

RyeNeck Schools

**RYE NECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
300 HORNIDGE ROAD
MAMARONECK, NEW YORK 10543
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
MARCH 19, 2025**

Present: President Erica Wagner

DRAFT

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

Mary Ellen Chiera, District Clerk

I. Executive Session

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

RESOLVED, that the executive session be adjourned and the Public Meeting be opened.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

II. Second Budget Presentation

Dr. Lutinski and Mrs. Mahar presented the 2025-2026 budget. Dr. Lutinski reviewed the dates for future budget hearings which are April 22nd and May 7th, with the Budget Vote and Trustee Election scheduled for May 20th from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the MS/HS Community Room. He stated that the budget goals are: a tax cap compliant budget for the 14th year in a row; one that is committed to favorable class sizes and that maximizes efficiencies in scheduling and personnel; upholds and enhances the District's safety and security measures; offers extracurricular opportunities that support a comprehensive educational program; and continues the breadth and depth of cor course offerings. He advised that the draft budget for the 2025-26 school year totals \$52,548,411, which reflects a 2.37% tax levy increase, and a 2.78% spending increase over 2024-25 totaling \$1,421,188. In addition, it will continue to support the District's Strategic Plan by maintaining a \$30,000 budget line to support additional professional development opportunities for staff.

Dr. Lutinski then reviewed the projected enrollment for 2025-2026 which shows a slight decrease from this school year, mainly due to the fact that this year's graduating class is very large in comparison to the other grades, the flat housing market and low birth rates.

Next, Mrs. Mahar reviewed the draft revenues, the bulk of which come from property tax, estimated State aid, and Westchester County sales tax. Other sources of revenue are the appropriated fund balance, transfers in from reserve funds and interest on deposits. She then reviewed the draft tax cap calculation, explained the 10 year look at how the tax cap levy has moved, and reviewed the estimated tax rate changes for Rye Town (-0.08%) and Rye Cit (+2.30%).

She then reviewed the State Aid estimates for 2025-26, the largest category being Foundation Aid, and stated that BOCES aid, transportation aid, and high/private excess cost aid are driven by how much money the district spends. The estimated increase in State Aid is 2.18%.

Mrs. Mahar then stated that the district pursues and obtains a number of state and federal grants each year. They are IDEA grants and Title grants. The total amount of grant funding planned to be used for the 2024-25 school year totals \$483,699.

In addition, Mrs. Mahar reviewed the proposed expenses, the bulk of which are salaries (\$25,730,079), benefits (\$13,041,143) and regular school instruction and ENL (\$14,172,949). Some of the other expenses include special education (\$5,865,474) which fluctuates based on the needs of students; cleaning/repair, maintenance and storeroom (\$2,511,936); counseling, health services, psychology and social work (\$2,207,444); and co-curricular and interscholastic athletics (\$1,723,281). The total proposed expenses total \$52,548,411 which represents a 2.92% increase over this year. Factors that are affecting the budget are: active and Medicare health insurance rates are increasing by a composite rate of 8.95%; an increase to the education software, services and supplies budget of \$136,000, partially offset by a \$70,000 reclassification to security; employer retirement system contributions are increasing for ERS and are decreasing for TRS; a decrease in staffing by 1.0 FTE; and the special education outside placements and transportation costs fluctuate based on placements and routes, and transportation assumes an estimated 2.5% CPI. The District does recognize savings as a result of combining certain bus routes with Mamaroneck. In addition, there is a transfer to capital in the amount of \$350,000 for capital improvements, renovations and upgrades to the high school entrance and electrical system.

Dr. Lutinski then reported on the security camera Video Management System which will have an estimated one-time cost of \$155,000 for implementation of the system to provide an analytic overlay on the existing security cameras. There will then be an estimated \$8,674 annual recurring cost for related software licensing.

Finally, Mrs. Mahar stated that the factors that influence the tax rate change are changes in the budget, changes in equalization and changes in assessments, and reviewed the effects of equalization and assessment on the 2025-26 tax rate change.

III. Opening of Meeting

President Wagner called the meeting to order at 7:27 p.m.

IV. President's Report

President Wagner began by reporting that the superintendent search is in full swing. The Board has spent the past few weeks interviewing outstanding candidates who will build on Rye Neck's strong foundation, deep rooted traditions, and desire to take our district to the next level. They have been unanimous in the candidate evaluations, enjoyed a strong spirit of cooperation, and she reported that the search process is going very well. She is hopeful to share a more specific update in the coming month.

Next, President Wagner stated that Spring brings the opportunity to learn more about the tax cap compliant budget that Mrs. Mahar thoughtfully presented this evening, as well as look ahead to May 20th when the community will have an opportunity to approve the budget and elect two members to the Board of Education. She advised that nomination petitions are due April 21st, and it is hoped that local residents will consider running. The Board sets the district's goals to reflect the community's values and needs.

In addition, Spring encourages us to walk the athletic facilities and see kids running track, playing lacrosse, baseball, softball and tennis. March invited the celebration of the enormously successful *Grease* production put on by Mrs. Feinman and her team. Spring also welcomes the annual science fairs where learners big and small test their hypotheses and see what happens. If we had to create a hypothesis for Spring at Rye Neck, we might suggest that working together and celebrating both our collective and individual efforts will yield higher engagement, happiness and Panther Pride!

V. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Lutinski began by advising that an underlying theme of our budget presentations is the attention Rye Neck pays to individualization. We collectively identify as Panthers and we have all the staples of a school system, like classrooms built for a few dozen students, a bell system for mass movement, and yearbooks that make you a part of the "class of...". However, while we present a responsible, collective, districtwide budget to the community, most of what we do is aimed at serving the needs of individuals.

In terms of reading, writing, and arithmetic, Rye Neck provides academic intervention services based on student need from K to 12, ENL afterschool help, Integrated Co-Taught courses for students with IEPs, advanced coursework beginning at the Middle School and culminating in 24 AP course offerings at the High School. Most of the academic work provides opportunity for student choice in everyday core instruction, in addition to the DW Wonder Studio, Bellows Idea Lab, 19 MS specials and 75 HS electives. The students' creativity is on display on the budget slides, on our walls and on the latest video edition of the High School's Rye Neck News.

Next, Dr. Lutinski stated that Rye Neck believes in extracurricular opportunities attractive to student interest. We have Math Olympiads and Science Expos; our 6th grade has intramurals while 70% of students in grades 7-12 compete at the modified, JV, and varsity level of interscholastic athletics. Beyond the general music class we offer band and string lessons in grades 4 through 8 with performance groups in both the MS and HS. There are over 40 clubs at the MS HS level, supported by PTSA at Bellows.

In addition, by the time the students graduate, they have had the chance to taste the real world through capstone projects and internships, and take dual enrollment courses with

local colleges and universities. The counseling department helps with the monumental transition into adulthood: the graduating class of 2024 last year, only 73% the size of this year's class, got 577 acceptances to 212 different schools.

The students come through a nurturing environment that starts and ends with an involved and caring teaching staff, and in between, an array of social-emotional assistance: Second Step, Kelso, RULER, No Place for Hate, Character Ed, DBT, and ESS, and we're working on creating an even more empathic and self-driven district for them through our Strategic Plan.

Finally, Dr. Lutinski stated that when federal and state governments argue over vocabulary like diversity, equity, and inclusion, they forget that schools are where children make their own friends, that schools are one of the places they learn right from wrong through standards they hold in their hearts; and that schools teach how to think for themselves and solve problems. Rye Neck has a welcoming and affirming environment because we understand the students are all different and all individuals, but our process is to work together and everyone offers their unique contributions to the group. Creating a welcoming and affirming environment is a goal that transcends politics: it speaks to our obligation to put each of our students in the best position to excel as part of an organization. It's also a principle that led to a diverse group of Rye Neck High School students capping off their production of *Grease* with an extraordinary and inclusive, sensory-friendly show on March 9th. That's a wonderful example of how our community has forged a district that values opportunity.

VI. Approval of Consent Agenda

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

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

Approval of the Minutes of the March 5, 2025 Board of Education Planning Session

Approval of the Minutes of the March 6, 2025 Special Board of Education Meeting

Approval of Personnel Appointments, Leaves and Resignations

RESOLVED, effective September 1, 2001, the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District (the "Board of Education") appointed Allison Reynolds to a three year probationary appointment as a Middle School teacher in the Elementary Education tenure area; and

WHEREAS, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and duly enacted resolution of the Board of Education, Ms. Reynolds was granted tenure in the Elementary Education tenure area effective September 1, 2004; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Reynolds holds valid New York State Teacher Certifications in Pre-Kindergarten, Elementary Education, Secondary Social Studies, and Secondary Mathematics; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Reynolds has been assigned and agreed to teach 0.6 classes in the Elementary Education Tenure area and 0.4 classes in the Mathematics tenure area since the start of the 2020-21 school year and each consecutive year thereafter.

RESOLVED that the Board of Education retroactively appoints Allison Reynolds in accordance with § 3012 of the Education Law to a three-year probationary period in the Mathematics tenure area, nunc pro tunc, commencing retroactive to September 1, 2020 and awards her service credit towards the completion of her probationary period in the Mathematics tenure area for her service during the 2020-21 school year and each subsequent school year in which she was assigned to teach at least 0.4 in such tenure area and was otherwise employed on a full time basis; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby retroactively grants Ms. Reynolds tenure, nunc pro tunc, effective September 1, 2023 in the Mathematics tenure area: and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board appoint **Matthew Ramos** to a probationary position as a Cleaner effective 02/17/25 and ending 02/16/26. Civil Service requires a probationary period of a minimum of 12 weeks to a maximum of 52 weeks; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board appoint **Amanda Ottly** to a provisional position as Senior Payroll Clerk, effective 04/28/2025; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board appoint the following certified personnel:

Name	Effective Date	Type	Assignment/Location	Salary/Step
Wendy Reynolds	02/24/2025	Per Diem Substitute	Teacher/District Wide	Per Diem Sub. Rate
Lauren Michetti	03/10/2025	Leave Replacement	Teacher/FEB	Grad. Sub. Pay Rate
Sheryl Jones	03/17/2025	Per Diem Substitute	Teacher/District Wide	Per Diem Sub. Rate
Albert Ciuffetelli	03/24/2025	Leave Replacement	Teacher/DW	Grad. Sub. Pay Rate
Lauren Wolman-Mioli	05/05/2025	Per Diem Substitute	Teacher/District Wide	Per Diem Sub. Rate
Susan Lichtenstein	05/05/2025	Per Diem Substitute	Teacher/District Wide	Per Diem Sub. Rate

and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board appoint staff members to the following positions for the 2024-2025 school year:

Model UN Club Advisors

Shawn Tedrow (effective 09/01/24 - 01/31/25)

Kelly Davey (effective 02/01/25 - 06/30/25)

Costume Manager, MS Musical

Karen Fontecchio

Playbill, MS Musical

Jennifer Dallow

Choreographer, MS Musical

Damiana DiMiceli

Music Director, MS Musical

Kathryn Krull

Assistant to the Director, MS Musical

Kelly Ceci

Director, MS Musical

Caitlin Clarke

Technical Director, MS Musical

Cynthia Feinman

Art Crew Advisor, MS Musical

Jennifer Dallow

and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board appoint the following staff members for 2024-2025 sports:

SEASON	SPORT	LEVEL	ROLE	FIRST	LAST
Spring	Baseball	Modified	Head Coach	Albert	Ciuffetelli
Spring	Coed Track	Varsity	Assistant to Program	David	Golden

and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board rescind the appointment of **Damiana DiMiceli** as the Winter Cheerleading Club Advisor; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board rescind the appointment of **Carl Fazio** as the Head Coach for Modified Baseball.

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Phoebe Burstein** a paid sick leave beginning on March 3, 2025 to on or about April 18, 2025; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Elizabeth Leifert** a paid FMLA leave beginning on March 13, 2025 to March 14, 2025; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Taylor Miller** effective 03/03/2025; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Ernest Ricketts** for the purpose of retirement effective 06/30/2025; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Carl Fazio** for the purpose of retirement effective 06/30/2025; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Fiona Lyons** for the purpose of retirement effective 06/30/2025.

Adoption of Boiler Plate for Policy 5300

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of the amended boiler plate for Policy 5300.

Authorization to Participate in Southern Westchester BOCES Joint Bidding

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Southern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services to allow any officer, board, or agency of a political subdivision or of any district therein, adopting this Resolution to bid jointly in those supplies, commodities, materials, and equipment set forth below.

RESOLVED, that the Rye Neck Union Free School District agrees to participate with other school districts of the Southern Westchester Board of Educational Services, Westchester County, New York adopting this in the joint bidding of:

Bid	Yes	No
Art Supplies	x	
Audio Visual Equipment and Supplies	x	
Bakery Goods	x	
Cafeteria Food and Supplies	x	
Custodial Paper Supplies	x	
Custodial Supplies	x	

Bid	Yes	No
Fine Paper Supplies	x	
Furniture, Storage, Auditorium, and Athletic Equipment	x	
Laser, Ink Jet Toner, & Large Format Printer Ink	x	
Lumber and Building Supplies	x	
School and Office Supplies	x	

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall remain in effect until June 30, 2026; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that it is agreed that the specifications as presented will be used, and that this Board agrees to bid its required amount of said commodities jointly with other participating school districts and Southern Westchester and the Southern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services. The recommendation of the Purchasing Steering Committee will be considered when this Board acts on the purchase of said Commodities; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the invitation to bid will be advertised by BOCES in the Journal News in accordance with the provisions of Section 103 to the General Municipal Law

Authorization to Participate in Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES Joint Bidding

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Putnam Northern Westchester Board of Cooperative Services to allow any officer, board, or agency of a political subdivision or of any district therein, adopting this Resolution to bid jointly in those supplies, commodities, materials, and equipment set forth below.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District agree to participate with other school districts of the Putnam Northern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services, Westchester & Putnam Counties, New York, adopting this in the joint bidding of:

	Please check Yes OR No
	<u>YES</u> <u>NO</u>
Asbestos Abatement and Mold Remediation	X
Asphalt Paving, Resurfacing and Site Work	X
Fence Installation and Repair	X
Table, Chair and Tent Rental	X
Construction Labor Trades:	

Carpentry	X	
Electricity		X
HVAC		X
Plumbing		X
Mason	X	
Welding Supplies		X
Carpentry Supplies	X	
HVAC Supplies	X	
Plumbing Supplies	X	
Construction Electricity Supplies		X
Fine Paper Supplies	X	
Science Hardware and Art Supplies	X	
Printing Services & Science 21 Printing Services	X	

and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall remain in effect until: June 30, 2026; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that it is agreed that the specifications as presented will be used, and that thus BOARD agrees to bid its required amount of said commodities jointly with other participating school districts and Putnam Northern BOCES and the Putnam Northern Westchester Board of Cooperative Services. The recommendation of the Purchasing Steering Committee will be considered when this BOARD acts on the purchase of said Commodities; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the invitation to bid will be advertised by BOCES in the Journal News in accordance with the provisions of Section 103 to the General Municipal Law.

Approval of Tax Certiorari Settlement

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District previously approved a tax certiorari settlement related to AVIBAC Investments, LLC located in the City of Rye at Parcel ID#152-16-1-51-2 on November 13, 2024, and

WHEREAS, the final consent judgement received in February 2025 modified the final tax certiorari settlement.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District rescind the approval of the aforementioned tax certiorari settlement; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District, hereby authorizes the District to execute settlement in accordance with the consent judgment pursuant to §726 of the Real Property Tax Law of the State of New York in the following tax certiorari proceeding:

Petitioner	Municipality	Parcel ID#	Consent Judgment Amount
AVIBAC Investments	City of Rye	152-16-1-51-2	\$25,936.89
TOTAL			\$25,936.89

and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, pursuant to the settlement, the Board of Education authorizes the appropriation of the tax certiorari reserve to increase the 2024-25 budget for \$25,936.89 in order to refund taxes.

Approval of Revised 2025-2026 Budget Development Calendar

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the attached Budget Development Calendar for the May 20, 2025 Budget Vote.

Approval of Additional Route Under Transportation Piggybacking Contract with the Mamaroneck Union Free School District

WHEREAS, on September 18, 2024 the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District consented to and authorized the use and sharing via piggybacking of the Mamaroneck Union Free School District's Home to School Transportation contract to the out-of-district locations to which the Mamaroneck Union Free School District is already providing transportation, pursuant to the terms and conditions.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approve an additional route with Mamaroneck Union Free School District as per the attached Schedule A.

Awarding of Contract for E-RATE Category 1 and Category 2 Services and Supplies/Equipment

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District, as a result of the Request for Proposals dated December 3, 2024 (Category 1) and January 28, 2025 (Category 2), award the contracts for E-Rate services as follows:

Category 1:

- CDW Government LLC for fifteen (15) new hotspots and a year of service service at a cost of \$3,495.00. This amount is eligible for the District's current E-Rate discount of 40%.

Category 2:

- CDW Government LLC for twenty-two (22) batteries for pre-existing uninterruptible power supplies for district servers at a total cost of \$16,450.00. This amount is eligible for the District's current E-Rate refund of 40% of the cost.

Approval of County of Westchester Voting Machine Contract

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approve the contract, dated March 3, 2025, with the County of Westchester for the use of their electronic voting machines and privacy booth at the May 20, 2025 Annual District Meeting and Budget Vote.

Approval of Change to List of Impartial Hearing Officers

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the **deletion** of the following persons from the Rotational Section List of Impartial Hearing Officers from the State Education Department which was adopted by the Board of Education at the July 2, 2024 Annual Reorganization Meeting.

KATIA MEHU
NATASHA PIERRE

Disposal of Equipment, Instructional Materials and Athletic Uniforms

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approve the disposal of equipment, instructional materials and athletic uniforms no longer in use or good working condition, obsolete or outdated, as per Schedule A.

Approval of Updated District Consultant List

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approve the updated District Consultant List, as per the **attached** schedule.

Approval of Athletic Mergers

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approve the following athletic mergers for the 2025-26 school year:

Girls Varsity Ice Hockey with Various Westchester Schools
Boys Varsity and Modified Ice Hockey with Blind Brook, Harrison and Port
Chester
Girls Varsity Swimming with Rye
Boys Varsity Swimming with Rye and Blind Brook
Varsity and Modified Wrestling with Rye

Awarding of Contract for IT Management and Support Services

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District, as a result of the Request for Proposals dated February 3, 2025, appoint Edu Tek, Ltd. as the District's IT Management and Support Services provider effective July 1, 2025.

Approval of Municipal Cooperation Resolution

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District, as a result of the merger of New York Liquid Asset Fund (NYLAF) and New York Cooperative Liquid Assets Securities System (NYCLASS), approve the attached municipal cooperation resolution.

Approval of Homebound Instruction

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District

agree to arrange for homebound instruction as recommended by the Committee on Special Education, as per the **attached** memorandum.

Approval of CSE Recommendations

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District agree to arrange for special education placement as recommended by the Committee on Special Education, Committee on Pre-School Education and Committee Recognition of Disabilities under American Disabilities Act (504), as per the **attached** memorandum.

Approval of Legal Notice of May 20, 2025 Budget Vote and Annual Meeting

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approve the **attached** legal notice of the May 20, 2025 Budget Vote and Annual Meeting for publication in the Journal News.

Approval of Financial Reports

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the Treasurer's Report, Appropriation Status Report, Bank Reconciliation Report, Claims Auditor Report, Extra-Classroom Activity Fund and Revenue Status Report.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

VII. Financial Reports for Information

The Board was presented with the Budget Transfers and Warrant Schedule - All Funds for information purposes.

VIII. Communications to the Board

President Wagner reported that the Board has received 11 communication since the last meeting, 4 regarding technology, 2 regarding Diwali, 4 regarding the Superintendent Search, and 1 regarding the district calendar.

IX. Citizens' Privilege of the Floor

There were no comments made by the public.

X. Reports - Community School Groups

Student Senate - Spencer Elliot

Student Senate President Spencer Elliot reported that this week, the High School students celebrated St. Patrick's Day. The Senate sponsored a Pickleball Tournament last week. 54 students participated, and the PTSA supplied prizes and snacks. Pantherpalooza, the Spring track meet, will take place in a few weeks. The Senate had a meeting tonight at which they worked on new ideas for future events.

PTSA - Ruth Homberg

PTSA President Ruth Homberg began by reporting on activities in the elementary schools. Theatre Club sign ups took place earlier this month. Daniel Warren and F.E. Bellows students will be performing *The Lion King Jr.* WSinter After School Clubs are ongoing and Spring Club sign ups are underway.

At Daniel Warren, students had a virtual author visit with award winning Children's book author, Mac Barnett who was recently appointed The National Ambassador for Young People's Literature by The Library of Congress and the nonprofit Every Child a Reader. Later this month, they will host the Spring Family Fitness Night with the Rye Y. In addition, the Rye Y will be in gym classes teaching the students Cardio Kickboxing during the week of March 24th.

At F.E. Bellows, 4th graders were treated to a theater performance called "Ellis Island: Gateway to a Dream"; 5th graders had the opportunity to see a "pop up" planetarium show in the auditorium explore Mobile Ed's Skydome; and Susan Marks helped organize and fund a virtual visit from author Lynda Mullaly Hunt, who wrote *Fish in a Tree*. The Rye Neck School Foundation has provided a grant to fund a schoolwide reading initiative of the book.

At the Middle School, 7th graders saw a performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by the Theater Troupe, Shakespeare Company of New Jersey, and on March 28th, 8th Graders will have a virtual visit with Holocaust survivor, Judith Altman.

At the High School, the Health and Wellness Committee provided snacks and t-shirts for the Student Senate Pickleball tournament; Shakespeare Company of New Jersey performed "Romeo & Juliet" to 9th graders; and on March 25th, 9th graders will experience a Virtual assembly on Extreme Weather with the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Next, Mrs. Homberg advised that the most recent Heard in Rye Talk was called "Let Grow: Always Helping Kids Isn't Always Helping Them" with Lenore Skenazy. The next Heard in Rye Talk is on March 31st at 7pm with NY Times Bestselling Author Dr. Aliza Pressman on the "5 Principles of Parenting and How to Raise Good Humans".

In addition, the PTSA will be trialing a "Let Grow Play Club" at Daniel Warren. Adult supervisors will take a "Lifeguard Role" and encourage kids to lead and direct their own play and to resolve conflicts and problem-solve on their own. The Club will take place on Fridays after school and will start on April 4th. Parents will be able to sign up on a first come, first serve basis.

The RNIC's most recent meeting was on March 13th. The guest speakers were teachers from Rye Neck's English as a New Language department. They covered topics including: helping younger kids grow confident in English and stay engaged over the summer break; supporting bilingual Middle and High School students with academic language challenges; and easing the transition for newly arrived teens who might feel anxious. The Committee also worked to finalize plans for the International Corner at the Panther Party; the culture club had an outing to a Rangers Hockey game; and next week they'll be doing a Mural and Foodie walk in Larchmont.

Mrs. Homberg reported that the PTSA hosted a district wide sneaker drive in February. Shoes were sent to the Sharing Shelf in Portchester. They partnered with Daniel Warren to help collect lightly used Children's books for the annual 100th day Book Drive and sent the books to the Darien Book Aid.

With regard to fundraising, she stated that Parent's Night out is coming up, and tickets are still available. There will be raffles, silent auctions, lots of 90s music, and online auctions. There will be a Nearly New Sale on the morning of Saturday April 5th at F.E. Bellows, and the Panther Party will take place next month. Students voted on the winning logo. Congratulations to the winning artist Natalie Baio and runner up Abby Andrews who both received Visa Gift Cards.

Booster Club - Ruth Homber

Ruth Homberg reported on behalf of Booster Club President Jennifer Abbey. She stated that tomorrow is the March Madness event at Wellingtons, and the Pantherpalooza is scheduled for April 5th.

Rye Neck School Foundation - Josh Moreau

Mr. Moreau reported that the RNSF held the first annual Polar Plunge on March 1st at the Mamaroneck Beach and Yacht Club. Over 130 community members took the plunge, including Middle School Principal Jason Doerr. They raised over \$17,000 and look forward to putting that money to good use for the District.

The RNSF Board recently approved a new grant requested by LeighAnn Kowalchick at Daniel Warren for new audio/visual equipment for the DW Morning Announcements. It is on the agenda for Board acceptance tonight. The grant, valued at approximately \$2,100 will help upgrade and obtain new equipment used in the production of the daily morning announcement videos and will also be utilized for additional projects and productions at Daniel Warren.

F.E. Bellows is wrapping up its highly successful *One Book, One Bellows* reading program, which the RNSF granted to Susan Marks. Throughout February and March, the entire Bellows community came together to read *A Fish in a Tree*, engaging in daily trivia games, interactive activities, and read-aloud sessions. As a grand finale, author Lynda Mullaly Hunt will join FEB virtually on Monday afternoon to discuss the book with students.

On March 13th, the High School Programming Club held its "Binary Bingo" event, which the RNSF granted to HS senior Zachary Harrison. The RNSF would love to fund student-led initiatives like this in the future, so please have your kids submit applications if they have any new and exciting ideas.

Finally, the RNSF is preparing for its next event, a spring fundraiser, which will be held the last weekend in May. Please stay tuned for more information about that on our website and in emails.

XI. Reports - Board of Education

Office Hours

President Wagner and Trustee Gatenio will represent the Board at the next Office Hours, April 2, 2025. Please email or call the District Clerk by Friday, March 28th to make an appointment and state your topic of interest.

West/Put Report

Trustee Barker reported that West/Put held a meeting regarding state aid and long range financial planning on March 14th. Discussion was had regarding state aid and what changes are in the works. Foundation Aid (the primary source of aid for schools) has lots of inter-connected pieces that make it hard to predict a district's aid, as any piece of the formula will change the outcome. It was stated that the Rockefeller Institute studied how Foundation Aid works, and the Governor has accepted a few of their recommended changes, and the legislative one-house budgets have included additional recommendations.

In addition, discussion was had regarding optimizing long range planning for the district. Planning anything beyond five years is increasingly speculative, so 3-5 years is the optimal time frame to plan for. The use of forecasting models exists to aid in long range planning.

Trustee Barker stated that they also reviewed the resources provided by West Put regarding the new state requirement to add a student member to the School Board which goes into effect in July of this year. The Board and Policy Committee are currently reviewing the mandate and guidelines to decide on best practices for the district.

Facilities Committee

Trustee Gatenio reported that the Facilities Committee has not met this month. However, the District was notified that we have been formally approved for our energy study under NYSERDA's Track I program. The \$110K study which will be performed by Fischer Energy, LAN and Gerard Associates will be fully funded at no out of pocket cost to the District. The findings of the study will be used to plan for future energy improvements, districtwide.

The next meeting will be scheduled in the near future where the committee will receive an updated timeline for this project, as well as findings from the flood risk analysis of the athletic fields at the Middle and high schools.

Technology Advisory Committee

Trustee Barker reported that the Committee held a VMS Community Forum presentation on March 4th. The administration, five members of the Board and a representative from the vendor presented on topics that arose from the request for public questions on the proposed upgrades to the district's video monitoring system. Some members of the TAC submitted additional questions to those submitted by the TAC to the Vendor in January. She stated that the follow up questions are also being considered by the Board and administration as it moves to implement the upgrades.

Trustee Barker explained that an upgrade to our video security system was recommended by our security consultant, and deemed to be of community importance after our programs and priorities forums a few years back. Vendors were vetted during the 2022-2023 school year, and the project was put on hold to put a committee in place to assist the district with the procurement process of technology vendors. The district now has the opportunity to upgrade its system to provide for better mobility and to enhance its alert system. This upgrade is not just about preventing bad actors, but implementing a preventive system. Mobile capability allows security personnel to more easily interact

with the actual physical grounds of the school instead of being tied to a computer and allows for alerts so that we have some assistance in telling us when things are out of the ordinary.

She advised that the upgrade to the VMS is a one time upfront cost that has been included in the security line of the budget, with a portion of the technology budget being moved to this line to help cover the initial upgrade. The ongoing cost is approximately \$8,000 per year. The cost of this system does not increase the overall budget.

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for April 9th.

Policy Committee

Trustee Yong reported that the committee met on February 25th. The reviewed policies from the second installment of NYSSBA's policy update as well as remaining policies from sections 4000 of the comprehensive policy review.

In addition, there were three policies and one exhibit from the second installment. Three of the policies and the exhibit were recommended to the Board for first reading later tonight. Those policies are:

0111 Sexual Harassment Grievances Under Title IX (policy and exhibit). This is a required policy with an optional exhibit. The update is required. Pursuant to a recent court decision vacating the 2024 federal regulations implementing Title IX, schools are now subject to the federal regulations that went into effect in 2020. This policy and exhibit are meant to replace our current policy 0111, regulation 0111-R, and exhibit 0111-E.

1120-R School District Records Regulation is a required regulation with a recommended update. Because the current state retention schedule LGS-1 now covers all types of municipalities, it no longer serves as an appropriate subject matter list, which must be compiled under the Freedom of Information Law. The list will now be maintained by the district.

8113 Extreme Heat Condition Days is a new required policy. This policy meets the requirements of new Education Law §409-n. The district already takes actions at elevated temperatures, but is now required to relocate students from spaces that are too hot, or will be too hot to be occupied, to cooler locations, to early dismissal or remote instruction.

The Committee also discussed one other policy from the installment, 2245 Ex Officio Student Member of the Board which is a required policy with a required update. It was amended to reflect anticipated district practices and will be reviewed at the next policy meeting.

In addition, there were five policies that were removed from section 4000 for further discussions.

The rest of the section was adopted earlier today. They are:

- Policy 4200 Curriculum Management
- Policy 4325 Academic Intervention Services

- Policy 4511 Textbook Selection and Adoption
- Policy 4532 School Volunteers
- Policy 4710 Grading Systems

Amendments were made to these policies to reflect actual district practices and align with state laws. We hope to reach a consensus at the next policy meeting to make a recommendation to the Board at the April planning session.

XII. New Business

Acceptance of Donation for Scholarships

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby accepts the donation of the *Sgt. Andrew P. Smith Memorial Scholarship* which will be awarded annually to a graduating Rye Neck senior beginning with the 2024-2025 school year in accordance with the criteria established; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby accepts the donation of *The Mark DiMaggio Performing Arts Scholarship* which will be awarded annually to a graduating Rye Neck senior beginning with the 2024-2025 school year in accordance with the criteria established.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

Acceptance of Donation to Benefit Rye Neck Theater Program

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 accept a donation in the amount of \$2,785 for the benefit of the Rye Neck theatre program per attached Schedule A.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

Establishment of the Rye Neck Administrators Association

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

RESOLVED, the Rye Neck Administrators Association (“the Association”), has formally affirmed that it has obtained a showing of interest of at least thirty (30%) percent of the employees presently employed on a full-time or interim basis by the Rye Neck Union Free School District (“the District”) in the administrative titles of Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Technology and Communications, Director of Health, Physical Education & Athletics, and the Director of Pupil Personnel Services and that a majority of the employees in such titles have voted affirmatively to request that the District voluntarily recognize the Association as its exclusive bargaining representative for purposes of collective bargaining and all other purposes under the Taylor Law.

WHEREAS, the Association has requested that the bargaining unit consist exclusively of those individuals serving in either a full time or interim capacity in the administrative titles of Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Technology and Communications, Director of Health, Physical Education & Athletics, and the Director of Pupil Personnel Services.

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby grants the request of the Association, and hereby recognizes the Association as the exclusive bargaining agent for the bargaining unit consisting solely of full time and interim positions in the administrative titles of Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Technology and Communications, Director of Health, Physical Education & Athletics, and the Director of Pupil Personnel Services, effective March 19, 2025; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the District Clerk is directed to post a copy of this resolution for a period of no less than five (5) working days in such locations within the District as official notices are normally posted and to publish a copy of this resolution in the local newspaper designated by the District for at least one (1) day

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

Ratification of the Rye Neck Teachers' Association 2025-2029 Memorandum of Agreement

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approve the Memorandum of Agreement between The Rye Neck Teachers' Association and the Rye Neck UFSD dated February 13, 2025 and covering the period July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2029.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

Acceptance of Grants from Rye Neck School Foundation

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby accept the Rye Neck School Foundation Grant to the Rye Neck Schools, as per the attached letter and chart.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

First Reading - Policy 0111 & 0111-E - Sexual Harassment Grievance Under Title IX X Exhibit

This was explained in the Policy Committee update by Trustee Yong.

First Reading - Policy 1120-R - School District Records Regulation

This was explained in the Policy Committee update by Trustee Yong.

First Reading - Policy 8113 - Extreme Heat Condition Days

This was explained in the Policy Committee update by Trustee Yong.

XIII. Public Comments Concerning Above

No comments were made by the public.

XIV. Adjournment

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

RESOLVED, that there being no further business before the Board , that the Board of Education Meeting of March 19, 2025 be adjourned.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

President Wagner adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Chiera
District Clerk