

MINUTES
RYE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Rye Middle School Multipurpose Room
March 9, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Slack at 6:35 p.m. and the roll was called:

Present

Ms. Laura Slack, *Vice President*

Ms. Kendall Egan

Mr. Edward Fox

Ms. Young Kim

Mr. Raymond Schmitt

Mr. Robert Zahm

And

Dr. Edward Shine, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Steven Cohen, Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Elaine Cuglietto, Director of Personnel

Mr. Joshua Nathan, *President* Arrived at 7:03 p.m.

Ms. Kathleen Ryan, Business Manager Arrived at 7:06 p.m.

On a motion by Mrs. Slack, seconded by Ms. Egan and carried unanimously (6-0) it was voted to move immediately into executive session to review the employment history of current and prospective employees, discuss negotiations pursuant to the Taylor Law and current litigation.

On a motion by Mr. Fox, seconded by Ms. Slack and carried unanimously (7-0) it was voted at 8:10 p.m. to reconvene in public.

Mr. Nathan welcomed those present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Shine reported on the following events occurring around the district:

- Dr. Shine congratulated the Ice Hockey Team for a great season. The team won the Division 2 Championship and went on to play Queensbury in the State Quarterfinals on Saturday. Our boys played very hard, but lost 5-3. They were awarded the Howard Kossel Team Sportsmanship Award for the third straight year. The team is also a New York State Scholar/Athlete team for the third straight year.

- Our most popular Advanced Placement course is AP Economics. More than half of our senior class takes this course. Recently, the students visited the New York Federal Reserve as part of their unit on Banking and economy.
- Debra Davis Gaillard's earth science students are studying rocks and minerals. In their lab on sedimentary rocks, they worked with a partner to identify the various sedimentary rocks at each station. This unit covers how each type of rock is formed and how rocks tend to be a conglomerate of various minerals. The students learn how to test for these minerals and to determine a rock's origin.
- Later this month, Mrs. Gaillard's 7th and 8th grade science students will debate controversial science topics for their 3rd quarter projects. These debates will be podcast on the middle school web site.
- Grade 2 students in Becky Hurta's classroom at Osborn School are divided into reading groups. While one group reads aloud and is coached by their teacher, another quietly reads an assigned book. At the same time, a third group practices writing according to a rubric that focuses students' attention on main idea and details.
- Some 6th grade students elect to switch to other languages after being exposed to our elementary Spanish FLES program. 6th grade French students are learning French in a "Total Physical Environment" that teaches them to associate certain movements with specific vocabulary.
- The Arts play an important role in our students' education. Beyond the joy of pure creative expression, our students learn math, history, geography and critical presentation skills. The creative talent of our students is evident, whether it is in the art displayed in hallways or the first-rate productions students in each school can enjoy. Last week, the 5th grade cross-discipline unit on Impressionism came to a close with a successful Monet Luncheon. Milton students dressed up either in fancy clothing or a period costume and were hosted by art teacher West Friedman, music teacher Shawn Amdur, and parent volunteers. Students whose peers gave them the highest number of points on their body of work presented to the entire 5th grade.
- In Midland School, teacher Brett Reilly's art room, students are learning the difference between three-dimensional and two-dimensional art by creating masks from paper mache, paint and decorative objects.
- The Parsons Street Players had another big hit in this past weekend's How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying. Congratulations to the outstanding cast and crew.

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC ON NON AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Erik Morque, Co-Captain of the Rye High School Squash Club addressed the Board describing some of his experiences playing squash and asking for the Board's financial support for the future of the squash program in the Rye City School District.

Mr. Christopher Murphy, Co-Captain of the Rye High School Squash Club addressed the Board asking for support of the Board of Education for the continuation of the squash program in Rye.

Mr. Nathan thanked Mr. Morque and Mr. Murphy as well as the other club members in attendance.

There were no other communications from the public.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Nathan announced that the following items were pulled from the Consent Agenda:

Consent Agenda Fiscal Item #7A – Approval of Agreement with Optimum Lightpath for Internet and Telephone Connectivity for \$5,739 per month.

Consent Agenda Fiscal Item #7D – Approval of Addendum to current contract with Kaplan Test Prep for \$375. per student with a 10 student minimum.

Consent Agenda Fiscal Item #7E – Approval of Treasurer's Report for the period ending January 31, 2010.

Consent Agenda -Special Education # 10 – Approval of the Recommendations of the Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education.

On a motion by Ms. Slack, seconded by Ms. Egan and carried unanimously (7-0) to approve the following items:

General

Consent Agenda General 6A - The Board approves the February 23, 2010 Board of Education Minutes as presented.

Consent Agenda General 6B - The Board approves the February 9, 2010 Joint Board of Education / Rye City Council Minutes as presented.

Fiscal

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7B – The Board approves the agreement with John A. Coleman School for the 2009-2010 IDEA sub-allocation of up to \$14,361. (Attachment # I)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7C – The Board approves the Health Services Contract with the Pelham Union Free School District for \$934.56 for the 2009-2010 school year. (Attachment # II)

Personnel-Professional

The Resignation of Meredith Adams from her position as a Library Media Specialist, assigned to Osborn School, effective June 30, 2010.

(Meredith Adams was previously approved for a Personal Leave of Absence, effective September 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010 at the September 8, 2009 Board of Education Meeting.)

The request by Shannon Gold for a Child Care Leave of Absence from her position as an Elementary Teacher, assigned to Milton School, effective September 1, 2010 to the end of the first semester.

(Shannon Gold was previously approved for Child Care Leave of Absences from March 6, 2008 through June 30, 2010. Shannon Gold is expecting her third child in May 2010.)

The Amendment of the Child Care Leave of Absence for Tara Taddeo to be effective February 16, 2010 – June 30, 2010.

(Tara Taddeo was previously approved for a Child Care Leave of Absence effective on or about her estimated due date of February 22, 2010 – June 30, 2010 at the December 8, 2009 Board of Education Meeting.)

The Amendment of the Child Care Leave of Absence for Christen Klewicki to be effective March 1, 2010 – June 30, 2010.

(Christen Klewicki was previously approved for a Child Care Leave of Absence to be effective on or about her estimated due date of March 19, 2010 – June 30, 2010 at the December 8, 2009 Board of Education Meeting.)

The Leave Replacement Appointment of Natalie Ramirez as an English Teacher, for which she holds New York State Initial Certification in English Language Arts 7-12, assigned to the Rye High School 0.8 FTE, MA +30 Step 1, of the 2006-2007 Teacher Salary Schedule, \$58,736* (pro rated amount of \$19,970*, effective February 22, 2010 – June 30, 2010).

(Natalie Ramirez will be replacing Vanessa Lawson who was approved for a Child Care Leave of Absence, effective on or about her estimated due date of March 4, 2010 – June 30, 2010 at the December 8, 2009 Board of Education Meeting.)

The Appointment of the following Extra Pay for Extra Work for the 2009/2010 School Year:

Activity	Name	Index	09/10 Step	09/10 Rate*
Middle School - Spring				
Track & Field Asst. to Mod. Program	Dowling, Connor	0.0550	1	2,922
High School - Clubs				
Outdoor Education Club	Rothstein, Judd (1/2 year)	0.04000	0	1,012
Garnet Insider	Rothstein, Judd (1/2 year)	0.03000	2	837
High School Spring Musical				
Choreographer	Limone, Mike	0.01750	6	1,186
Music Director	Brown, Dan	0.01750	6	1,186
Lighting/Sound	Viesta, Nicole	0.02000	0	1,012
Accompanist	Cuffari, Tom	0.01750	6	1,186

(Nicole Viesta will be replacing John Gwardyak who was previously approved at the November 24, 2009 Board of Education Meeting.)

*Salary pending contract settlement

Ratification of the memorandum of Agreement between the Rye City School District Board of Education and the Rye Administrators Association, dated March 8, 2010. (Attachment #III)

The Board of Education of the Rye City School District hereby authorizes and approves the memorandum of agreement between the Board and the Rye Administrators Association dated March 8, 2010.

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to incorporate said memorandum of agreement into a more formal written agreement and further authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to execute said formal written agreement.

Personnel – Classified

The following Per Diem Substitute Clerical Worker to be used on an as needed basis:

Effective 7/1/09 – 6/30/10

Rate of pay is dependent upon the civil service title of the position being substituted for –

Hourly rate of pay is as follows:

Step 1 of Secretarial Clerical School Nurse and Computer Aide Unit Contract for the 2009-2010 School Year is:

Column A - \$15.97

Column B - \$21.35

Column C - \$22.19

Column D - \$24.27

Column E - \$26.35

Column F - \$29.53

Beth LaBella

(Beth LaBella is presently a 0.5 FTE Library Clerk at Milton School)

The Appointment of Michael Marcuccilli as a Per Diem Substitute Cleaner to be used only on an as needed basis effective March 10, 2010 – June 30, 2010 at the following rate of pay:

Step 1 of Custodial Unit Contract for Cleaner

\$19.03* per hour for days and \$19.98* per hour for nights for the 2009-2010 school year.

Items Pulled from the Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda -Special Education #10 –

The Approval of Recommendations of the Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education.

On a motion by Mrs. Slack seconded by Mr. Schmitt and carried 6-0-1 with Mr. Zahm abstaining, to approve the Recommendations of the Committee on Special Education and Committee on Preschool Special Education. (Attachment #IV)

Consent Agenda Fiscal Item # 7A – Approval of Agreement with Optimum Lightpath for Internet and Telephone Connectivity for \$5,739 per month.

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Zahm, seconded by Ms. Kim and carried unanimously (7-0) to approve this agreement with Optimum Lightpath for Internet and Telephone Connectivity (Attachment # V)

Consent Agenda Fiscal Item # 7D – Approval of Addendum to current contract with Kaplan Test Prep for \$375. per student with a 10 student minimum.

After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Slack, seconded by Ms. Kim and carried unanimously (7-0) to approve this addendum to current contract with Kaplan Test Prep. (Attachment # VI)

Consent Agenda Fiscal Item #7E – Approval of Treasurer’s Report for the period ending January 31, 2010.

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Zahm, seconded by Mr. Fox and carried unanimously (7-0) to approve the treasurer’s report for the period ending January 31, 2010. (Attachment # VII)

Mr. Nathan announced that among the items approved in the Consent Agenda is the ratification of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Rye City School District Board of Education and the Rye Administrators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement which expires on June 30, 2010. A memorandum of Agreement has been reached with the School District’s Rye Administrators Association (RAA) for a three year period through June 30, 2013. Mr. Nathan thanked the administrators in their approach to negotiations. After only one meeting, common ground was found and the agreement was reached. (Attachment #III)

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

Mr. Martin Gerson addressed the Board of Education asking for clarification of the monies needed to fund Tax Certiorari claims and where it comes from. Mr. Nathan advised Mr. Gerson that the Board would be addressing that issue this evening.

School District Tax Certiorari Presentation

Mrs. Ryan presented a report of tax certiorari. Her presentation included an overview of the following topics: (Attachment #VIII)

- The district’s estimated tax rate.
- What impacts taxable assessments?
- What are tax certiorari proceedings?
- What is the tax certiorari reserve and why does the District have one?
- Are tax certiorari refunds increasing?
- Is the current reserve adequate?

Mr. Nathan thanked Mrs. Ryan for her presentation. After Board discussion, Mr. Nathan called for comment from the public.

Mr. Bertrand deFrondeville addressed the Board of Education regarding the tax certiorari report presented by Mrs. Ryan and shared several opinions on the topic.

Mr. deFrondeville urged the Board to instruct the administration to restore Page 6-3 of the budget book general fund reserves so the public can see what is happening with the reserves.

There were no other comments from the public on this topic.

Capital Projects Presentation

Mrs. Ryan presented a report regarding Capital Projects 2010-2011 based upon an annual visual inspection. Mrs. Ryan's report included discussion of estimates of total capital repair projects, critical project that are deferred, large capital projects for the coming years as well as not funded high school updates. (Attachment # VIII)

Mr. Nathan asked the Facilities Committee to review the details of the needed projects, prioritize for health and safety, enrollment support, and items will be discussed as to what type of spending the committee thinks may be required and over what period of time they will be reviewed.

2010-11 Superintendent's Recommended Budget – Reclassifications

Mrs. Ryan addressed the Board, advising them of two reclassifications from the previous Superintendent's recommended budget presented to the Board. Both reclassification items are the same amount of \$30,000. The first being the Lightpath savings has been changed between facilities and technology support budgets and, the second reclassification is regarding new 6th grade math textbooks as a first time expense to be paid for from the curriculum budget rather than from the middle school budget.

The recommended 2010-2011 budget remains the same at \$69,731,200. which is a 1.32% budget to budget increase with a tax levy impact of 1.45% and an estimated tax rate increase of 1.95%.

Another follow up item that Mrs. Ryan discussed is the cost shifts for two unfunded mandates that are new and not included in the recommended budget:

- 1) The New York State Executive Budget proposal includes the cost shift of the extended school year special education summer program from being previously funded at 80% of the program costs. The proposal is reducing the funding down to 10% of the program costs. According to estimates from the Special Education Department this could have an impact of \$181,320.
- 2) The second cost shift would be the cost of Preschool Special Education programs from the County to the school district. The specific proposal is that the county would pay 102% of the prior school year costs and the school district would assume costs over that. Those costs are currently unknown. The estimate from the special education program is that it would have a \$70 - \$100,000. impact on the proposed budget.

Mrs. Ryan indicated that at the March 23, 2010 Board of Education Meeting, the discussion would continue on the Superintendent's recommended budget as follows:

A scheduled Community Forum on the Budget, Fund Balance Projection, Contingent Budget Calculation and the Administration would be looking for the Board's direction for proposed budget adoption at the April 13, 2010 Board of Education meeting.

Dr. Shine stated that two administrators; Rye Middle School Principal Dr. Ann Edwards, and Director of Physical Education Mr. Robert Castagna were present to discuss some budgetary concerns.

Dr. Edwards addressed the Board of Education to answer any questions that the Board may have regarding the budget reductions on her school/building.

Dr. Edwards reported that she currently estimates the following:

13 - 6th grade students chose Mandarin as their first language choice.

No sixth grader wants to pick up a second language.

22 - 7th grade students chose Mandarin as a second language.

8 - 8th grade students chose Mandarin as a second language resulting in a total of 30 students who would like to study Mandarin as a second language.

Dr. Shine stated that the middle school would require a .6FTE Mandarin teacher for the middle school and .4FTE Mandarin teacher for the high school. This would result in one full time Mandarin teacher needed.

Mr. Robert Castagna addressed the Board of Education to answer any questions that the Board may have regarding the Athletic Department budget.

A detailed discussion was held regarding the possibility of including Crew and Squash in the 2010-2011 budget in order to provide some support to the two programs and relieve some of the support that parents are currently providing. Mr. Castagna stated that the advisors would add support to the programs and alleviate some of the work that the current parent volunteers are performing, and advisors would be in lieu of the coach. The advisors would take the place of parents that are coordinating the programs now. The cost of each advisor would be \$3794. One advisor would be needed for Crew and one advisor for Squash. The bulk of the expense would still be on the parents, such as transportation, rental fees, etc.

A discussion of comparative sports was held regarding cuts in other athletic teams and programs. Mr. Zahm asked for verification that both genders were impacted equally.

A Detailed discussion was held regarding funding of school district athletic programs, team transportation, competition fees and phasing in of support of the squash and crew programs.

Mr. Nathan asked Dr. Shine to follow up on the short list of some budgetary items that have been requested by Board members inquired about as either additions or alterations to the projected budget.

COMMUNICATIONS TO/FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Zahm stated that as a break out from the Audit Committee, some members have identified issues with the policy approved by the School Board last school year. They are waiting for a Policy Committee meeting to address some concerns. There is some work that needs to be done by the Policy Committee regarding possible adjustments to the Policy and possible adjustments to the procedures followed by the Claims Auditor. Mr. Zahm reminded everyone that the Claims Auditor works for the Board. The current reports being submitted are not insightful.

Mr. Zahm announced that he will not seek re-election for the school Board at the conclusion of his term. Mr. Zahm indicated that it has been an honor to serve on this Board. Mr. Zahm encourages people to run for the School Board as a good opportunity to give back to the community and to share other points of view on the School Board.

Mr. Nathan thanked Mr. Zahm for his service as a Board member for two terms. He encourages other people in the community to thank Mr. Zahm for his outstanding work.

Ms. Kendall Egan announced that she has chosen to seek re-election for a seat on the School Board at the conclusion of her term this year. She encourages people to run for the Board. While it is time consuming and a challenge, she feels it is the best volunteer position around. It has an impact on children, education and people in the community.

Mr. Nathan thanked Ms. Egan for her hard work, time and commitment to the School Board and the District.

Mr. Nathan advised anyone interested in running for election to the School Board may pick up their petitions and packets at the Rye City School District Administrative Offices, 411 Theodore Fremd Avenue, South Lobby, Rye New York during regular working hours.

Mr. Zahm announced that there was a walkthrough of Midland School by some members of the shared committee with the City Council. A similar walkthrough occurred yesterday at Milton School. Data has been collected and will be shared at the next Joint Council meeting in April. Mr. Zahm thanked the PTOs of the schools and both Brian Pickup and Scott Dempsey for taking part in those sessions as well.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Fox, seconded by Mr. Schmitt and carried unanimously (7-0) it was voted at 11:45 p.m. to move into Executive Session for the continuation of discussion of topics discussed during an earlier executive session this evening to review the employment history of current and prospective employees, discuss negotiations pursuant to the Taylor Law and current litigation.

On a motion by Ms. Slack, seconded by Mr. Nathan and carried unanimously (7-0) it was voted at 12:57 a.m. to reconvene in public and immediately adjourn the meeting.

Elaine Cuglietto
District Clerk

Video of this meeting can be found on the District's website (www.ryeschools.org). Click on District and on Board of Education.