



**RYE NECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
300 HORNIDGE ROAD  
MAMARONECK, NEW YORK 10543  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
JANUARY 17, 2024**

Present: President Rebecca Mansell

Trustee Jason Carmel

Trustee Gloria Golle

Trustee Patty Nashelsky

Trustee Erica Wagner

Trustee Elizabeth Yong

Dr. Eric Lutinski, Superintendent of Schools

Carolyn Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Business

Corinne Ryan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Mary Ellen Chiera, District Clerk

**I. Opening of Meeting**

President Mansell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. President's Report**

President Mansell began her report by advising the community that next year's proposed calendar will be presented to the Board for review at the January 31st planning session and will be adopted at the February 14th Board meeting.

With regard to Rye Neck's strategic planning initiative, President Mansell advised that Judith Wilson introduced the team to the idea of schools as learning organizations. She stated that Rye Neck is dedicated to being a school district that learns and the strategic plan will detail ways in which the community will come together to support students and teachers as they identify and develop their talents, interests and skills.

**III. Superintendent's Report - State of Our Schools**

Dr. Lutinski began his report by acknowledging that our small district fosters a tight community feeling, and our special identity comes from the Rye Neck School District itself. There is strong and active community support from our various parent organizations, and keeping them and our parent community informed about the schools requires consistent attention to our communication procedures. Results from the November survey regarding the replacement of our website shows that push-out communications are preferred.

Dr. Lutinski stated that student service is the driving principle behind schools, and our curricular and social responsibilities can be measured quantitatively and qualitatively which is best done individually since students have differentiated abilities, needs, and motivations. He stated that the core of the District's work is academics. The elementary Data Teams meet every 6-8 weeks to look at student performance; routine Instructional Support Team meetings focus on all areas of development; grade teams, Special Services teams and specialists meet regularly to collaboratively plan instruction; and team leaders meet weekly with the principals.

He spoke about the curriculum in Daniel Warren and Bellows, and stated that the total number of students in need of AIS for both Math and ELA has decreased over the past two years. This is also true for the Middle School.

With regard to the Middle School, Dr. Lutinski advised that even though it shares its building and some of its staff with the High School, it maintains the qualities of a middle school with grade level teams who know the students well. He then highlighted some of its curriculum.

With regard to the High School, he stated that courses are credit-bearing, adding more gravity to attendance and grade point average. In addition, the IST and Data Teams review numbers and individual student progress, and we track participation in Regents and AP courses, scores, scholars programs, and college credit programs.

Next, Dr. Lutinski spoke about extracurricular activities, which often allow more student choice, opportunities for self-directed engagement, and interaction with peers. The PTSA is currently funding 16 clubs at Daniel Warren and 10 clubs at Bellows, in addition to the academic enrichment programs available at Bellows. The Middle School runs about a dozen clubs with annual changes based on attendance and new student ideas. High School students participate in 27 clubs and a number of curricular contests and are encouraged to participate in outside programs. Two of the largest extracurricular programs are the performing arts and athletics. About 156 students at Bellows and 152 at the middle school participate in extracurricular music. High School musicians meet as classes during the school day, so they are usually smaller. Theater products typically attract a broad range of students with almost 100 in the middle school and almost 200 in the high school shows. In addition, we currently have over 60% of our students participating in athletics, and we offer many teams for a district of our size. We are very competitive with most teams qualifying for postseason play and numerous awards.

With regard to mental health, Dr. Lutinski noted that it is universally recognized that there is an increase in student anxiety and related mental health symptoms. He advised that the District is working with consultants from Effective School Solutions (ESS) to refine and implement a district-wide screening tool and codify a district structure for our ISTs. In addition to providing parent workshops, ESS has allowed for the retention in-district of multiple fragile learners and at-risk students so far this school year.

Dr. Lutinski stated that staff development is a critical element of teachers' work, and many of the teachers and support staff are currently in programs earning new degrees and certifications, as well as participating in outside and in-house professional development opportunities.

Next, Dr. Lutinski stated that we have been completing and planning improvements for our buildings and grounds, and the Facilities Planning Advisory Team has examined the Building Condition Survey, building by building, as presented by the architect in September in order to make recommendations to the Board. Much of the early items to be recommended are basic, necessary infrastructure improvements, but they also discussed topics such as field renovations, air conditioning, and security. Regarding school safety, this year we have already completed numerous improvements, including procedural and training improvements, across the district. Additionally, we have implemented new tech security measures.

Dr. Lutinski advised that Rye Neck's Strategic Plan is proceeding well and he expects to have the finalized goals in his February 5th Superintendent's message, and will keep the community updated through the website, messaging and future Board meetings.

Finally, Dr. Lutinski stated that it's budget season and there is a full budget calendar on the website. In addition, the District will use all of its communication tools to make sure the community knows the key dates in advance. He hopes that everyone will participate in this important activity.

#### **IV. Curriculum Presentation - Seal of Civic Readiness**

Social Studies Department Chair Tom Graziano explained to the community the NYS Civic Readiness Initiative and how Rye Neck Middle/High School is preparing its students for the increased and necessary emphasis on civic readiness. He explained that the domains of civic readiness - civic knowledge, civic skills and actions, civic mindsets, and civic experiences - are addressed in the classroom and through certain extracurricular activities.

Next, Mr. Graziano explained the criteria for earning the Seal of Civic Readiness. A student must complete all the requirements for a New York State local or Regents diploma and earn a total of six points with at least two in Civic Knowledge and two in Civic Participation. Students may also earn points by completing a middle school or high school Capstone project. He further explained that in November 2023 the Blue Ribbon Commission made recommendations concerning graduation requirements which include the option to add one civic seal to diplomas.

Finally, Mr. Graziano discussed how Rye Neck is promoting critical thinking and citizenship, he explained the Capstone project, and the future changes the District is currently working on for next year including evaluating and retooling research methodology.

#### **V. Approval of Consent Agenda**

Upon Motion duly made by Trustee Golle and seconded by Trustee Wagner, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approves the following consent agenda:

1. Approval of the Minutes of the January 3, 2024 Board of Education Planning Session

2. Approval of Personnel Appointments, Leaves and Resignation
3. Approval of Ratification of Teachers' Association (Assistants/Aides/Monitors Unit) Memorandum of Agreement
4. Awarding of Bid for HVAC and Boiler Services
5. Authorization to Transfer Remaining 2018 Capital Bond Funds to 2022 Capital Reserve Fund.
6. Approval of Change to List of Impartial Hearing Officers
7. Approval of Sale of Equipment
8. Approval of CSE Recommendations
9. Approval of Homebound Instruction
10. Approval of Budget Transfers
11. Approval of Financial Reports

**AYES: All Present**

**NAYES: None**

**VI. Financial Reports for Information**

The Board was presented with the Warrant Schedule - All Funds for information Purposes.

**VII. Communications to the Board**

President Mansell reported that the Board has received no new communications since the last meeting.

**XIII. Citizens' Privilege of the Floor**

There were no communications made by the public.

**IX. Reports - Community School Groups**

**Student Senate - Dylan Schneider**

Student Senate President Dylan Schneider reported that High School students will be taking midterm exams next week. Clubs did not meet in January due to midterm exams. They will start up again after exams are complete. He stated that parking changes are taking place in the gravel lot to address safety concerns. There will be a security person in the lot at dismissal directing traffic and keeping cars from exiting until all students are gone. In addition, QR codes will be posted throughout the school for students to anonymously bring any concerns to the attention of the Senate, and the Senate will be using the monitors in the High School to post upcoming events and activities.

**PTSA - Ruth Homberg**

PTSA President Ruth Homberg reported that the General Membership meeting scheduled for last night was rescheduled for January 23rd due to the snow. Last week, the Rye Y was in gym classes giving Daniel Warren students lessons on cardio kickboxing, and the Middle School Activity Night will take place this Friday, January 19th.

With regard to fundraising, Mrs. Homberg stated that the PTSA held the F.E. Bellows Book Fair in December, which raised over \$2,000. After School Clubs at Daniel Warren

and F.E. Bellows started last week with 16 clubs and 191 students enrolled at Daniel Warren and 10 clubs with 116 students enrolled at F.E. Bellows. In addition, they are working on the winter social fundraiser which will take place at the Mamaroneck Beach and Yacht Club on February 10th, as well as planning for the Panther Party and Fun Run scheduled for April 27th.

The STEAM Committee has been busy at all of the schools. Bash the Trash visited Daniel Warren and performed with homemade instruments and showed students how to transform household items into treasures, and Board Trustee Dr. Jason Carmel spoke to the AP Psychology and Physiology classes about neuroscience. In addition, 6th grade students will have a virtual visit from The Cleveland Museum regarding Egyptian mummification, and they are hoping to have Susan Schulten talk with AP History students about “Maps in American History”.

The Rye Neck International Committee will be hosting a variety of activities in January which include the Walking Club exploring Edith Read Wildlife Sanctuary; a Culture Club outing to see *Moulin Rouge* on Broadway; the Cooking Club will have an online session with Galette de Rois (King Cake); the Book Club will be reading *The Dictionary of the Lost Words*; and the Origami Club will be brainstorming Panther Party workshops.

Finally, Mrs. Homberg informed the community that the PTSA has worked with the Booster Club and Mary Lanza to streamline email correspondence, and they have split up the days on which each club will send emails in an effort to avoid inundating the community with information.

#### **Booster Club - Jocelyn Donat**

Booster Club representative Nikki Barker gave an update on the Harlem Wizards event scheduled for Friday night, January 26th. The Wizards will take on Rye Neck staff in basketball. The Wizards performed two short assemblies at Daniel Warren and F.E. Bellows to promote the game, and there have been over 600 tickets sold so far. Due to the bad weather at Homecoming, the Booster Club will sell the excess spiritwear inventory at the event.

Next, Mrs. Barker stated that Winter sport Senior Day celebrations have started. They provided lawn signs to every senior on a sports team and theater participants in the Fall play and Spring musical.

Finally, the Booster Club has begun planning for the Spring season which includes the March Madness gathering on March 22nd, Track Palooza in April, Spring Sports Senior Days and graduation signs, Spring musical support, End-of-Year barbeque, and Sports Award Ceremony.

#### **RNTA - Melissa Silva**

RNTA representative Melissa Silva reported that Kindergarten parent/teacher conferences are taking place now; the Noon Pursuits enrichment lunch program begins at Daniel Warren; students at Daniel Warren were treated to a Bash the Trash assembly; the Harlem Wizards gave a preview performance at both Daniel Warren and F.E. Bellows; 4th and 5th grade students were able to participate in a Meet the Scientists night; midterm

reviews have been underway; and Middle and High School teachers participated in an ENL seminar.

Looking ahead, the Bellows Loves Writing Workshop will take place on Valentine's Day; midterm exams will be given next week; and the Middle School will be conducting the Computer Based Testing simulation with students in preparation for State tests.

In addition, the Middle School student senate organized a 1980's Spirit Day last Friday; the Middle School Activity Night is scheduled for January 19th; rehearsals for the High School musical are underway; and tomorrow evening, the Science Department and STEM Board will be hosting interested F.E. Bellows and Daniel Warren students for the first ever Experiment Night in the Collaborative Science Center.

Finally, Mrs. Silva stated that seniors who applied to college on Early Action/Early Decision are beginning to hear back from schools.

**X. Reports - Board of Education**

**Office Hours**

Trustee Golle and Trustee Carmel will represent the Board at the next Office Hours, January 31, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. Please call the District Clerk by Friday, January 26 to make an appointment and state your topic of interest.

**West/Put Report**

Trustee Wagner reported that the first West/Put meeting of the year is scheduled for January 26th, and the focus will be on board communications.

**Audit Committee**

Trustee Yong reported that they met on October 5th regarding the internal audit special project on penetration testing of the District's IT systems by Thrive, which is expected to begin later this month. The next Audit Committee meeting is scheduled for January 25th. Claims Auditor Steve Robbins will be presenting his annual report, and discussion will be had regarding the District's long range financial planning and internal audit special projects.

**Policy Committee**

Trustee Nashelsky reported that the Board will be adopting nine amended policies later in the meeting. In addition, she explained that a policy regarding workplace violence prevention will be discussed at the January 24th Policy Committee meeting, with a first reading at the January 31st Planning Session, and adoption at the February 14th regular meeting. The Department of Labor requires that the policy be adopted by February 3rd.

**XI. New Business**

**Adoption of Policy 0110 - Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy**

**WHEREAS**, revisions to Policy 0110 were presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at a public meeting for discussion and a first reading at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy 0110 has been presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at this current public meeting for discussion and a second

reading.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Yong and seconded by Trustee Carmel, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of amended Policy 0110.

**AYES: All Present**  
**NAYES: None**

**Adoption of Policy 2410 - Formulation, Adoption and Amendment of Policies**

**WHEREAS**, revisions to Policy 2410 were presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at a public meeting for discussion and a first reading at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy 2410 has been presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at this current public meeting for discussion and a second reading.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Nashelsky and seconded by Trustee Carmel, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of amended Policy 2410.

**AYES: All Present**  
**NAYES: None**

**Adoption of Policy 4321 - Programs for Students with Disabilities Under the IDEA and New York's Education Law Article 89**

**WHEREAS**, revisions to Policy 4321 were presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at a public meeting for discussion and a first reading at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy 4321 has been presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at this current public meeting for discussion and a second reading.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Golle and seconded by Trustee Yong, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of amended Policy 4321.

**AYES: All Present**  
**NAYES: None**

**Adoption of Policy 4321.12- Use of Time Out and Physical Restraint**

**WHEREAS**, revisions to Policy 4321.12 were presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at a public meeting for discussion and a first reading at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy 4321.12 has been presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at this current public meeting for discussion and a second reading.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Wagner and seconded by Trustee Nashelsky, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of amended Policy 4321.12.

**AYES:**           **All Present**

**NAYES:**       **None**

**Adoption of Policy 4772 - Graduation Ceremonies**

**WHEREAS**, revisions to Policy 4772 were presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at a public meeting for discussion and a first reading at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy 4772 has been presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at this current public meeting for discussion and a second reading.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Carmel and seconded by Trustee Wagner, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of amended Policy 4772.

**AYES:**           **All Present**

**NAYES:**       **None**

**Adoption of Policy 5300.55 - Corporal Punishment and Emergency Interventions**

**WHEREAS**, revisions to Policy 5300.55 were presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at a public meeting for discussion and a first reading at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy 5300.55 has been presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at this current public meeting for discussion and a second reading.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Nashelsky and seconded by Trustee Yong, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of amended Policy 5300.55.

**AYES:**           **All Present**

**NAYES:**       **None**



**Adoption of Policy 5605 - Voter Registration**

**WHEREAS**, revisions to Policy 5605 were presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at a public meeting for discussion and a first reading at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy 5605 has been presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at this current public meeting for discussion and a second reading.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Carmel and seconded by Trustee Nashelsky, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of amended Policy 5605.

**AYES: All Present**

**NAYES: None**

**Adoption of Policy 6240-R - Investments Regulation**

**WHEREAS**, revisions to Policy 6240-R were presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at a public meeting for discussion and a first reading at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy 6240-R has been presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at this current public meeting for discussion and a second reading.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Carmel and seconded by Trustee Wagner, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of amended Policy 6240-R.

**AYES: All Present**

**NAYES: None**

**Adoption of Policy 6645 - Fixed and Right to Use Assets**

**WHEREAS**, revisions to Policy 6645 were presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at a public meeting for discussion and a first reading at the December 20, 2023 Board Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy 6645 has been presented to the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District at this current public meeting for discussion and a second reading.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Golle and seconded by Trustee Yong, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of amended Policy 6645.

**AYES: All Present**

**NAYES: None**

**XII. Public Comments Concerning Above**

There were no comments made by the public.

**XIII. Executive Session**

Upon Motion duly made by Trustee Wagner and seconded by Trustee Nashelsky, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby agrees to move into executive session to discuss a particular person.

**AYES: All Present**

**NAYES: None**

**XIV. Adjournment of Executive Session, Reopening of Public Meeting and Adjournment of Public Meeting**

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Nashelsky and seconded by Trustee Wagner, it was

**RESOLVED**, that the executive session be adjourned and the Public Meeting be reopened; and it was

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that there being no further business before the Board and upon motion duly made by Trustee Wagner and seconded by Trustee Golle, it was

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education Meeting of January 17, 2024 be adjourned.

**AYES: All Present**

**NAYES: None**

President Mansell adjourned the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mary Ellen Chiera  
District Clerk