

MINUTES
ROCKY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
March 26, 2007

Mrs. Thalen called the meeting to order at 7:41 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Geraldine Thalen, President
Joseph Sanseverino, Vice-President
Jane Bonner, Trustee
Michael Matera, Trustee
Margaret Smith, Trustee
Carla L. D'Ambrosio Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools
Sherry J. Alessandro, Asst. Supt. for Human Resources/Administration
Michael W. Ivanoff, Director of Finance and Operations
Patricia Jones, District Clerk

Absent: None

Mrs. Thalen opened the meeting to questions or comments from the community:

- Mrs. Johannesen announced information concerning the Friends of Rita fund raiser being held on Tuesday, April 10, 2007 at Majestic Gardens. Mrs. Johannesen invited anyone interested in obtaining tickets to the benefit dinner party for Rita and her family and/ or seeking information on making donations to same to visit her at her office.
- Ms. Charlene LaCascia thanked Carol Tvelia and Craig Knapp for their efforts in bringing attention to the ongoing problem of motorists driving too fast in the vicinity of the school and local areas where children gather to play. Ms. LaCascia stated that in spite of their efforts, the problem continues to be ongoing. Mrs. Thalen thanked Ms. LaCascia for her report.

There were no further questions or comments at this time. Mrs. Thalen reminded everyone that there would be another opportunity for questions/comments later in the meeting.

Superintendent's Report

RECOGNITION OF ROCKY POINT STUDENTS FOR RAISING MONEY IN SUPPORT OF RITA SANFORD

Dr. D'Ambrosio advised the members of the Board and those community members in attendance at this meeting that she was honored to recognize a special group of students for raising money in support of Rita Sanford, a Rocky Point Middle School student. Dr. D'Ambrosio invited Dr. Centamore, Mr. O'Brien and Ms. Tvelia to acknowledge students from their respective buildings for their fund-raising efforts during the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The following students were recognized: From the Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School: Megan Johannesen, Julieanna Joy and Kerri McHugh; From the Joseph A. Edgar School: Jason Cervello, Matthew Cervello, Claire Johannesen and Kathleen Johannesen; From the Rocky Point Middle School: Maria Guerrisi, Elizabeth Johannesen, Brianna Lent, Kimberly Oliver, Victoria Trapani, and Sarah Vaden. Dr. D'Ambrosio again thanked everyone involved for their efforts on behalf of Rita and the Sanford family. Ms. Bonner invited the parents of the honorees to come forward to take photographs of their children.

Scott O'Brien, Principal, Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School:

- This month, the FJC building hosted the Energy Star Singing Contest. Kindergartners through second graders participated in this contest which highlighted the singing talents of students committed to saving energy and protecting the environment. Second grade student, Corrine Castoldi, has been

named a finalist in the contest and will participate in the final competition at an upcoming Islanders' home game.

- “Boss of My Body” presentations for all classes K-3 from the Parents for Megan’s Law organization will take place on March 28th and March 29th. An evening parent workshop, entitled “Apple of My Eye,” is scheduled for Wednesday, March 28th at 7 PM in the high school auditorium.
- Kindergarten classes will attend a field trip to the Patchogue Theater on March 29th for the presentation of the *Rainbow Fish*.
- Kindergarten registration forms are available on both the district website and the FJC website. Children turning five years of age on or before December 1st, 2007 are eligible for kindergarten. Currently, 226 students have registered for kindergarten classes.
- On Friday, March 30th, famous women (through the eyes of FJC students) will be recognized. Honorees include Dr. D’Ambrosio, Ms. Lori Blend, Dr. Herbert, Office Val and Mrs. Puccio. These women will be recognized by the students for their courage and service to the Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School, Rocky Point Schools, and the Rocky Point Schools community.

Carol Tvelia, Principal, Joseph A. Edgar School:

- Three dozen eggs are in the process of hatching very, very soon. The children of the JAE are anxiously awaiting the birth of several ducks.
- Ms. Tvelia thanked Dr. Centamore for permitting the dress rehearsal performance of the Middle School dramatic production to be presented to current fifth grade students at JAE who will be entering the Middle School in September.

Joseph T. Centamore, Principal, Rocky Point Middle School:

- Dr. Centamore announced that the drama production, *The Enchantment of Beauty and the Beast*, was OUTSTANDING. Dr. Centamore extended his sincere thanks and congratulations to Ms. Donadoni, Ms. Abramovitch, Ms. Nolan and Mr. Goldstein for their dedication and hard work in presenting this second annual Middle School dramatic production.
- During the month of April, two Holocaust awareness events for the seventh and eighth graders will be presented.
- Dr. Centamore wished “Happy Holidays” to all.

William B. Caulfield, Principal, Rocky Point High School:

- Mr. Caulfield offered his congratulations to Nicole Waldbauer on the birth of her son.
- Mr. Caulfield extended his sincere appreciation to all the committee members for making *Challenge Day* such an extraordinary success. Special thanks went to Ms. Linda Sperl for spearheading the committee. In turn, Ms. Sperl thanked Ms. Crossan, Ms. Sullivan, Dr. D’Ambrosio, Mr. Ivanoff, Ms. Campbell, Ms. Connolly and Mr. DiScala.
- Mr. Caulfield invited students Lydia Belanich, Ryan Messina and Alexander Williams to share their impressions of the day with those in attendance at the meeting. Each student related his/her personal response to the program. The students were profoundly affected by the program and voiced their desire to have *Challenge Day* repeated in order that more students could benefit from the program’s messages.
- Continuing, Mr. Caulfield invited two members of the faculty, Ms. Nicole Gabrinowitz and Mr. Tom Rotanz to share their views of *Challenge Day*. Ms. Gabrinowitz described how the placement of participants into small groups helped them to openly share their feelings and to assist them in fostering a genuine caring for each other. Ms. Gabrinowitz stressed that a special bond was formed among those who participated in the program. Mr. Rotanz commented that his participation in the program was “an incredible experience.” Mr. Rotanz was deeply affected by his participation in *Challenge Day* and stated that after twenty-two years of teaching, the program “blew him away.”
- Mr. Caulfield presented Rocky Point Jewelers with a proclamation for the generous donation which helped to make the *Challenge Day* program available to the staff and students of Rocky Point High School. The proclamation was

accepted by Ms. Maria Bongiovanni on behalf of her father, owner of Rocky Point Jewelers.

- Mr. Caulfield invited Dr. D'Ambrosio, also a participant of the program, to share her thoughts on *Challenge Day*. Dr. D'Ambrosio stated that the day represented one of the most memorable and powerful experiences of her thirty-year career in education. Dr. D'Ambrosio stated that she intends to bring back the program – for the kids! She thanked all involved.

AP HONORS PROGRAM – PRESENTATION

Ms. Anja Groth, Director of Instruction, presented a power point program entitled “Report to the Board of Education: Advanced Placement Program.” Ms. Groth’s presentation covered the following topics:

- Charge for 2006-2007
- 2007 AP Report to the Nation
- AP Course Audit
- AP Course Offerings at Rocky Point
- Pre-AP Honors Program and Sequences
- Honors Policy
- AP Examination Data 1996-2006
- AP Commendations
- AP Results for Seniors
- AP Staffing and Professional Development
- Update on 2006-2007 Goals

Following the presentation, Ms. Groth opened the floor to questions.

- Mrs. Thalen asked Ms. Groth for the specific requirements for a student to take AP courses. Mrs. Thalen expressed her concerns that students were signing on to take AP classes and then pulling out or being pulled out mid-year. Mrs. Thalen questioned the difference in the number of students enrolled in AP courses in September compared to the number of students that remained in June.
- Mrs. Thalen expressed her concerns that students were not properly prepared for the rigors of AP coursework and dropped out of the classes resulting in a negative impact.
- Ms. Groth suggested that prospective AP students, and their parents, visit a book store to review the AP coursework and sample AP test booklets prior to signing on for the course. This would enable the student to make a more informed decision. Ms. Groth stated that it was not an intention to set students up for failure and guidance counselors are able to assist students in making a final decision.
- Mrs. Thalen asked if copies of such test preparation booklets were in the school library. Mrs. Thalen suggested that outgoing students might donate gently used booklets to the school library for use by current students. Mrs. Thalen offered to donate the “many test booklets” she has personally accrued through the years.
- Mr. Sanseverino asked Ms. Groth if a student could go from an AP course back to a Regent course. Both Ms. Groth and Dr. D'Ambrosio said yes.
- Mr. Steven Lagnena asked who designed the new AP policy on page 12 of the handout Ms. Groth provided to all those attending the meeting. Mr. Lagnena asked if teachers were involved in the process and if so, was it only AP and Honors courses teachers. Concerning the second portion of the “appeals process,” Mr. Lagnena inquired about any input from the student’s former teacher(s).
- Ms. Dawn Callahan acknowledged that although Ms. Groth’s presentation was basically a high school presentation, “middle school students and their needs should not be put off until later; the middle school piece of the equation should be addressed now.”
- A member of the audience inquired about Math AP courses, specifically, Integrated Math A and B. Mr. Michael Gabriel, Math/ Science/Technology Coordinator addressed the questions presented.
- Mrs. Johannesen asked the following questions:

- ❖ When are middle school students made aware of high school course offerings and whether or not they, the students, are being considered for possible placement in AP/Honors classes?
 - ❖ How is an invitation to participate in these programs extended to a student?
 - ❖ Do the criteria for placement on the Honor Roll in the RPMS meet the same criteria for inclusion in the Honors/AP Programs in the RPHS? Is it the same? Is it aligned? Mrs. Johannesen expressed her concern for this information to be “black and white” for students going from the MS to the HS.
 - ❖ Mrs. Johannesen requested that detailed information pertaining to her questions/concerns be made available as soon as possible.
- Mrs. Diane Burke asked the cost of an AP exam and inquired about the procedure, if any, if a student can not pay.
 - Ms. Groth advised that the cost for an AP exam was \$85.00. Ms. Bonner stated that if a student could not pay for the exam, the District/the BOE would pay.
 - Mr. Anthony Nobre commented that it has been his experience that during the first weeks in September a student will pick too many AP courses without realizing the amount of work each course mandates and the degree of difficulty each course presents. As a result, courses which start out with high numbers of enrollees may end with low numbers.
 - Mrs. Thalen expressed her concern for the burden upon the taxpayers regarding the high number of students enrolled in an AP class in the beginning of the school year and the low number remaining at the end of the school year.

There was no further discussion regarding the AP Honors Program presentation. Mrs. Thalen thanked Ms. Groth for all of her hard work. In turn, Ms. Groth thanked Dr. D’Ambrosio and the coordinators for their contribution to the presentation.

MINUTES

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Minutes of the following Board of Education Meetings be accepted as presented: **Regular Meeting, February 26, 2007, Special Meeting, March 5, 2007, Special Meeting, March 14, 2007, Special Meeting, March 19, 2007.**

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

TREASURER’S REPORTS

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept the Treasurer’s Reports for the month of January 2007 as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITY ACCOUNT TREASURER REPORT

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Jane Bonner, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accepts the Extra Classroom Activity Treasurer Reports for the month of January 2007 as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Upon a motion made by Jane Bonner and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accepts the Financial Reports for the month of January 2007 as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

RESOLUTION FOR HEALTH SERVICES CONTRACT

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education authorizes the Board President to enter into an agreement for health services for the current 2006 – 07 school year with the following district:

South Huntington Union Free School District

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

DONATIONS – WASHINGTON MUTUAL

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approves and accepts the following donations from Washington Mutual:

WaMoola for Schools (FJC) \$336.22
WaMoola for Schools (JAE) \$161.66
WaMoola for Schools (HS) \$201.16

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

AWARDS – BEST BUY TEACH AWARD

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Jane Bonner, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accepts the Best Buy Gift Card Awards in the total amount of \$7,500.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Thalen wished to publicly acknowledge the teachers receiving the award and proceeded to recognize Jennifer Meschi, Susan Wilson and Craig Knapp. Mrs. Thalen expressed her sincere thanks. There was no further discussion.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

LIMITED INCOME DISABILITY EXEMPTION

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept the Limited Income Disability Exemption through 2010 according to the attached income schedule.

Mrs. Thalen announced that this resolution would be removed from the agenda pending further information from the Brookhaven Town Tax Assessor's Office.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON AND VOTE WORKERS FOR BUDGET HEARING/VOTE/ELECTION (BUDGET HEARING MAY 8, 2007/BUDGE VOTE-ELECTION MAY 15, 2007); BOARD OF REGISTRATION; CHIEF INSPECTOR; POLL CLERKS; TELLERS; AND SUBSTITUTE TELLERS AND POLL CLERKS.

Upon a motion made by Jane Bonner and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education appoints the following persons as Chairperson of the Budget Hearing/Budget Vote/Election; Board of Registration; Chief Inspector; Poll Clerks; Tellers and Substitute Tellers and Poll Clerks. The hourly rate for the Board of Registration and vote workers will be \$9.00.

Debra Spina	Substitute Teller/Poll Clerk
Kelly McNeill	Substitute Teller/Poll Clerk
Mary Caccavale	Substitute Teller/Poll Clerk

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

COMMITTEES ON SPECIAL EDUCATION/PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon a recommendation made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education votes to arrange for appropriate services pursuant to the recommendations of Schedule 3-26-07-A and Schedule 3-26-07-B.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

RATIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT AND AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE CONTRACT BY BOARD PRESIDENT ON BEHALF OF BOARD OF EDUCATION

Upon a recommendation made by Michael Matera and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools that the Board of Education hereby ratifies the employment contract between the Board of Education of the Rocky Point Union Free School District and Sherry J. Alessandro, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Administration, for the period July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2009, and hereby authorizes the president of the Board, Geraldine Thalen, to execute the contract on behalf of the Board.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

ADOPTION OF THE 2007-2008 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Upon a recommendation made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Jane Bonner, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education adopt the 2007-2008 school calendar as presented.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Thalen announced that upon the approval of this resolution by the Board of Education, the 2007-2008 school calendar would be available on line on the school district's home page. There was no further discussion.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

PERSONNEL

Upon a recommendation made by Jane Bonner and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accepts the attached Personnel changes.

CHANGE OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING DATE

Upon a recommendation made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education votes to change the April meeting date from April 24, 2007

(as originally approved at the Organizational Meeting of 7/6/06) to April 25, 2007. This action allows the Board to vote on the proposed BOCES administrative budget and to elect members of the BOCES Board.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

ADDITIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Upon a recommendation made by Michael Matera and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education votes to approve an additional Board of Education meeting to be held on April 17, 2007, in order to conduct a budget overview and approve the Rocky Point Union Free School District Budget for the 2007-2008 school year.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Thalen asked if this would be the meeting at which eSchool Data Student Management Services would make a presentation. Dr. D'Ambrosio said yes. Mrs. Thalen explained that eSchool previously made a presentation to the Board and planned to make the same presentation to the community.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

Mrs. Thalen opened the floor to any other questions or comments before the Board moved to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Jamie Skaggs identified himself as a recently appointed permanent substitute teacher and thanked Mrs. Thalen and the members of the Board of Education for appointing him to his position. He expressed his complete satisfaction with his assignment.

Mr. Lagnena offered to assist the Administration in efforts to bring *Challenge Day* back again for the 2007/2008 school year.

There were no other questions or comments.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:50 PM a motion was made by Jane Bonner and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino for the Board of Education to adjourn the meeting.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Jones
District Clerk

