Rye Neck Schools

RYE NECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
300 HORNIDGE ROAD
MAMARONECK, NEW YORK 10543
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
OCTOBER 15, 2025

Present: President Erica Wagner
Trustee Nikki Barker
Trustee Halli Gatenio
Trustee Ruth Homberg
Trustee Alex Rainert
Student Representative Spencer Elliot
Mr. Michael Burke, Superintendent of Schools
Carolyn Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Mary Ellen Chiera, District Clerk

Absent: Trustee Jason Carmel

I. Adjournment of Executive Session, Opening of Public Meeting

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

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

AYES: All Present
NAYES: None

II. Hearing - Safety Presentation

Middle School Principal Jason Doerr advised the Board that there were mandated updates to the District-Wide Safety Plan to comply with Desha's Law which is meant to strengthen cardiac emergency readiness in schools. The updates will also be integrated into the building level plans.

III. Opening of Meeting

President Wagner called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

IV. President's Report

President Wagner began by stating the District's mission plan which became Rye Neck's strategic plan and which summarizes the aims and values of the District. She stated that tonight we will celebrate the three goals of the strategic plan. Each goal has co-chairs and team leaders who work hard to create detailed action plans with measurable milestone indicators. Their work is guiding how the District will develop and support its learners over the next several years as well as inform future decisions that will impact all levels of the District.

V. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Burke began by addressing the arrest of the middle/high school night custodian which happened last week and reinforced that there is nothing more important than keeping our schools safe for families, staff members, and all who use Rye Neck's facilities.

Next, he advised that the third week in October is Digital Citizenship Week. The goal is to specifically reinforce concepts that are part of today's schools, namely digital responsibility, safety and security, and etiquette. He stated that each of the schools will engage in age-appropriate activities.

In addition, next week is also Walk to School Week, sponsored by the PTSA. All students are encouraged to walk to school, in a safe manner. He thanked the local Police Departments, School Crossing Guards, PTSA and our Safe Routes to School group for all their support in helping to keep the students and community safe.

Mr. Burke then stated that the week of October 13th through the 17th is recognized as this year's School Board Recognition Week by the New York State School Boards Association. School boards are volunteers who don't receive compensation, yet they work year-round for students. He thanked Erica, Nikki, Hallie, Ruth, Alex and Jason for their service.

Finally, he advised that we will be having a presentation by students and staff celebrating Phase I of our District Strategic Plan. Rye Neck created a triad of goals to achieve the changes we want for our students, now and in the future. To reach those three goals, an Action Team was created for each. He thanked Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, Ms. Corinne Ryan for her guidance and direction on a fantastic Phase I of the Strategic Plan. We will hear tonight from students and staff regarding what they learned from this process. Phase II will be begin shortly with a meeting with our consultant Ms. Judy Wilson, to collaborate on the most important purpose: the future of the Rye Neck students.

VI. Tenure Candidate

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

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant tenure to **Jennifer Bartlett** in the Teaching Assistant Tenure Area, effective 11/12/2025.

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

VII. Curriculum Presentation - Strategic Plan - A Celebration

Mrs. Ryan began by reviewing the Strategic Plan process, the District's mission, the three goals of the Plan, and the portrait of a learner. Next, she had students from each building present their Goal 1 dream projects. The 2nd grade dream project was Improving Indoor Recess, 5th grade's dream project was Raising Awareness Walkathon, the Middle School dream project was a Middle School Wellness Day, and, in the High School, student

Ashley Hernandez created a Hispanic Coalition. In addition, Forensic teacher Gwen Hoeler presented her goal 3 (creating systems for professional learning) project - Mindfulness Through Ceramics.

Mrs. Ryan advised that the District will be partnering with Consultant Judy Wilson again to create the action plans for the next 18 months.

VIII. Approval of Consent Agenda

Upon Motion duly made by Trustee Rainert and seconded by Trustee Homberg, 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 September 30, 2025 Board of Education Planning Session

Approval of Personnel Appointments and Resignations

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board appoint **Jeannine Teter** to a probationary position as a Secretary to School Principal effective 09/22/2025 and ending 08/17/2026. Civil Service requires a probationary period of a minimum of 12 weeks to a maximum of 52 weeks; and it was

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board appoint **Caroline Leira** to a probationary position as a Senior Office Assistant (Automated Systems) effective 09/22/2025 and ending 11/14/2025. 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, hereby that the Board appoint staff members to the following positions for the 2025-2026 school year:

Library Special Assignment - **Domingo Gonzalez**

Professional Learning Partners
Ivan Martinez
Anne Palombo
Linette Milo
Meegan Lawlor
Lauren D'Alesandro

MS/HS Club Advisors
Art Club, HS - **Jennifer Dallow**
Card Club, HS - **Joseph DePalo**
Crafts and Clay (Old Ceramics) Club, HS - **Alexandra Campana**
English Honor Society, HS - **Kara Slattery**
Environmental Council, HS - **Chelsea Gillespie**
Fields for Kids Club, HS - **Kathleen Regan**
French Club, HS - **Kathleen Regan**
Future Health Professional (HOSA) Club, HS - **Matthew DeBellis**

Global Connections, HS - **Ana Crivorot**
Hispanic Coalition, HS **- Jessica Cuevas**
Human Rights Club, HS - **Chelsea Gillespie**
International Thespian Honor Society, HS - **Cynthia Feinman**
Italian Club, HS - **Rosina Martinelli**
JCK Ambassadors, HS - **Evan Miller and Jessica Cuevas**
Jewish Student Union, HS - **Cynthia Feinman**
Key Club, HS - **Meghan Hyland**
Mock Trial Club, HS - **Shawn Tedrow**
Model UN Club, HS - **Mónica Aparicio**
Mu Alpha Theta, Math Honor Society, HS - **Veronica Faraci**
Muses-Literary Magazine Club, HS - **Regina Grace Mackin**
National Honor Society, HS - **Jessica Calvini**
Newspaper Club, HS - **Jessica Calvini**
Programming Club (formerly AI Club), HS - **Shelley Swick**
Rho Kappa Social Studies Honor Society, HS - **Marcella Sykucki**
Science Honor Society, HS - **Anne Palombo**
Science Olympiad, HS - **Anne Palombo and Gwen Hoeler**
Senior Internship Coordinator, HS - **Kara Slattery**
Spanish Club, HS - **Monica Aparicio**
Sports Stats Club, HS - **Chelsea Gillespie**
STEM Board Club, HS - **Anne Palombo**
Student Athletic Council, HS - **Joan Spedafino**
Student Senate, HS - **Amanda D'Addona**
Student Voices for Change, H - **Amanda D'Addona**
Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) Club, HS - **Susan Hannon**
Students of All Races (SOAR) Club, HS - **Jessica Cuevas**
Tri-M Music Honor Society, HS - **Caitlin Clarke and Jessica Yeung**
UNICEF Youth in Action Club, HS - **Monica Aparicio**
Warm Hearts Club, HS - **Alicia Sokolofsky**
Women in Business Club, HS - **Jennifer Carpiniello**
World Language National Honor Society, HS - **Davide Bianco**
Yearbook Club, HS - **Jennifer Dallow**
Art Club, MS - **Trisha Appel**
Beyond the Book Club, MS - **Angela DeRosso**
Blue Zones Club, MS - **Eugenie Theall**
Board Games and Trivia Club, MS - **Eugenie Theall**
Comic Book Club, MS - **Adam Johnson**
Drama Club, MS - **Caitlin Clarke and Kelly Ceci**
Kindness Ambassadors Club, MS - **Meegan Lawlor and Coleen Sullivan**
Literary Magazine Club, MS - **Catherine Toolan**
No Bake Cooking Club, MS - **Hanan Eldahry**
Pop Culture Club, MS **- Ana Crivorot**
Robotics Club (formerly STEM club), MS- **Linda Costelloe**
Science Fair Moderator, MS - **Kristi Rachiele**
Student Senate, MS - **Kelly Davey**
Writer of the Month Club, MS - **Catherine Toolan**
Written Out Loud Club, MS - **Grace Cassese and Katherine Offner**
Yearbook Club, MS - **Trisha Appel and Catherine Toolan**

FEB Club Advisors
Student Senate - **Joan Spedafino and Janice Tosi**
Continental Math - **Suzanne Losito**
Math Olympiad - **Eleftheria Speros**

and it was

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

SEASON	SPORT	LEVEL	ROLE	FIRST	LAST
Winter	Boys Basketball	Varsity	Head Coach	Michael	Denman
Winter	Boys Basketball	Varsity	Assistant to Program	Kevin	Rafferty
Winter	Boys Basketball	JV	Head Coach	Albert	Ciuffettelli
Winter	Boys Basketball	Modified	Head Coach	Christopher	Mileo
Winter	Girls Basketball	Varsity	Head Coach	Daniel	Linehan
Winter	Girls Basketball	Varsity	Assistant to Program	Robin	Trigoboff
Winter	Girls Basketball	JV	Head Coach	Ashley	Eklund
Winter	Girls Basketball	Modified	Head Coach	Terell	Iconic
Winter	Boys Hockey	Varsity	Head Coach	Rich	Myers
Winter	Boys Hockey	Varsity	Assistant to Program	Jamie	Funigiello
Winter	Boys Hockey	Modified	Head Coach	Rob	Iannuzzo
Winter	Boys Hockey	Modified	Head Coach	Andres	DeFrancis
Winter	Girls Hockey	Varsity	Head Coach	Jed	Shahar
Winter	Boys Indoor Track	Varsity	Head Coach	Susan	Soohoo
Winter	Girls Indoor Track	Varsity	Head Coach	Marcella	Scalise
Winter	Coed Indoor Track	Varsity	Assistant to Program	David	Golden
Winter	Coed Indoor Track	Modified	Head Coach	Hayley	Graney
Winter	Coed Indoor Track	Modified	Head Coach	Matthew	DeBellis
Winter	Boys Swimming	Varsity	Head Coach	Katherine	Konopka

Winter	Wrestling	Varsity	Head Coach	Brian	Scherr
Winter	Wrestling	Varsity	Assistant to Program	Greg	Domestico
Winter	Wrestling	Modified	Head Coach	Mitchell	Barcus
Winter			Assistant Athletic Director	Joseph	Carlucci
Winter			Equipment Manager	Joseph	Dranoff
Winter		Modified	Program Development	Bryan	Iacovelli
Winter			Athletic Trainer	Joseph	Dranoff
2025-2026			Athletic Support Staff	Nicole	Yannuzzi

and it was

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

Name	Effective Date	Type	Assignment/Location	Salary/Step
Max Leifert	**10/06/2025**	**Per Diem Sub.**	**Monitor/ FEB**	**Per Diem Sub. Rate**
Mary Branley	**2025-2026**	**Per Diem Sub.**	**Teacher/ District Wide**	**Per Diem Sub. Rate**

and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Tracey Lizzo** effective 10/17/2025; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Nicole Crispinelli** effective 10/31/2025.

Approval of Extra-Classroom Activities
RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approve the following Extra-Classroom Activities for the 2025-2026 school year:

High School
Card Club
English Honor Society
Hispanic Coalition
Human Rights Club

Rho Kappa - Social Studies Honor Society
Student Voices for Change
Sports Stats
Warm Hearts
Middle School
Blue Zones Club
Pop Culture Club
Written Out Loud

Approval of Professional Learning Plan
RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the District's Professional Learning Plan for the 2025-2026 school year.

Approval of Disposal of Equipment
RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approve the disposal of equipment no longer in good working condition as per Schedule A.

Awarding of Contract for Capital Work Project
RESOLVED, that as a result of the bids received on October 1, 2025 for Roof Replacement at High School Gymnasium at the Rye Neck UFSD MS/HS campus, the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District make the following award of the contract, pending final clearance of insurance documentation, to:

Armor-Tite Construction Corp.
Port Chester, NY

Base Bid:	$197,000.00
Allowance:	$ 30,000.00
TOTAL:	**$227,000.00**

Unit Prices: AS PER ATTACHED BID LOG

Acceptance of External Audit and District Management Action Plan
RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District accept the annual external audit report from NawrockiSmith dated June 30, 2025; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approve the attached district management action plans prepared in response to the external audit.

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 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**

IX. Financial Reports for Information

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

X. Communications to the Board

President Wagner reported that the Board has received 4 communications since the last meeting, 1 regarding curriculum, 2 regarding litigation, and 1 regarding a FOIL request.

XI. Citizens' Privilege of the Floor

A community member addressed the Board regarding teaching acceptance and diversity in the schools.

XII. Reports - Community School Groups

Student Senate - Spencer Elliot

Student Senate President Spencer Elliot reported that last week was spirit week for the high school with themes including Adam Sandler day, Twin/Triplet day, Winter vs Summer, and color wars where each grade wore a different color. Last Friday everyone wore Rye Neck gear to kick off homecoming, and attended the annual Homecoming pep rally. In addition, last week, upperclassmen put on a club fair for all high school students which in order to encourage students to get more involved and aware of the many opportunities available. Many clubs have already started as of last week.

Next, Mr. Elliot stated that today was a big day for juniors and seniors. While juniors were taking the PSAT, seniors had a trip to Chelsea Piers. This Friday is the annual senior buddy day. This event is a way for seniors and sixth graders to build connections.

Finally, he advised that there will be another costume competition for Halloween, and a student volleyball tournament after school on November 12th and 13th.

Booster Club - Jennifer Abbey

Booster Club President Jennifer Abbey reported that the Booster Club had its membership drive which attracted over 150 members. This past weekend was Homecoming. The week leading up to it was spirit week in the elementary schools, as well as in the Middle/High School. The Rye Neck Youth Flag Football team played a scrimmage during half time at the game. The Booster Club provided Homecoming t-shirts for all High School students; purchased Senior signs for all senior athletes; and ran the concession stand and gave a portion of the proceeds to the Junior class to help fund Prom.

PTSA - Elizabeth Gillespie

PTSA President Elizabeth Gillespie reported that since the last meeting, the PTSA had their first General Membership Meeting where they approved the annual budget. The fundraising goal for this school year will be just over $111,000, and all of the money has been allocated back to the district through enrichment programs and events between September and June.

With regard to fundraising, Mrs. Gillespie advised that Fall Parent's Night Out was held in September. The event was sold out with 185 attendees. Between ticket sales and a 50/50 raffle, they made $2,238. The next parent's night out is scheduled for March 13th. The first two sign-up parties are set for October 24th (Cardio Tennis) and November 13th (Mahjong Night). Ribbons for Rye Neck wrapped up last week, everyone received their window clings, and their $30,000 goal was reached. 336 families and 26 businesses donated. At this time, they are running a merchandise collaboration with GOAT USA. Youth and adult t-shirts and sweatshirts are available for purchase through October 19th. This is a limited edition collaboration, so order before the 19th.

Next, Mrs. Gillespie reported that there is a lot of exciting programming in the works. A few fan favorites coming up in October include:

Daniel Warren Halloween Playdate/Costume Exchange on October 16th
The annual Fall Family Kickball Night at F.E. Bellows is scheduled for October 23rd
The District-Wide Walk To School Week is October 20th - 24th

Rye Neck School Foundation - Jennifer Soussa

Mrs. Soussa began reported that the RNSF awarded 7 teacher grants in September, which included flexible furniture for Kindergarten and 3rd grade classrooms, a social studies weekly newspaper to enhance the 4th grade social studies curriculum, and a 10th grade-wide field trip to the Anne Frank Exhibition in NYC, which is taking place next week. Tonight, they are awarding one grant to support a HS upper level/AP French class field trip to the Barnes museum in Philadelphia.

Next, Mrs. Soussa advised that they are gearing up for the Second Annual RNSF Polar Plunge, which will be held on November 15th. Registration opened today, and plungers and families are encouraged to arrive at 10 a.m. for warm drinks and sweet treats before the official plunge at 11 a.m. They will be giving out prizes to all plungers who raise over $150, as well as the top 3 fundraisers, and the grade with the most participants.

Finally, she reported that the Panther Paver bricks that were sold last spring have been delivered and will be installed by the Rye Neck grounds crew over the coming weeks

XIII. Reports - Board of Education

Office Hours

Trustees Barker and Gatenio will represent the Board at the next Office Hours, November 5, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Administration Building. Please email or call the District Clerk by Friday, October 31st to make an appointment and state your topic of interest.

Audit Committee

Trustee Rainert reported that the Audit Committee met last week, with Jason Carmel elected as Chair. The committee confirmed that long-range financial planning will be a key focus of the first budget meeting in February.

In addition, representatives from our external auditing firm presented the results of the annual audit. Thanks to the efficient work of Maria Gigi and Carolyn Mahar, the district closed the books by July 21st. The auditors reported no proposed adjustments, no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies, and no recommendations for changes to prior or current year practices.

He stated that overall, revenues increased by 1.5% and expenses by 2%, reflecting planned capital improvements. The district continues to maintain its 4% cash reserve, the legal maximum allowed. The full audit report is available on BoardDocs and the Business Office page of the district website.

Finally, he stated that the committee also reviewed a Cybersecurity Assessment conducted by the auditing firm using the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. Results showed low risk across nearly all areas and only a few recommendations, primarily related to documentation. Rye Neck's performance compared favorably to peer districts, highlighting a strong and proactive approach to data security.

The committee will reconvene in January to review the annual Claims Audit and long-range financial planning data.

Policy Committee

Trustee Barker reported that the Committee met on September 22nd and reviewed sections 6000 and 7000 of the policy manual. These sections are up for a first reading later tonight. The next meeting is scheduled for October 28th.

Facilities Committee

Trustee Barker advised the first meeting of the Committee is scheduled for October 29th.

X. New Business

Acceptance of Donation of Books

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby accepts the donation of of 40 copies of House in the Cerulean Sea and 10 copies of Somewhere Beyond the Sea from Macmillan Charitable Book Donations for the benefit of Rye Neck Middle School English Department.

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

Acceptance of Rye Neck School Foundation Grant
Upon motion duly made by Trustee Gatenio and seconded by Trustee Barker, it was **RESOLVED,** that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby accept the Rye Neck School Foundation Grants to the Rye Neck Schools, as per the attached letter and chart.

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

First Reading - Section 6000 of the Policy Manual
Trustee Barker stated that the redlined version is posted on Board Docs and the District website for viewing by the public.

First Reading - Section 7000 of the Policy Manual
Trustee Barker stated that the redlined version is posted on Board Docs and the District website for viewing by the public.

XV. Public Comments Concerning Above
No comments were made by the public.

XVI. Adjournment of Meeting
Upon motion duly made by Trustee Homberg seconded by Trustee Gatenio, it was

RESOLVED, that there being no further business that the Board of Education Meeting of October 15, 2025 be adjourned.

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

President Wagner adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____
Mary Ellen Chiera
District Clerk