Rye Neck Schools

RYE NECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
300 HORNIDGE ROAD
MAMARONECK, NEW YORK 10543
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
FEBRUARY 11, 2026

Present: President Erica Wagner
Trustee Jason Carmel
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

I. First Budget Presentation & Long Range Financial Plan Presentation

Mr. Burke and Mrs. Mahar gave the first presentation of the 2026-2027 budget. Mr. Burke reviewed the dates for future budget hearings which are March 18th, April 21st and May 6th, with the Budget Vote and Trustee Election scheduled for May 19th 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; one that is committed to favorable class sizes and that maximizes efficiencies in scheduling and personnel; upholds the District's security and safety measures; offers extracurricular opportunities that support a comprehensive educational program; and continues the breadth and depth of core course and elective offerings. He advised that the draft budget for the 2026-27 school year totals $53,828,373, which reflects a 2.38% tax levy increase, and a 2.44% spending increase over 2025-26 totaling $1,279,962.

Next, Mrs. Mahar reviewed the draft revenues, the bulk of which come from property tax and estimated State aid. Other sources of revenue are transfers in from reserve funds and ERate Cat 2 funding. She then reviewed the draft tax cap calculation and the 10 year look at how the tax cap levy has moved.

In addition, Mrs. Mahar reviewed the expenses, the bulk of which are salaries ($26,629,310), benefits ($13,480,641) and regular school instruction and ENL ($14,795,950). Some of the other expenses include special education ($6,078,910) which fluctuates based on the needs of students; cleaning/repair, maintenance and storeroom ($2,487,136); counseling, health services, psychology and social work ($2,278,918); and co-curricular and interscholastic athletics ($1,734,135). The total proposed expenses are $53,846,167 which represents a 2.47% increase over this year. Factors that are affecting the budget are: active and Medicare health insurance rates are increasing by a composite rate of 8.77%; employer retirement system contributions are increasing for ERS and are

decreasing for TRS; and the special education outside placements and transportation costs fluctuate based on placements and routes, and transportation assumes an estimated 3.0% CPI, and there is a net increase of $467,000. The District does recognize savings as a result of combining certain routes with Mamaroneck. Other expense changes include the addition of one new psychologist/social worker to head up the Middle/High School in-house therapeutic support program, the reallocation of certain security duties to existing district staff, and a transfer to capital in the amount of $485,000 for capital improvements, renovations and upgrades to the Middle/High electrical system, boiler replacements and repair work in the Middle/High School gym and Daniel Warren, and HVAC upgrades for the Daniel Warren Kindergarten wing.

Mr. Burke then reviewed the projected enrollment for 2026-2027 which shows a slight decrease from this school year.

Next, Mrs. Mahar reviewed the District's Long Range Financial Plan which is a tool to aid in strategic decision making and presented as a 5-year look-ahead. She reviewed the historical revenues and expenses, fund balance history, and reserve fund history. She then reviewed the key factors of the Long Range Financial Plan, the revenue and expense projections, and provided a summary of the plan.

Finally, Mr. Burke briefly spoke about the athletic field and renovation referendum vote scheduled for October 1, 2026. He will be providing livestream information once a month until the vote, with the next one taking place on February 25th.

II. Opening of Meeting

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

III. President's Report

President Wagner began by stating that tonight's budget presentation and long range financial plan summary was the first formal presentation of the season. Mrs. Mahar and her team have been working diligently, responsibly and thoughtfully since September and are putting forth a tax-cap compliant budget for the 15th year in a row. There will be more public budget presentations in March, April and May leading up to the budget vote and trustee election on May 19th.

In addition, President Wagner announced that Mr. Burke is hosting monthly livestream information sessions regarding the facilities referendum vote which will take place in the fall. The purpose of these livestreams is to disseminate valuable information and to begin a consistent flow of communication to the community. They can be viewed on the Rye Neck Live YouTube Channel. The next one is scheduled for February 25th at 7 p.m. and questions can be emailed to bond@ryeneck.org. The bond referendum not only offers the District an opportunity to upgrade the middle/high school athletic fields, it also invites the opportunity to invest in the students, community, and Rye Neck's future.

IV. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Burke began by announcing that it has been a pleasure to applaud the seniors as they were honored over the past month across multiple athletic events. Boys & Girls Ice Hockey, Wrestling, Basketball, Indoor Track, and Bowling have all been recognized, and now enter the sectional and state tournament season. In addition, tickets are now on sale

for the upcoming High School musical, *The Prom,* which takes place on March 5th, 6th and 7th. Everyone is invited to attend the event which is always one of the highlights of the school year.

Next, he stated that he sent out a District Community Survey to all our families via ParentSquare. The survey was designed to collect both known and anonymous feedback from the students, staff and community regarding their experience with the Rye Neck Schools. The survey will remain open until Friday, February 27th. He has been pleased with both the response rate and candor from our community, and values all feedback regarding Instruction & Program, School Culture, Operations and Communications.

Mr. Burke then advised the community that the District has received reports from multiple local businesses in recent weeks that they have received calls from representatives of a company called Elite Sports claiming to have a sponsor partnership with our Athletic Department and soliciting money. In their fraudulent pitches, they have referred to false partnerships with some of our coaches and athletic department staff members. He advised not to engage in any agreements with this company if contacted and do not give them any personal or payment information. They are NOT affiliated with Rye Neck in any way. If anyone has specific questions about any affiliation with Rye Neck, please contact the Athletic Director, Mr. Joe Ceglia, for clarification.

Mr. Burke then thanked Director of Technology, Mrs. Mary Lanza, and the volunteers on this year's Technology Committee. The first meeting was this past Monday, where we reviewed the District's NYSED Instructional Technology Plan, and started gathering information on the appropriate use and applications of Artificial Intelligence.

Finally, he stated that the next Bond Referendum Livestream is scheduled for February 25th at 7:00 p.m. He will be joined by our Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance Mrs. Carolyn Mahar and Athletic Director Mr. Joe Ceglia. They will outline the financial components of the Bond and address the opportunities for our curricular and extracurricular programs. The first livestream from January 21st is available on the website under the Bond Referendum tab. Questions should be emailed directly to Bond@ryeneck.org so as to be answered promptly.

V. Approval of Consent Agenda

Upon Motion duly made by Trustee Carmel 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 February 4, 2026 Board of Education Planning Session

Approval of Personnel Appointments, Leaves and Resignation

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board appoint **Annette Bird** as a part-time Teacher Aide, effective 02/09/2026. 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 the following certified personnel:

Name	Effective Date	Type	Assignment/ Location	Salary/Step
Maria Lan	2025-2026	Per Diem Teacher Sub.	District Wide	Per Diem Sub Rate

and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board appoint the following long term leave replacement:

Christopher Aquina (Teacher)

and it was

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

Philip Tancora (substitute Custodial Worker)

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board appoint the following coaches for spring sports:

SEASON	SPORT	LEVEL	ROLE/COACH	FIRST	LAST
Spring	Assistant Athletic Director	N/A	N/A	Bryan	Iacovelli
Spring	Baseball	JV	Head	Rob	Kiernan
Spring	Baseball	Modified	Head	Albert	Ciuffetelli
Spring	Baseball	Varsity	Head	George	Travis
Spring	Baseball	N/A	Asst. to Program	Joe	Silvestri
Spring	Golf	Varsity	Head	Mark	Canno
Spring	Lacrosse - Boys	JV	Head	Darien	Bica
Spring	Lacrosse - Boys	Modified	Head	Adam	Johnson
Spring	Lacrosse - Boys	Varsity	Head	Matt	Macias
Spring	Lacrosse - Boys	N/A	Asst. to Program	Matthew	DeBellis
Spring	Lacrosse - Girls	JV	Head	Amanda	D'Addona
Spring	Lacrosse - Girls	Modified	Head	Doraanne	Aman-Radulovic
Spring	Lacrosse - Girls	Varsity	Head	Nichole	Flasz
Spring	Lacrosse - Girls	N/A	Asst. to Program	Kathleen	Regan
Spring	Program Development	Modified	N/A	Vincent	Scozzari
Spring	Softball	JV	Co-Head	Julianna	Peduzzi
Spring	Softball	JV	Co-Head	Ryan	Walzer

Spring	Softball	Modified	Head	Chris	Aquina
Spring	Softball	Varsity	Head	Joan	Spedafino
Spring	Softball	N/A	Asst. to Program	Jessica	Calvini
Spring	Tennis - Boys	JV	Head	Rob	Simels
Spring	Tennis - Boys	Modified	Head	Ivan	Martinez
Spring	Tennis - Boys	Varsity	Head	Brad	Levine
Spring	Track	Modified	Head	Hayley	Graney
Spring	Track - Boys	Varsity	Head	Susan	Soohoo
Spring	Track - Girls	Varsity	Head	Marcella	Sykucki

and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Alicia Sokolofsky** a paid FMLA leave beginning on **February 2, 2026** through **February 27, 2026**; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Max Leifert** effective January 4, 2026; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Carolyn Brown** effective February 7, 2026; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Matteson Donnelly** effective February 25, 2026; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board approve the resignation of **Samantha Krench** effective March 20, 2026.

Adoption of Policy 9240 - Recruiting and Hiring

WHEREAS, Policy 9240 was 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 January 20, 2026 Board Meeting; and

WHEREAS, Policy 9240 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.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the adoption of Policy 9240.

Approval of Updated District Consultant List

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

Awarding of Bid for E-RATE Category 2

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District, as a result of the Request for Proposals dated January 2026, award the contracts for E-Rate Category 2 to Edu-Tek LTD for a total cost of $193,557.14 for LAN network equipment and services. This amount is eligible for the District's current E-Rate refund of 40% of the cost.

Acceptance of Side Letter

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approve the attached Side Letter Agreement between the Rye Neck Union Free School District and the Rye Neck Teachers' Association (NYSUT, AFT #2971), dated February 11, 2026.

Approval of Disposal of Uniforms, Furniture and Equipment

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

Acceptance of Long Range Financial Plan

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District accept the attached Long Range Financial Plan.

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**

VI. Financial Reports for Information

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

VII. Communications to the Board

President Wagner reported that the Board has received 4 communications since the last meeting, 1 regarding kindergarten registration, 1 regarding superintendent's evaluation, 1 regarding the calendar, and 1 regarding HOSA.

VIII. Citizens' Privilege of the Floor

There were no comments made by the public.

IX. Reports - Community School Groups

Student Senate - Spencer Elliot

Student Senate President Spencer Elliot reported that the third quarter is underway and students have been busier than ever. Clubs have been active with a Mock Trial trip to a court house last week, a supply drive in the Global Connections Club, a Future Business Leaders Competition, and a Science Olympiad competition where the Rye Neck team won multiple awards. Last Friday, high school students joined middle schoolers in the cafeteria for the "No One Eats Alone" initiative in order to connect the older students in the school with the younger ones. Varsity sport seasons are ending and heading into playoffs. The Spring musical, *The Prom*, is taking place March 5th through 7th.

With regard to Student Senate news, Spencer reported that they've been active in a number of projects. During the past few meetings, they focused on how they can continue to improve aspects of Student Life including fundraising, a Spring Pep Rally, and a Pickleball Tournament. He shared that this year's pickleball tournament will be on March 4th - which happens to be an early release day so the event will take place from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

The Student Senate is also planning on doing another raffle basket fundraiser at the Musical this year, and have already started planning the Spring Pep Rally. They are looking into creating a shared calendar among clubs and club officers as a way to better communicate school activities and news.

Booster Club - Jennifer Abbey

Booster Club President Jennifer Abbey reported that since the last meeting they held the largest event of the year, The Snowflake Soiree, at Modern on the Rails which was attended by approximately 100 parents. They raised approximately $10,000 through an auction, 50/50 raffle and donations.

In addition, the Booster Club contributed funds to the new Scrim for the Performing Arts Center which will be used at the musical, *The Prom*. They will be providing a tech week meal to the cast and crew, will be running concessions in the lobby at the shows, and providing lawn signs for the senior members of the cast and crew that will be displayed at the entry to the school. They will also be providing lawn signs for the winter sports senior athletes to be displayed in the gym.

PTSA - Elizabeth Gillespie

PTSA President Elizabeth Gillespie began by reporting that the 4th graders participated in a 3-week residency with Dance Cavise's *Beyond Broadway* which ended with a performance for the families. The Middle School Hang Out took place on January 23rd and was attended by over 130 students. At Daniel Warren, the Mobile Ed STEAM Museum turned the auditorium into a hands-on exhibit. This week Acrobat Li Lui visited, celebrating the Chinese New Year.

Mrs. Gillespie announced that the Heart & Sole Sneaker Drive at DW and Bellows is happening this week, and the Daniel Warren Book Drive runs from February 23rd through March 6th. Donation bins will be at each school.

Finally, she reported on upcoming events. March 21st will be Rye Neck day at the Westchester Knicks game. Discounted tickets are available on the PTSA Instagram or you can access the link in PTSA emails. Family dance night is scheduled for February 26th in the Middle/High School cafeteria. It is a free, very fun event open to students K - 5 and their families. Parents Night Out is March 13th with a Retro Remix theme. There will be a raffle and silent auction. Tickets are on sale now. Family Pasta Night returns on March 25th at Daniel Warren. It is open to the entire district. Ticket info and volunteer opportunities are coming soon.

Rye Neck School Foundation - Josh Moreau

RNSF representative Josh Moreau reported that the RNSF funded $113,00 in grants this school year. Their Spring event and fundraiser will take place on April 17th. There will be more information to come in this regard.

X. Reports - Board of Education

Office Hours

Trustees Rainer and Gatenio will represent the Board at the next Office Hours, March 4, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. in the Administration Building. Please email or call the District Clerk by Friday, February 27th, to make an appointment and state your topic of interest.

Audit Committee Report

Trustee Carmel reported that the Audit Committee met on January 29th at which they received the annual report from the Claims Auditor. The District had only 3 exceptions which were corrected by the business office in a timely manner. It was noted that Rye Neck continues to maintain an overall better exception percentage relative to other Westchester County school districts with similar disbursement volume.

He stated that the Committee also discussed internal audit reviews and long range financial planning.

The next meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m. on Thursday, May 14th.

WestPut Report

Trustee Rainer reported that The Lower Hudson Education Coalition held its annual advocacy meeting with state legislators. Nearly 80 participants joined as legislators walked through LHEC's 2026 agenda including pre-K funding, vouchers, teacher retention, reserve funds and foundation aid and the tax cap.

Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins urged the coalition to pick one or two priorities to push hard on rather than spreading energy across the full wish list.

Policy Committee

Trustee Homberg reported that the most recent Policy committee meeting was held on January 29th. They reviewed NYSSBA-recommended Policies 8121.1 and 8121.1-R, as well as 0105, and 2210.

Policies 2210 - Board Organizational Meeting, 8505 - "Charging" Meals and Other Food Items, and 8520 - Free Meal Programs, are up for first reading this evening.

The next Policy Meeting is scheduled for February 24th at 2 p.m. at which the Committee will review the policies in Section 1000 to ensure the District is adhering to policies in place. For the remainder of meetings this year, they will review quarterly updates as provided by NYSSBA.

XI. New Business

First Reading - Policy 2210 - Board Organizational Meeting

Trustee Homberg stated that this is a new policy that is posted on Board Docs and the District website for viewing by the public.

First Reading - Policy 8505 - "Charging" Meals and Other Food Items

Trustee Homberg stated that this is a new policy that is posted on Board Docs and the District website for viewing by the public.

First Reading - Policy 8520 - Free Meal Programs

Trustee Homberg stated that this policy was revised as per NYSSBA's recommendations and is posted on Board Docs and the District website for viewing by the public.

XII. Public Comments Concerning Above

There were no comments made by the public.

XIII. Adjournment of Meeting

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Gatenio seconded by Trustee Rainert, it was

RESOLVED, that there being no further business that the Board of Education Meeting of February 11, 2026 be adjourned.

AYES: All Present
NAYES: None

President Wagner adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mary Ellen Chiera
District Clerk