



**RYE NECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
300 HORNIDGE ROAD
MAMARONECK, NEW YORK 10543
BOARD OF EDUCATION PLANNING SESSION
MARCH 5, 2025**

Present: President Erica Wagner
Trustee Nikki Barker
Trustee Jason Carmel
Trustee Halli Gatenio
Trustee Gloria Golle
Trustee Elizabeth Yong
Dr. Eric Lutinski, Superintendent of Schools
Carolyn Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Corrine Ryan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Mary Ellen Chiera, District Clerk

I. Opening of Meeting

President Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approves the Minutes of the February 12, 2025 Board of Education Meeting.

AYES: All Present
NAYES: None

Upon Motion duly made by Trustee Hatenio and seconded by Trustee Yong, it was

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approves the Minutes of the February 25, 2025 Special Meeting of the Board of Education.

AYES: All Present
NAYES: None

III. Discussion

Governor's Cell Phone Proposal Update

Dr. Lutinski informed the Board that part of Governor Hochul's proposed budget includes a plan to restrict cell phone use in New York's public schools. It includes "internet enabled devices" such as cell phones and smart watches, but it excludes school provided devices. If it passes, the plan will take effect in September of 2025 and encompass the whole instructional day and all areas of the campus.

He then reviewed the plan's requirements which include schools having to provide ways for students and families to contact each other, and schools having to provide a place to store the phones. There are exceptions listed in the plan including cell phone use if authorized by a teacher or the school for educational purposes, for a medical reason, for translation, in an emergency, or as part of an IEP or 504. He stated that these rules are consistent with Rye Neck's policy 5695 for grades K-8 where devices are not allowed during the school day.

Dr. Lutinski advised the Board that if passed, the law would require changes to the High School's procedures. The District, in conjunction with the High School faculty and administrators, will have to create a plan that will both comply with the law and be effective for daily use. Student input will be an important part of the process. A High School student survey was recently given when the District was considering whether or not to ban cell phones before the Governor's plan came out. In addition, Mrs. Folchetti has begun gathering opinions from building stakeholders to work on a draft set of rules.

Anonymous Alert System Update: Summary of Products, Policy, and Practice Being Researched

Dr. Lutinski advised the Board that since the idea of an anonymous reporting system came up at the last Planning Session, he has been researching the possible introduction of such a system at Rye Neck. These type of systems are built to facilitate reporting threats to the school, students who might harm themselves, or bullying. They feature an app as the vehicle for reporting to the school. He has gathered names of 13 different systems and has begun collecting comparative information on each. There is one leader at the moment that is regional, has no cost, and provides training. He has gotten good reference feedback.

He stated that at next week's administrators' meeting they will discuss the real application of the process and how it would be integrated into the safety plan. He will then contact the service with further questions.

Dr. Lutinski then explained how this might fit into Rye Neck's safety process. There would be annual student training on when and how to use it; staff training on how to use it; communication with parents; placement on the website and in the safety plans. He will add information to his Board updates as it comes.

2025-26 District Calendar: RNTA Vote Results & Strategic Plan Early Release Dates

Mrs. Ryan explained that the calendar is approved in March because we wait for the BOCES approved calendar to come out so our vacations can align with theirs since some of our students attend their programs and the staff often attends their professional

development classes. However, she stated that going forward we can release a draft of the calendar earlier in the year.

In addition, Mrs. Ryan reported that the RNTA agreed to come back to school for 3 superintendent's days in August and she put 6 days in for Early Release days for purposes of professional development for the Strategic Plan. The Rye YMCA will be available again next year to provide supervision for students who need it.

The Board will approve the calendar at its March 19th regular meeting.

Budget Update

Mrs. Mahar advised that the business office is still reviewing specific budget lines in the draft 2025-26 budget. However, she still anticipates a tax cap compliant budget. She will provide the Board with updated documents next week.

TAC Update

Trustee Barker reported that 10 community members showed up for last night's VMC community forum and gave a recap of her remarks.

Mrs. Lanza then went over her presentation with the Board. She stated that she was very clear in explaining that the District would not be using biometrics and facial recognition technology. We are only using analytics, which is a technology that uses algorithms to analyze video footage to detect and understand what's happening in the video. It helps the platform learn the environment to detect threats. She reviewed the 29 questions received from 11 community members who took the survey, and she reviewed Rye Neck's needs which are based on recommendations from the security company, user feedback and requests and the status of the current system. We would like an expandable system that can be accessed on any device, including mobile devices. In addition, it should be able to receive mobile alerts and have a search function.

Next, she reviewed the process and priority features, and stated that Mark Garbett from Avigilon explained the scope of the AI that would be used with this system. He advised that it is very narrow - it will identify if the subject is a person or a vehicle and breaks it down further. He reiterated that the system will not have facial recognition, but it does perform an appearance search based on what a person is wearing (i.e., a red shirt).

With regard to cybersecurity, Mr. Garbett explained that Avigilon has a lot of protections in place to protect data. The information collected by the system will not be going outside of the District, and can be erased as frequently as the District determines. In addition, there is a lot the system can do to secure privacy (i.e. blurring out sections of a video). Additionally, Rye Neck's data will not be used to train Avigilon's larger model. It solely uses the data to learn Rye Neck's environment (i.e., traffic patterns, hallway occupancy, normal gathering times), which will allow the District to set alert rules to notify District staff when a change to the environment occurs (i.e., a fight in the hallway, a large gathering of cars or people during a normally quiet time, a student climbing a fence or down by the pond).

Mrs. Lanza advised that she will compile a list of follow up questions for Avigilon

Policy Committee Update

Trustee Yong reported that the Committee met on February 25th and is recommending the following policies for a first read at the March 19th Board Meeting:

Policy 0111 & 0111-E - Sexual Harassment Grievances Under Title IX & Exhibit
Policy 1120-R - School District Records Regulation
Policy 8113 - Extreme Heat Condition Days

IV. Adjournment

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

RESOLVED, that there being no further business before the Board, the Board of Education Planning Session of March 5, 2025 be adjourned.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

President Wagner adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Chiera
District Clerk