

MINUTES
RYE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Rye Middle School Multipurpose Room
February 25, 2014

Present:

Ms. Laura Slack, President
Ms. Katy Keohane Glassberg, Vice President
Ms. Karen Belanger
Mr. Edward Fox
Ms. Nancy Pasquale
Mr. Christopher Repetto
*Ms. Nicole Weber – Arrived at 7:11 p.m.

And

Dr. Frank Alvarez, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Betty Ann Wyks, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Ms. Gabriella O'Connor, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Ms. Elaine Cuglietto, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
Ms. Shirley Klein, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services
Mr. Gus Mountanos, Legal Counsel
Mr. Tom Scapoli, Legal Counsel

The meeting was called to order by Laura Slack at 7:05 p.m. on Tuesday February 25, 2014 at Rye Middle School.

On a motion by Mr. Repetto, seconded by Ms. Pasquale 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 review current litigation.

On a motion by Ms. Pasquale, seconded by Ms. Belanger and carried unanimously (7 -0) it was voted at 8:45 p.m. to reconvene in public. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Alvarez thanked those who came out to the advocacy panel entitled, "The High Cost of Reform: Educational and Fiscal Effects," held on February 12. Those who participated were informed about the major issues school districts are facing in light of the state's required roll-out of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), high-stakes

testing, and new teacher accountability systems all in one year. Presenters discussed the toll that these additional unfunded mandates and the tax cap are taking on school districts and educational programs. Dr. Alvarez specifically acknowledged parents Mindy Grigg and Jennifer Boyle; Board of Education President Laura Slack; teachers Jennifer Fall, Dayna Reist, and Suzanne Short; Senator George Latimer; and Assemblyman Steve Otis for their involvement in coordinating and leading the panel.

Dr. Alvarez announced that inspections were of all school roofs to ensure safety and prevention of snow-related damage. He thanked Facilities Director Sam Carder and the custodial staff for overseeing this as well as many other projects completed during the February recess. Also discussed was the behind-the-scenes work taking place regarding math testing. Dr. Alvarez explained that the administration is reviewing the trajectory and determining what changes should be made moving forward. A recommendation will be brought to the Board at the March 11 meeting.

Dr. Alvarez shared the excellent news that Rye High School students Claudia Hentschel, Olivia Iles, and Elliot Meister were named National Merit Finalists through the National Merit Scholarship Program. He also announced the Parson Street Players February 28 and March 1 performances of the musical, *Beauty and the Beast*, as well as the Girls Basketball Section One Semi-Finals on February 26.

Dr. Alvarez noted that he will present the Superintendent's Recommended 2014-15 Budget on March 4 during a Special Board of Education meeting that has been added to the calendar.

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC ON NON AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Mary Emery Co-Chair of Friends of Rye addressed the Board regarding the upcoming budget season. Ms. Emery thanked Dr. Alvarez for the amazing forum held on February 12 where many individuals were able to pose their questions and voice their opinions as well as listen to our state legislators.

Ms. Emery further stated that she respects and acknowledges the many cuts the district has implemented over the last years. She went on to state that whether we decide to go with an override or stay within the 1.46% constrictive tax cap, she will support the Superintendent in whatever direction is pursued.

Ms. Slack announced that the following item was being removed from the agenda for consideration separately.

Consent Agenda General 6.03

Recommended Action:

That the Board adopts the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education herewith authorizes the release of an opinion letter of counsel dated February 4, 2014 as discussed in Executive Session.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

General

Consent Agenda General 6.01

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the 2014-15 school calendar as presented. (Attachment #I)

Consent Agenda General 6.02

Recommended Action:

That the Board adopts the Spanish 1A (Grade 7) curriculum revision.

Fiscal

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.01

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the RFP Consulting Services Agreement with Pat Bucci for the 2013-2014 school year. (Attachment # II)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.02

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the Triton Construction Change Orders as listed and described below for the necessary work to be completed in connection with the HS/MS Science Addition Project. The following Change Orders have been reviewed and recommended for Board approval by acting construction manager, Triton Construction, for necessary work in connection with the HS/MS Science Addition Project. (Attachment # III)

Triton CO #03. Door glazing modification. \$0.00

Changes made to the interior doors to include the appropriate number of SED required vision panels.

Triton # X-301. Installation of diffuser/hood at crawl space vent/louvers. \$2,918.80

Preventative measures were taken to prevent freezing of mechanical duct work in the crawl space by installing weather blocking diffuser/hood.

Triton # X-117. Purchase and installation of 4 lab refrigerator/freezer units. \$7,139.88

As not all units were included in the contract for the General Contractor, we requested a proposal. It is preferred that the GC take care of this and its integration/installation with the casework.

Triton #X-202. Additional domestic water piping, floor drain and vent piping for Ice Machines. \$14,730.01

The architects omitted the supply and drain piping for ice makers in their design. The plumbing contractor picked up on the matter and provided this proposal.

Triton # X-403. Supply of generator power to sump pumps in Science Addition. \$42,423.38

Testing showed that the sump pumps need to be on auxiliary power as power outages often occur when it rains. An additional change order is forthcoming as a result of the testing performed.

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.03

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the RFP Consulting Services Agreement with Heartsong for the 2013/2014 school year. (Attachment # IV)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.04

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the gift of \$10,000 for the Burke Family Scholarship Fund.

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.05

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves an increase to the General Fund budget in the amount of \$575. for the approved Milton School PTO donations for bus expenditures related to field trips.

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.06

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the Treasurer's Report for July 2013. (Attachment # V)

PROFESSIONAL

Consent Agenda – Personnel 8 .01

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the Leave Replacement Appointment of Suzanne Adams as an English Teacher, for which she holds New York State Professional Certification in English Language Arts 7-12, assigned to Rye Middle School, 1.0 FTE MA Step 5 of the 2013-2014 Teacher Salary Schedule, \$72,736 (pro rated amount of \$34,185.92), effective February 11, 2014 – June 30, 2014.

(Suzanne Adams is replacing April Colarusso who is out on a medical leave and who was previously approved for a Child Care Leave of Absence, effective on or about her estimated due date of March 17, 2014 – June 30, 2014 at the January 14, 2014 Board of Education Meeting.)

Consent Agenda – Personnel 8 .02

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the following Appointments for Extra Pay for Extra Work, for the 2013-2014 school year:

EPEW				13/14	13/14
	ACTIVITY	NAME	INDEX	STEP	RATE
Athletic-SPRING					
ATHLETIC	Assistant to Program	Pusateri, Theresa	0.09000	6	6,671
BASEBALL	Varsity Baseball Coach	Bruno, Michael	0.09500	6	7,042
BASEBALL	JV Coach	Bruno, Matthew	0.07500	6	5,559
BASEBALL	Asst. to Program	Charney, Chad	0.05500	6	4,077
GOLF Boys	Varsity Coach	Romano, Pat	0.08000	6	5,930
GOLF Girls	Varsity Coach	Savage, Rich	0.08000	6	5,930
LACROSSE (Boys)	Varsity Coach	Dooley, Brian	0.09500	6	7,042
LACROSSE (Boys)	JV Coach	Johnson, Michael	0.07500	6	5,559

LACROSSE (Boys)	Asst. to Var. Prog.	Dooley, Scott	0.05500	6	4,077
LACROSSE (Boys)	Asst. to JV Prog.	McReddie, Adam	0.05500	6	4,077
LACROSSE (Girls)	Varsity Coach	Hurlie, Dennis	0.09500	6	7,042
LACROSSE (Girls)	JV Coach	Sweeney, Eileen	0.07500	6	5,559
LACROSSE (Girls)	Asst. to the Program	Morrison, Kerri	0.05500	4	3,698
LACROSSE (Girls)	Asst. to JV Prog.	DiRusso, Lisa Marie	0.05500	3	3,522
SOFTBALL	Varsity Coach	Tejera, Alex	0.09500	6	7,042
SOFTBALL	JV Coach	Nixon, Kim	0.07500	6	5,559
TENNIS (Boys)	Varsity Coach	Dickson, Susan	0.08000	6	5,930
TENNIS (Boys)	JV Coach	Caulway, Cari	0.06500	6	4,818
TRACK	Varsity (Boys) Coach	Yedowitz, James	0.09500	6	7,042
TRACK	Varsity (Girls) Coach	McGee, John	0.09500	6	7,042
TRACK	Asst. to Var. Prog. (Girls)	Fitzgerald, Emily	0.07500	6	5,559
TRACK	Asst. to Var. Prog. (Boys)	Ciociou, Adrian	0.07500	6	5,559
CREW	Varsity (Girls)	Palermo, Jennifer	0.08000	6	5,930
CREW	Varsity (Boys)	Nelson, Stanley	0.08000	6	5,930

Middle School - Spring

BASEBALL	Modified 7/8 Coach	Plaice, Josh	0.06500	6	4,818
LACROSSE(Boys)	Modified 7/8 Coach	Berk, Simon	0.06500	6	4,818
LACROSSE (Girls)	Modified 7/8 Coach	Henwood, Mary	0.06500	6	4,818
SOFTBALL	Modified 7/8 Coach	Poccia, Rachel	0.06500	3	4,162
TRACK (Co-Ed)	Modified 7/8 Coach	Carman, Charles	0.06500	6	4,818
TRACK (Co-Ed)	Modified 7/8 Coach	Dowling, Connor	0.06500	6	4,818
TRACK (Boys)	Assist. To Mod. Program	Griffin, John	0.05500	5	3,883
TRACK (Girls)	Assist. To Mod. Program	Mooney, Kim	0.05500	6	4,077

EPEW

				13/14	13/14
	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>INDEX</u>	<u>STEP</u>	<u>RATE</u>
High School Winter Musical					
Plays - Spring	Accompanist	Kostner, Douglas	0.01750	0	968
Middle School – Clubs					
Club Sports-Session 3	Floor Hockey	Rinaldi, James	0.00910	0	503
Club Sports-Session 3	Volleyball	Poccia, Erica	0.00910	2	555
Club Sports-Session 3	Basketball	McGlynn, Christopher	0.00910	0	503

Consent Agenda – Personnel 8.03

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the following Per Diem Substitute Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Teacher Aides to be used only on an as needed basis for the 2013-2014 school year at the approved per diem rates, effective February 26, 2014:

Per Diem Rates as follows:

Per Diem Substitute Teacher - \$102.00

Per Diem Substitute Teaching Assistant for Special Education - \$102.00

Per Diem Substitute Teaching Assistant - \$102.00

Per Diem Substitute Teacher Aide for Special Education - \$102.00

Substitute Teacher Aide \$13.95 per hour

Jacquelyn Hicks

Keri MacKenzie

CLASSIFIED**Consent Agenda – Classified 9.01****Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the request by Xiomara Dreves for a Child Care Leave of Absence from her position as a Computer Aide, assigned to Milton School, effective on or about her estimated due of May 8, 2014 – June 30, 2014.

Consent Agenda – Classified 9.02**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the Probationary Appointment Amendment of Xiomara Dreves as a Computer Aide, with a probationary period of a minimum of twelve weeks to a maximum of fifty-two weeks, assigned to Milton School, 0.5 FTE W/O Degree of the 2013-2014 Secretarial/Clerical/School Nurse and Computer Aide Unit Salary Schedule, annual salary \$26,470* (pro rated amount of \$13,235*), effective September 13, 2013.

(Xiomara Dreves was previously approved effective September 13, 2013 – June 30, 2014 at the September 10, 2013 Board of Education Meeting. The resolution did not include the proper probationary appointment language.)

Consent Agenda – Classified 9.03**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the Probationary Appointment of Alessandra Gaudio-Tamerin as a Teacher Aide, for lunch time duty, with a probationary period of a minimum of twelve weeks to a maximum of fifty-two weeks, assigned to Midland School, at \$13.95* per hour, Step 1 of the 2013-2014 Teacher Aide/Teaching Assistant Salary Schedule, 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, effective February 25, 2014.

*Salary pending contract settlement

Recommendation: That the Board approves the Probationary Appointment of Sarah Niez as a Teacher Aide for Special Education, with a probationary period of a minimum of twelve weeks to a maximum of fifty-two weeks, assigned to Midland School, at \$18.45* per hour, Step 1 of the 2013-2014 Teacher Aide/Teaching Assistant Salary Schedule, 6.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, effective February 25, 2014.

*Salary pending contract settlement

Consent Agenda –Special Education 10.01**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the Committee of Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education recommendations as attached. (Attachment # VI)

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion by Ms. Belanger, seconded by Mr. Repetto and carried (6-0-1) with Mr. Fox abstaining, to approve the following agenda item:

Consent Agenda General 6.03

Recommended Action:

That the Board adopts the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education herewith authorizes the release of an opinion letter of counsel dated February 4, 2014 as discussed in Executive Session. (Attachment # VII)

PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Dr. Betty Ann Wyks provided a progress update on Culture of Caring, one of the District's five goals. Academic Achievement was the focus at the January 28 Board meeting, Teacher Effectiveness was reviewed on February 11 and the remaining two goals -- Fiscal Responsibility, and Community Engagement -- will be addressed at future meetings.

Dr. Wyks described Culture of Caring as meaning "Staff and students will consistently demonstrate respect and concern for others." Sub-components of this goal include developing consistent behavioral norms and an age-appropriate Code of Conduct, which is still in the development phase. Dr. Wyks noted that there is a great deal of work and many discussions taking place within the schools, particularly at the elementary level, where the goal is to develop a consistent program. She mentioned the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) as being one aspect of the program.

DASA

Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Elaine Cuglietto, who serves as the District's Dignity Act Coordinator, shared an overview of the DASA structure. She explained that the intent of DASA is to provide an environment free of discrimination and harassment. Each building has an assigned DASA Coordinator, to whom parents, students, and staff can reach out regarding possible incidences. Mrs. Cuglietto explained that all staff members in the District have been trained on DASA, the timeframe for reporting concerns, and what to do if they hear or see that something that should be reported. The list of DASA Coordinators and their contact information is available on the District's website.

Emergency Management

Another Culture of Caring component is emergency management. The District's Facilities Director Sam Carder discussed measures that have been taken to address elements recommended by StoneGate Associates, the District's security consultants. He explained that one of the security projects had been put out to bid and the District is seeking State contractor pricing as well. Public Announcement system upgrades are also being quoted through the State Education Department contractor. The District has additionally received pricing for 3M security film, a preventative film applied to glass to deter forced entry. All current door hardware was fixed and confirmed to work, classroom numbers are now prominently displayed in all windows. Exterior lighting in all

the schools has been repaired and some lighting has been added. Exterior doors remain locked. Lastly, Mr. Carder explained that floor plans of all buildings in the District were provided to Rye City Police Department, which has conducted drills to familiarize officers with the school layouts.

Character Education

Rye Middle School Social Worker Peter Green presented an overview of the individual school initiatives relating to character education. Mr. Green defined character education as "teaching of the core values that help people live together in society," and explained that many school districts, organizations, and other institutions have adopted the Six Pillars: responsibility, respect, trustworthiness, caring, fairness, and citizenship as central to their character education programs. Mr. Green pointed out that the District pays particular attention to respect and caring, as well as compassion, empathy, and emotional intelligence. Each of the District's school principals reports their own design and delivery of character education programs. While the programs in the three elementary schools differ in level of control and nomenclature, they emphasize similar values; all employ monthly themes supported through announcements, activities, reading, and curriculum.

Mr. Green noted that Rye Middle School Principal Ann Edwards describes the middle school years as "a crucial time for shaping character and creating a culture of caring," and encourages teachers to support this on a daily basis. Curriculum in classrooms supports conversations about empathy, responsibility, citizenship. Assemblies explore ethnic and gender stereotyping. Classroom visits from Mr. Green, seventh-grade team building activities, student leadership opportunities, clubs, and the peer mediation group further strengthens the values of good character. Additionally, the Middle School holds an annual expo celebrating dignity and differences.

At the High School, Principal Patricia Taylor "sets an intention and looks for opportunities." The school has introduced awards that recognize students who demonstrate good character in addition to academic achievement. Literature is used to support community well-being, a civility committee is evolving and will help plan future programs. Excellent Awareness clubs exist for students interested in service.

Mr. Green specifically spotlighted the Rye School of Leadership (RSoL), explaining that it "embraces value of personal responsibility and caring for others." The RSoL Principal Paul Blank bases values on five words: courage, concern, curiosity, integrity, and leadership. The school also emphasizes five principles: destiny, humility, conscience, truth, and brother's keeper. At RSoL, failure is viewed as an opportunity to learn about oneself, and students are taught to be responsible for their education, actions, and school building.

Mr. Green also spoke about the Rye Youth Council (RYC) and the role that this community organization plays in the schools. RYC advocates visit the District's schools and provide various programs, panels, and events for students and families to participate in.

Lastly, Mr. Green discussed the District's athletic program as another avenue in which to encourage students to develop leadership skills and become people of good character. High

School Principal Patricia Taylor and Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics Robert Castagna have put in place procedures regarding acceptable student conduct and is also introducing service learning opportunities for teens.

Dr. Alvarez explained that the District can now explore ways to provide more consistency around the programs that Mr. Green mentioned. He expressed that the District has a series of effective programs and our goal now is to determine how they can come together more systematically, using the Six Pillars as a framework.

Culture of Caring: Midland School's Approach

Midland School Principal Angela Grille and Assistant Principal Joanna Napolitano provided a presentation detailing Midland's character education program, highlighting just one of the approaches the District uses to promote character education. Dr. Grille first explained that "Culture of Caring" means "taking the knowledge and going beyond the District's Code of Conduct and policies, beyond the curriculum and DASA, and making all of those elements come to life for young children by creating a culture where people truly care for each other." She summarized Midland's approach to character education, R.E.A.C.H., which was established in 2003 through the efforts of the School Excellence Team. The group of teachers and parents researched the Six Pillars and simplified these values into a condensed format that children can more easily understand.

R.E.A.C.H., which is an acronym for Respect, Empathy, Acceptance, Cooperation, and Honesty, serves as the framework of Midland's program. The program involves monthly building-wide themes. Among those already focused on this year are Citizenship, Responsibility, Empathy, Gratitude, Acceptance, and Kindness. The themes serve as the center of monthly Spirit Assemblies, during which the entire Midland family comes together for a celebration of meaningful "WOW moments" acts of kindness, school-wide tributes, and more. Dr. Grille explained that character education at Midland is also incorporated into various content areas including literature, writing, language, environment, reading, and outdoor classroom studies. Students participate in a number of drives, fundraisers, and outreach initiatives that are conducted by parents as ways to support the R.E.A.C.H. principles. Additionally, Midland participates in many character education activities with RSoL students, which has strengthened the positive relationship between the two buildings.

In 2011, Midland received the National Schools of Character Recognition Award for "the warmth and community within the school and the behaviors and values evident in the school."

Policies

The Board discussed in depth revisions and considerations for the following policies: Equal Opportunity, HIV/AIDS, School District Goals and Objectives, Evaluation of Professional Staff, and Evaluation of Instructional Program. Ms. Slack asked for comment from the public on the policies discussed. There were no communications from the public.

COMMUNIATIONS TO/FROM THE BOARD

Board President Laura Slack announced that she received a request and met with residents Jack Zahringer and Maurio Sax regarding a proposal that the City of Rye has approved regarding the local property tax incentives for historical preservation. This is a part of the Historical Preservation Landmark Committee to “Keep Historical Rye, Rye.”

The proposal would included a local property tax incentive for historical preservation on properties built 1904 and before. For those individuals who chose to renovate these properties and keep its historical character rather than demolishing the property, the new assessment would be phased in over a ten year period. Ms. Slack reported that she was advised that there are 104 properties in the City of Rye. Ms. Slack is asking the Board to consider the proposal and determine what concerns and/or questions the Board may have regarding this matter and to communicate with her.

On a motion by Ms. Pasquale, seconded by Ms. Keohane-Glassberg and carried unanimously (7-0) it was voted at 10:35 p.m. to adjourn into Executive Session to review the employment history of current and prospective employees and litigation.

On a motion by Ms. Weber, seconded by Mr. Repetto and carried unanimously (7-0) it was voted at 11: 50 p.m. to 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.