

MINUTES
RYE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Rye Middle School Multipurpose Room
March 11, 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
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
Dr. Ann Edwards, Rye Middle School principal

The meeting was called to order by Laura Slack at 7:08 p.m. on Tuesday March 11, 2014 at Rye Middle School.

On a motion by Mr. Repetto, seconded by Ms. Pasquale and carried unanimously (7 -0) it was voted to move immediately into executive session to review the employment history of current and prospective employees.

On a motion by Ms. Glassberg, seconded by Ms. Belanger and carried unanimously (7 -0) it was voted at 8:50 p.m. to reconvene in public. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Frank Alvarez provided a report to the Board of Education and community, sharing several outstanding highlights that have taken place in the schools over the past week. He congratulated the Rye Middle School Science Olympiad Club for achieving excellent results at the Regional Middle School Science Olympiad Competition held on March 8. In its second year competing, the team earned an impressive 19 medals and an overall second place finish out of 32 schools. Dr. Alvarez also noted that six varsity teams received the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Scholar Athlete Team Award, an honor that requires a number of athletes from each team to earn a 90% or higher average for the first marking period. He congratulated the following teams: Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Ice Hockey, Boys Swimming, Boys Indoor Track, and Girls Indoor Track.

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC ON NON AGENDA ITEMS

The following community member addressed the Board of Education referencing the teachers that have been administratively reassigned and testing irregularity allegations:
Mr. Eric Kamander

Ms. Slack announced that the following items were being removed from the agenda:

Consent Agenda General 6.01

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the January 27, 2014 Minutes as presented.

Consent Agenda General 6.04

Recommended Action:

That the Board adopts the Middle School and High School Math curricula revisions.
Action on this item will be taken after the presentation/discussion of this item on this agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

General

Consent Agenda General 6.02

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the February 11, 2014 Minutes as presented.

Consent Agenda General 6.03

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the February 25, 2014 Minutes as presented.

Consent Agenda General 6.05

Recommended Action:

That the Board adopts the Resolution to establish May 20, 2014 for Budget Vote and Election Procedures. (Attachment # I)

Consent Agenda General 6.06

Recommended Action:

That the Board adopts the Resolution for Establishment of Board of Registration.
(Attachment # II)

Fiscal

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.01

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the Contract for Health Services with the Ardsley Union Free School District for \$2,357.68 for the 2013-14 school year. (Attachment #III)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.02**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the Contract for Health Services with the Katonah-Lewisboro Public Schools for \$5,515.00 for the 2013-14 school year. (Attachment # IV)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.03**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the Contract for Health Services with the Harrison Central School District for \$15,882.60 for the 2013-14 school year. (Attachment # V)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.04**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the RFP Consulting Services Agreement with Audiology and Speech Solutions, PC for the 2013/2014 school year. (Attachment #V I)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.05**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the award of Bid #13-14-008 for District-Wide Security to Security Specialists for the base bid amount of \$479,310. (Attachment #VI I)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.06**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves this budget transfer # 7. (Attachment # VIII)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.07**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves this budget transfer #8. (Attachment # IX)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.08**Recommended Action:**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the Rye City School District recognizes the high costs associated with Special Education and Related Services and agrees to work cooperatively and collaboratively with other local school districts in the Sound Shore Consortium in an effort to reduce such costs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Rye City School District Board of Education agrees to participate in a Sound Shore Consortium RFP for Special Education and Related Services to be issued March 17, 2014. Awarded contracts with vendors will be effective July 1, 2014.

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.09**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the contract with Wainwright House, Inc. in the amount of \$885.00 (Attachment # X)

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.10**Recommended Action:**

That the Board of Education approves the \$18,301 gift from Milton School PTO for an I-Pad cart and increases the general fund budget accordingly.

Consent Agenda Fiscal 7.11**Recommended Action:**

That the Board of Education increases the General Fund budget by \$30,868.21 for driver education program payments.

PROFESSIONAL**Consent Agenda – Personnel 8 .01****Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the Resignation due to Retirement of Angela Grille, from her position as Principal of Midland School, effective at the close of business June 30, 2014,

Consent Agenda – Personnel 8 .02**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the Resignation due to Retirement of Janice Mottarella, from her position as a Teaching Assistant, assigned to Rye School of Leadership, effective July 1, 2014.

Consent Agenda – Personnel 8.03**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the request by Aaron Marsh for a Personal Leave of Absence, from his position as a Mathematics Teacher, assigned to Rye High School, effective September 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015.

Consent Agenda – Personnel 8.04**Recommended Action:**

That the Board approves the request by Traci Tasso for a Child Care Leave of Absence from her position as an Elementary Teacher, assigned to Osborn School, effective September 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015.

(Traci Tasso was previously approved for a Personal Leave of Absence, effective September 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011 and Child Care Leaves of Absence, effective September 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012 and September 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013 after one child's birth and September 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014 after another child's birth.)

Recommendation: That the Board approves the request by Michelle Garofano for a Child Care Leave of Absence from her position as a Special Education Teacher, assigned to Rye Middle School effective on or about her estimated due date of June 2, 2014 – June 30, 2014 and September 1, 2014 through the end of the first semester.

Recommendation: That the Board approves the request by Vanessa Lawson for a Child Care Leave of Absence from her position as an English Teacher, assigned to Rye High School, effective September 1, 2014 to the end of the first semester.

(Vanessa Lawson was previously approved for Child Care Leaves of Absence effective February 15, 2013 – June 30, 2013, September 1, 2013 – January 31, 2014 and February 1, 2014 – June 30, 2014.)

Consent Agenda – Personnel 8.05

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the Amendment of the Child Care Leave of Absence of April Colarusso to be effective February 28, 2014 – June 30, 2014.

(April Colarusso 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 8.06

Recommended Action:

That the Board approves the Two-Year Probationary Appointment Amendment of Robert Villanova as a School Counselor, for which he holds New York State Permanent Certification as a School Counselor, assigned to Rye Middle School, effective September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2015.

(Robert Villanova was previously approved for a Three-Year Probationary Appointment, effective September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2016 at the May 21, 2013 Board of Education Meeting. Robert Villanova has provided us with proof of prior tenure.)

Recommendation: That the Board approves the Two-Year Probationary Appointment Amendment of Toni-Mari Grosso Marano as a Special Education Teacher, for which she holds New York State Initial Certification in Students With Disabilities (Birth-Grade 2), assigned to Midland School, effective February 24, 2014 – February 23, 2016.

(Toni-Marie Grosso Marano was previously approved for a Three-Year Probationary Appointment, effective February 24, 2014 – February 23, 2017 at the February 11, 2014 Board of Education Meeting. Toni-Marie Grosso Marano has provided us with proof of prior tenure.)

Consent Agenda – Personnel 8.07

Recommended Action:

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

EPEW	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>INDEX</u>	<u>13/14 STEP</u>	<u>13/14 RATE</u>
Athletic-SPRING					
SOFTBALL	Asst. to Var/JV Prog	Dosso, Victoria	0.05500	0	3,042
High School Winter Musical					
Plays - Spring	Choreog.	Janos, Leanne	0.03250	0	1,798

Consent Agenda – Personnel 8.08

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:

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

Megan Ollive

Consent Agenda –Special Education 9.01

Recommended Action:

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

Board President Laura Slack announced the Board of Education accepted the retirements of Midland School Principal Angela Grille and Rye School of Leadership Teacher Assistant Janice Mottarella at this meeting. Mrs. Slack extended best wishes and thanks to both individuals, sharing some of their many contributions to the District.

Dr. Grille has served as Midland School Principal for 14 years, and under her leadership the school's award-winning character education program, R.E.A.C.H., was established. Midland was also recognized by the United States Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon Award Winner during Dr. Grille's tenure. Mrs. Slack explained that Dr. Grille has run a school that has made a difference in many students' lives, with a rigorous but comprehensive education program, excellent teaching staff, and family-like atmosphere. Her ability to guide teachers, communicate with parents, and collaborate with community groups has helped Midland flourish.

Mrs. Mottarella has worked at the Rye School of Leadership for 23 years. She has been a valuable asset to the program, helping to manage classrooms, collaborate with faculty, and implement teachers' lessons effectively. As Mrs. Slack noted, Mrs. Mottarella is extremely devoted to the students of the Rye School of Leadership and in her time here, has developed many meaningful and productive relationships with students and their families.

Mrs. Slack also announced the Board of Education approved a gift of \$18,301 from the Milton School PTO for an iPad cart. Mrs. Slack thanked the parents who continue to support the District's students and programs.

PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION

Rye High School Assistant Principal and Math Department Chair Ellen McDonnell provided a presentation on Mathematics Pathways, which was prefaced with information regarding eighth-grade testing. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Dr. Betty Ann Wyks explained that this has been a transition year given the changes associated with the implementation of Common Core. The District has historically administered an eighth-grade mathematics test, taken by all students. With the introduction of Integrated Algebra last year, eighth grade students also took the Integrated Algebra Regents. This year, there is also a Common Core Algebra Regents. Though a State waiver would enable the District to forgo the eighth-grade test, this is not plausible under the District's existing APPR Plan. Eliminating the test would require re-opening the plan and pre- and post-testing students, which could not realistically be done at this point in the school year. Students are not required to take both Regents exams, but are required to take the Common Core Algebra Regents. Whether they also take the Integrated Algebra Regents will ultimately be a decision they make with their families. If both Regents are taken, only the higher of the two scores will be recorded on students' transcripts. The two Regents are given two weeks apart, therefore the results from the Common Core Algebra Regents (June 3) will not have been received prior to the Integrated Algebra Regents (June 20). The eighth-grade math test is scheduled for April 30, May 1, and May 2.

Mrs. McDonnell then described the math trajectories for 2014-15 for each grade level at the High School, reviewing the options that students have regarding math courses they may take. Most Freshmen will take Integrated Geometry. Sophomores will move through different paths based on their ninth-grade math courses, and Juniors will typically take a version of Algebra 2. Seniors will have several options and may co-enroll in multiple math courses.

Teachers recommend which courses they advise their students to take in the following year, and the math department is currently revisiting the manner in which this is done. Dr. Wyks explained that the department is seeking to quantify the information that goes into these recommendations, with the goal of developing a rubric comprised of important elements and data that is used to make a recommendation. The staff has always based recommendations on each individual student, but is working to establish an official system with specific components to be considered, which would be insightful to support a determination.

Parents may override the recommendations, and High School Principal Patricia Taylor noted that the High School is very open to making change from recommendations based on students' interests in particular courses. Parents are encouraged to review the recommendations and discuss them with guidance counselors or classroom teachers.

A detailed discussion on this topic was held with Dr. Wyks, Mrs. McDonald, members of the Board of Education, Rye High School Principal Patricia Taylor, Rye Middle School Principal Dr. Ann Edwards and community members Mr. Bob Zahm and Ms. Jamie Jensen

ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

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

Consent Agenda General 6.04

Recommended Action:

That the Board adopts the Middle School and High School Math curricula revisions.

PRESENTATION DISCUSSION **CONTINUED**

Superintendent's Recommended 2014-15 Budget

Dr. Alvarez explained that the Administration has put careful thought into developing the Superintendent's Recommended 2014-15 Budget and stressed the importance of retaining the quality programs that the District provides. He outlined several elements within the budget, including the preservation of all current programs, maintenance of the class size policy, partial support for mandated computer-based testing technology, funds to address aging buildings, the addition of four high school teachers, re-implementation of the Writing Mentor Program for all ninth- and tenth-graders, and the addition of a security guard and custodian at the High School due to the increase in building square footage.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Gabriella O'Connor then presented the Superintendent's Recommended 2014-15 Budget, revisiting and further explaining several topics that were addressed during the March 4 meeting.

Tax Cap

Ms. O'Connor reviewed the tax cap calculation, explaining that the 2014-15 tax cap for the Rye City School District is 1.64%.

Prior Cost Saving Measures

The District has made a number of cost saving efficiencies this year, including the implementation of tools such as the WinCap, AESOP, and dmPlanning. Mrs. O'Connor discussed cost sharing opportunities through services such as BOCES, the Consortium for Employee Benefits, and cooperative bidding.

Fund Balance

The presentation included a more detailed look at fund balance, which has declined significantly overall. Mrs. O'Connor discussed the three reserve funds that the District has relied most heavily upon: Tax Certiorari reserves, Employees' Retirement System (ERS) reserves, and Undesignated Fund Balance. All of these have dwindled over the years as unfunded State mandates continue to increase in cost.

Budget Drivers Beyond Local Control

There are a number of budget drivers that are beyond the District's control. Mrs. O'Connor explained that mandated pension costs for ERS and the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) continue to increase in expenditure. TRS expenditures are increasing 9% in 2014-15 from the current school year, while ERS expenditures are increasing 2%. Employee/Retiree Health Care Benefits costs are anticipated to increase by 4.75%.

Enrollment

Enrollment was discussed throughout the presentation. The District's enrollment continues to grow, and the tax cap does not allow for exemptions based on enrollment. At the High School, there will be an increase of 144 students over two years -- posing the need for more teachers.

Superintendent's Recommended Budget: Options

The Superintendent's recommended 2014-15 budget is \$79,470,000, which leaves the District with a shortfall of \$3.84 million. The District is looking at two options: A tax cap compliant budget, or an override. The Board of Education and Administration discussed the details of each:

- Under a tax cap compliant budget, the District would utilize \$2.5-\$2.8 million from reserves, and could collect an estimated \$990,700 by imposing a utility tax*.
- The District could propose an override for an additional \$1.54 million, plus the use of \$2.3 million in reserves.

Utility Tax

Mrs. O'Connor explained the method by which utility tax is collected and provided an estimate of how much revenue this would raise. Based on what the City of Rye collects, the District anticipates an annual utility tax revenue of \$1,200,000. The projected prorated revenue for 2014-15 would be \$990,700.

A budget discussion was held with members of the Board of Education, administration and community members Mr. Bob Zahm, Ms. Alison Kim, and Mr. Jim Culyer regarding the recommended budget, a utility tax, Tax Cap Task Force and the fund balance issue.

Budget conversations will continue at the March 25, 2014 Board of Education Meeting, during which an Open Topics Forum will be held in order to gain input from members of the community.

COMMUNICATIONS TO/FROM THE BOARD

Board of Education Member Karen Belanger announced that she will be seeking re-election as her term ends this year on June 30, 2014.

Board of Education Member Edward Fox announced that he will not run for re-election as his term ends this year on June 30, 2014.

Board candidate packets are available in the District Offices located at 411 Theodore Fremd Avenue, Suite 100S during school days between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Ms. Pasquale seconded by Ms. Belanger and carried unanimously (7-0) it was voted at 12:10 a.m. to adjourn into Executive Session to continue to review the employment history of current and prospective employees.

On a motion by Mr. Repetto seconded by Ms. Glassberg and carried unanimously (7-0) it was voted at 1:45 a.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.