

MINUTES
RYE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Rye Middle School Multipurpose Room
March 23, 2010

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

Present

Mr. Joshua Nathan, *President*
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. Kathleen Ryan, Business Manager

On a motion by Ms. Slack, seconded by Ms. Egan and carried unanimously (7-0) 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 8:05 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:

- My Soldier, the Rye High School club that works to support our country's active troops, held an assembly last week that featured a talk by Iraq Veteran Major James McCann. Leading up to the assembly, students sold specially-designed T-shirts to raise funds for organizations that help returning veterans.
- Students in Bill Schrammel's 6th and 7th grade Technology classes are working on wooden IQ games. They use saws, drills, sandpaper and lots of elbow grease to produce puzzles.

- Milton Physical Education teacher Becky Ward wants her students to reflect on their own preconceptions about disabilities and to develop a more sophisticated awareness of what constitutes success. To achieve this, she created a unit where students were put through a range of activities designed to help them appreciate some of the physical challenges faced by the disabled. The classes were also visited by Matthew Castelluccio, a wheelchair Rugby player for the NY Warriors and experts from the Adaptive Sports Foundation who taught the students about adaptive skiing.
- Milton's 4th and 5th grade students participated in the school science fair. Working in pairs, students created exhibits based on scientific topics they researched using the scientific method. The exhibits were on display in the auditorium. As visitors approached their table, the students presented their projects. Scott Cifone is the Science Fair coordinator and he worked with the students in developing their problem and hypothesis. In all, 71 fifth graders and 63 fourth graders participated. Each will receive Milton School certificates at the June awards assembly.
- Last week was the Ninth Annual Great Midland Read Aloud where students celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday. This event at Midland is organized by Reading Recovery teacher Judy Conrad and librarian Amy Andrews. On Read Aloud morning, each student returned to last year's classroom to hear a story and visit with their former teacher and classmates. Reading good books aloud is a tradition and favorite activity in the classroom. The Read Aloud engages the students while developing background knowledge, increasing comprehension skills, and fostering critical thinking. It also models the use of reading strategies that aid in comprehension.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Consent Agenda Fiscal Item #6A – Approval of Treasurer's Report for the period ending February 28, 2010. This item has been tabled to a future Board of Education Meeting.

Consent Agenda Personnel - Professional Item #7C – Child Care Leave of Absence Extension – Teacher (1)

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

General

Consent Agenda General 5A - The Board approves the March 8, 2010 Board of Education Minutes as presented.

Consent Agenda General 5B - The Board approves the March 9, 2010 Board of Education Minutes as presented.

Consent Agenda General 5C - The Board accepts the gift from the Burke Family for the Burke Scholarship in the amount of \$10,000.

Fiscal

Consent Agenda – Fiscal 6B – Approval of Health Services Contract with the Greenburgh Central School District No. 7 for \$1,492.32 for the 2009-2010 school year.

Consent Agenda – Fiscal 6C – Approval of Contract for Health and Related Services with the Harrison Central School District for \$20,877.57 for the 2009-2010 school year.

Consent Agenda – Fiscal 6D – Approval of Consultant Contract with Elena A. Caffentzis, M.A. CCC-SLP doing business as Speech Journey, for speech/language therapy services for a maximum consulting fee of \$3,000.

Personnel-Professional

The Resignation of Jennifer Muller from her position as a 0.6 FTE School Psychologist, assigned to Milton School, effective June 30, 2010.

The Resignation of Travis Thornton from his position as a Technology Teacher, assigned to Rye Middle School, effective June 30, 2010.

The request of Anne Swenson Graham for a Child Care Leave of Absence from her position as an Elementary Teacher, assigned to Osborn School, effective March 3, 2010 – June 30, 2010 and September 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011.

The request of Andra O'Brien for a Child Care Leave of Absence from her position as an Elementary Teacher, assigned to Midland School, effective September 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011.

The Three Year Probationary Appointment of Brian Mulvihill as a Foreign Language Teacher, for which he holds New York State Initial Certification in Spanish 7-12, assigned to Rye High School, 1.0 FTE, MA Step 7, of the 2006-2007 Teacher Salary Schedule, \$72,192* (pro-rated amount of \$25,989*), effective March 11, 2010 – March 10, 2013.

The Salary Adjustment Payment of Lisa Burroughs from a Permanent Substitute rate of \$105.00 per day to a Leave Replacement Elementary Teacher, for which she holds New York State Permanent Certification in Pre K, K and Grades 1-6, assigned to Osborn School, 1.0 FTE, MA +30 Step 5, of the 2006-2007 Teacher Salary Schedule, \$69,359* (pro-rated amount of \$36,413*), effective January 25, 2010 – June 30, 2010. (Lisa Burroughs has been substituting in the same assignment for Deborah DioGuardi since January 25, 2010 at a daily rate of \$105.00. Lisa Burroughs will be paid the difference between the two amounts.)

The Leave Replacement Appointment of Joseph Beauchamp as a Science Teacher, for which he holds New York State Initial Certification in Biology 7-12 and New York State Initial Certification in Chemistry 7-12, assigned to Rye High School, 1.0 FTE, MA +30 Step 4, of the 2006-2007 Teacher Salary Schedule, \$66,071* (pro-rated amount of \$19,821*), effective April 5, 2010 – June 30, 2010.

(Joseph Beauchamp will be replacing Bruna Mascia who was previously approved for a Child Care Leave of Absence, effective on or about her estimated due date of April 13, 2010 – June 30, 2010 at the January 26, 2010 Board of Education Meeting.)

The Amendment of the Child Care Leave of Absence for Vanessa Lawson to be effective February 24, 2010 – June 30, 2010.

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

Activity	Name	Index	09/10 Step	09/10 Rate*
High School Winter Musical				
Accompanist	Cuffari, Tom	0.01750	6	1,186

(Tom Cuffari was previously approved for the same Index, Step and Rate for the Spring Musical at the March 9, 2010 Board of Education Meeting. Tom Cuffari was an Accompanist for the Winter Musical. Tom Cuffari will not be an Accompanist for the Spring Musical.)

The Board approves the Emergency Conditional Appointment of Jeff Loddó for Performing Arts & Visual Arts technical repair services to be used on an emergency basis for the 2009-2010 school year at the rate of \$35.00 per hour.

(Jeff Loddó will be used only when John Gwardyak is not available for emergencies.)

The Board approves the following Per Diem Substitute Teachers to be used only on an as needed basis for the 2009-2010 School Year at a daily rate of \$100.00 per day:

- Noah Appleton
- Lauren Davis
- Meaghan Maloney
- Marianna Oprisek
- Christopher Piccone
- Allison Ross
- Alison Sheehy

Personnel – Classified

The Board approves the Appointment of Patrick Milboer as a Cleaner - Nights with a probationary period of a minimum of twelve weeks to a maximum of fifty-two weeks, assigned to Midland School, on Step 1 of the 2008-2009 Custodial Unit Salary Schedule, \$39,577* (pro rated amount of \$9,590*) plus night differential, \$1,979* (pro rated amount of \$479*), total salary \$41,559* (pro rated amount of \$10,069*), effective April 5, 2010.

(Patrick Milboer will be replacing Edward Portillo who was appointed a Night Custodian, assigned to Milton School, effective January 18, 2010 at the January 12, 2010 Board of Education Meeting.)

The Board approves the Appointment of Salvatore Lagani 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.

*Salary pending contract settlement

Items Pulled from the Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda Fiscal Item #6A – Approval of Treasurer’s Report for the period ending February 28, 2010. This item has been tabled for discussion at a future Board of Education meeting.

Consent Agenda Personnel - Professional Item #7C – Child Care Leave of Absence Extension – Teacher (1) The Board not approve the request of Alisha Miller for an extension of a Child Care Leave of Absence from her position as an Elementary Teacher, assigned to Osborn School, effective September 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011.

On a motion by Ms. Egan seconded by Mr. Schmitt and carried 6-1 with Mr. Fox Voting No, to approve the recommendation not to extend the Child Care Leave of Absence for Alisha Miller.

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC ON NON AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Angie Cho, Senior at Rye High School and Captain of the Girls Varsity Squash Team addressed the Board describing her relationship with other team members and asking for the Board’s continued support of the team in the future.

Mr. Keith Hanson, Senior at Rye High School and Captain of the Crew team addressed the Board describing his experiences in this sport, the team’s growth, and the need for the Board’s financial support to enable more students to participate.

Mr. Colin Croughan, Rye High School Senior addressed the Board asking for their financial support of the developing Crew Team in the future.

Ms. Margaret Mulkerrin, Jr. at Rye High School and member of the Rye Crew Team addressed the Board regarding the financial commitment necessary to participate in this sport and asked the Board for their financial support to continue a Crew Team.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

A presentation on the Superintendent's recommended budget was continued. Various aspects of the Superintendent's recommended budget were discussed at prior Board meetings.

Ms. Ryan, Business Manager continued the discussion and gave a detailed presentation on the following topics:

- Contingent Budget Calculation
- Fund Balance Projection
- Facilities Project update
- Responses to previous questions

Mr. Stanley Nelson coach of the current crew club addressed the Board in a discussion regarding the funding necessary for this club and views of partial levels of support for a team.

Mr. Rob Castagna was available to answer some questions by Board members regarding the number of students participating in the current squash and crew clubs as well as in other sports.

Open Topics Forum Discussion

Board Members had the opportunity to sit with members of the community in small groups to discuss items of interest to the community.

Mr. Nathan asked the Board members for a report on the key findings of their discussions. Most discussions surrounded the following areas:

Technology – recognition of outdated software, general systems to be upgraded, etc. Issues of commonality of platforms across classrooms were raised. Uniformity of technology initiatives. There needs to be a vision or procedure how technology will be handled. Smartboards are in some classes and not in others.

Elimination of Positions – There is a concern that the district will be eliminating library clerks and the expectation is that the PTOs will be available to volunteer. There is concern that they may not be able to continue to fill the gap. Difficult time to find parent volunteers due to economy.

Facilities – recognition of on-going maintenance, minimum % of budget allotted for upgrade. Osborn Ramp – cost of ramp at Osborn for \$25,000 and cost at Midland for path at a cost of \$100,000 is ridiculous. Space Constraints and facility needs – long term plan needed aside from the portables.

Squash and Crew – recognition of enthusiasm of crew and squash request the recognition at awards, benefits and general recognition. Other districts are providing more funding than Rye for these sports.

90% of the Squash team members are new to sport, within three years they have reached 3rd in their division. It is a real opportunity to attract students that do not participate in other sports.

The current fees limit participation at this time.

Colleges are seriously recruiting students with crew backgrounds.

Concern for Squash Team as the coach's child will be graduating this school year.

Tax Rate Increase – current tax rate under 2% increase is too high and what additional items can still be trimmed from the budget. Some members stated that their discussions included comments that due to technology needs, it was not too high or it was just about right.

Class Size issues – modest increases in class sizes to ease the budget might be acceptable. Concern at the middle school of increased class size due to large incoming 6th grade. Class sizes large at the high school for ELA, writing mentors have larger number of students.

Elementary schools – due to price increases of textbooks, budget cuts to elementary schools will be difficult.

Middle School – mathematics textbooks are an issue. The discussion has gone on too long of what to purchase, etc. Students have homework with no answer keys, etc. Listening Lab at the middle school to assist students in foreign language. Technology program at the middle school be reviewed. Additional staffing at the middle school computer lab due to higher demand.

Addition of Mandarin – discussion as to whether or not it is a good time to add Mandarin as a first language and/or to add a second language at the middle school due to the economy

Art Show – concern that the art show may not occur. Board members stated that the Art Show would occur this year.

Athletic Events – perhaps we should charge more money for entrance fees, etc. to help offset increases

Merger opportunity with other districts to help defray costs

Super booster club umbrella over all sports was discussed.

Mr. Nathan thanked everyone for participating in the Open Topics Forum and advised the public that the Board members were reporting on individual discussions that were held with their groups and to keep in mind that they do not necessarily reflect that Board member's opinion.

Dr. Shine presented information on some one time vs. recurring costs for the district.

Hearing of the Public on Budgetary items

Mr. Bertrand deFrondeville addressed the Board regarding the Contingency Budget presented by Ms. Ryan. Mr. deFrondeville is asking for a reduction of the budget due to over taxation as well as additional decrease related to the high school.

Ms. Karen Belanger Co-President of Midland School PTO addressed the Board accompanied by other Co –Presidents of PTOs and POs throughout the District. Ms. Belanger thanked the Board for their attempt at being fiscally responsible with a very low budget increase. From their perspective, they hope this does not fall on the backs of parent volunteers and make it more difficult for the PTOs and POs to continue to man the programs they already have as well as the additional expectation of assisting in many other ways. They are happy to assist in the pitching of a Yes vote for the School Budget, even with a marginally higher tax increase to be sure that they are not called upon to always make up the slack.

Ms. Charmian Neary addressed the Board. She requested there be more cuts rather than to have any higher tax increase. She expressed her concern for the people in Rye who do not want to have any tax increase.

Ms. Susan Whelan, Coach of the Rye High School Girls Squash Club addressed the Board to clarify some issues regarding the Squash Club.

Among the items she mentioned were, last year, there were 20 girls playing, this year there were over 40 throughout the season. Her expectation is that there will be even more students who want to participate next year. Ms. Whelan advised the Board of the impressive statistics of the Squash Club. This team was #1 in the league this year. The club does play in a public school league that continues to grow also playing again private day and boarding schools.

2010 – 2011 School District Budget

Dr. Shine asked for direction from the Board on the 2010 – 2011 School District Budget

Dr. Shine said that the budget planning was coming to a close with the Board asked to adopt the budget at its April 13, 2010 meeting. Board members provided their comments on various components of the budge including addition of Squash and Crew Teams, Mandarin as a Second Language as well as Technology initiatives.

Adjournment

Board Minutes

March 23, 2010

On a motion by Ms. Egan , seconded by Ms. Slack and carried unanimously (7-0) it was voted at 12:25 a.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 1:20 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.