Rye Neck Schools

RYE NECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
300 HORNIDGE ROAD
MAMARONECK, NEW YORK 10543
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 23, 2026

Present: President Halli Gatenio
Trustee Gabriella Danza
Trustee Ruth Homberg
Trustee Alex Rainert
Trustee Laurel Ryan
Trustee Erica Wagner
Mr. Michael Burke, Superintendent of Schools
Carolyn Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Student Senate Representative Charlotte Picone
Mary Ellen Chiera, District Clerk

I. Public Hearing

Mr. Burke and Mrs. Mahar presented information regarding the October 1, 2026 Bond Referendum vote. They reviewed the scope of the project which includes upgrading the MS/HS athletic field complex to enhance student safety, improve physical education and athletic opportunities, provide essential support facilities, and maximize community use. In addition, it addresses important renovation work including window replacements at Daniel Warren, HVAC additions in the Daniel Warren Kindergarten wing, replacement of end-of-life HVAC units at the MS/HS campus, and electrical upgrades at the MS/HS campus.

Mrs. Mahar stated that the total project budget is $23,595,847, $20 million of which will be from the bond and $3.6 million from the Capital Reserve Fund. $20.2 million is the estimated total cost of the athletic field complex and $3.4 million is the estimated cost of the renovation work. She reviewed the estimated annual tax impact on taxpayers which is $18 per $100,000 of equalization value.

Finally, Mr. Burke reviewed the estimated timelines for the projects and opened the meeting up for questions. They addressed questions concerning whether or not the money should go to education rather than the athletic fields, other capital spending needs that may come up in the future, safety concerns regarding turf fields, the maintenance involved with turf fields, and the impact on flooding.

II. Opening of Meeting

President Gatenio called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

III. President's Report

President Gatenio began by stating that the school year is off to a wonderful start and the Board is looking forward to all that this year will bring for students, the schools and the entire Rye Neck community.

She noted that this is the second year of having a student representative on the Board of Education and this year, the ex-officio position will rotate among students serving on the Student Senate. She introduced Charlotte Picone who was joining the meeting tonight.

Mrs. Gatenio reminded the community of the Homecoming Bonfire which will begin at 7:30 p.m. tomorrow night out at the athletic fields to kick off Homecoming Weekend.

She reminded everyone that the bond referendum vote will take place on October 1st and encouraged all community members to stay informed and learn more about the proposed referendum. Detailed information is available on the district website by clicking on the 2026 Bond Referendum tab.

IV. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Burke began by stating that the school year is off to a strong start. Open Houses have taken place at the High School, Daniel Warren and FE Bellows, and the Middle School's is scheduled for October 1st.

He announced that Rye Neck's first Bonfire will take place tomorrow night at 7:30 p.m. on the MS/HS campus to kick off the Homecoming Weekend events. He thanked Rye Safety Commissioner Mike Kopy, Rye Fire Captain Clyde Pitts and Mamaroneck Chief Engineer Mike Yannuzzi for all their guidance, support and attendance of this event. He recognized and thanked Heather Harvey and the Booster Club for their support of the Bonfire and encouraged all community members to join the events this weekend. In addition, he welcomed and recognized the Rye Neck Class of 1976 on their 50th anniversary. They will be on the campus next week for a tour of the facility.

Mr. Burke then reported that the District is moving forward with the hope of initiating a pilot PreK program for next year. New York State is on track to ensure universal Pre-K access for all four-year-olds by the start of the 2028–2029 school year (fall 2028), but the Board of Education and the staff are supportive of trying to initiate a small program for next Fall. An extensive RFP (Request for Proposal) from several programs in the area has been completed, and site visits will be conducted next week. There will be more information during the month of October.

Finally, Mr. Burke reminded the community that the District is a little more than one week away from the Bond Referendum vote. This is a critical decision for the Rye Neck School District, as this proposal is the direct result of extensive community feedback, meticulous planning, and exceptional short- and long-term fiscal management. It was created through multiyear stakeholder communication on what is right for students, staff, and community. Rye Neck is perfectly positioned to provide the modern resources

necessary to provide a balanced extracurricular experience along with strong academic results. He thanked the community members from Mamaroneck and Rye who have provided input throughout the process. Thursday's vote is the next step in the process, and community opinions and guidance will continue to be valued throughout the subsequent planning period. Please continue to send any questions or concerns to Mr. Burke, Mrs. Mahar, Mr. Ceglia or our general email bond@ryeneck.org.

V. Approval of Consent Agenda

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

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

1. Approval of the Minutes of the September 9, 2026 Board of Education Planning Session

2. Approval of Personnel Appointments and Leaves

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board hereby appoints **Maria Bahanovich**, in accordance with §3012 of the Education Law, to a three-year probationary term as a Special Education Teacher, in the tenure area of Special Education; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that because **Maria Bahanovich** has previously been appointed tenure in a New York State school district and satisfies the requirements of Education Law §3012, the probationary period for this appointment shall be three (3) years, commencing September 25, 2026 and ending September 24, 2029, subject to the applicable provisions of law.

WHEREAS, **Jon-Paul DiBernardino** is currently employed by the Rye Neck School District as a Long Term Substitute; and

WHEREAS, **Jon-Paul DiBernardino** holds the appropriate New York State teaching certification and has satisfied the applicable requirements for appointment to the position of Science Teacher.

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board hereby appoints **Jon-Paul DiBernardino**, in accordance with §3012 of the Education Law, to a four-year probationary term as a Science Teacher, in the tenure area of Science, commencing on October 1, 2026 and ending on September 30, 2030; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that effective October 1, 2026, **Jon-Paul DiBernardino's** appointment as a Long Term Substitute shall cease concurrent with the commencement of the appointment to the teaching position; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board appoint **Justin Myers** to a four year probationary term as a Teaching Assistant, effective September 24, 2026 and ending on September 23, 2030.

WHEREAS, at its meeting held on August 24, 2026, the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, appointed **Anthony Maraglino** to the position of Custodial Worker for a probationary term commencing September 1, 2026 and ending on August 31, 2027; and

WHEREAS, subsequent to said appointment, Westchester County Department of Human Resources advised that **Anthony Maraglino** may serve in the position only in a temporary capacity until the permanent status of the incumbent employee, effective September 1, 2027;

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby amends its August 24, 2026 appointment of **Anthony Maraglino** as follows:

- **Anthony Maraglino** shall serve as a Temporary Custodial Worker from September 1, 2026 through August 31, 2027;

and it was

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board appoint **Jack Trinidad Cusicanqui** to a probationary position as a Cleaner effective September 17, 2026 and ending September 16, 2027. 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 grant **Sarah Carpenito** an unpaid leave of absence from her Teaching Assistant position with the Special Education Department to assume a Leave Replacement Teacher position at Daniel Warren Elementary School beginning on September 14, 2026 through June 25, 2026; 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 2026-2027 school year:

<u>STEAM Coordinator</u>
Jennifer Carpiniello (HS)

<u>Building Leaders (CSEA)</u>
Carl Mangone
Jose Quintero
Stephen McLoughlin
Robert Scatenato
Brian Crawford

<u>After-Hours Subbing Assignment</u>
Concetta Maresca

<u>Professional Learning Partners</u>
Ashley Eklund
Matthew DeBellis

Board Meeting A/V Coordinator
David Golden

Department Chair - District Library
Leigh Ann Kowalchick-Porphy

Assistant to Director, HS Fall Play
John Baranowski

and it was

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

Name	Effective Date	Type	Assignment/Location
Elizabeth Nocera	2026-2027	Per Diem Nurse Sub	Districtwide
Summer Breidenbach	2026-2027	Per Diem Sub Teach	Districtwide
Nina Blauner	2026-2027	Per Diem Sub Teach	FEB and DW
Mikayla Amir	2026-2027	Per Diem Sub Teach	FEB and DW

and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Philece McCoy** a paid FMLA beginning on or about October 8, 2026 to on or about November 5, 2026; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Alyssa Ciotti** a paid FMLA beginning on or about January 4, 2027 to on or about February 14, 2027; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Alyssa Ciotti** an unpaid FMLA beginning on or about February 22, 2027 to on or about April 11, 2027; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Christina Lee** a paid FMLA beginning on or about January 4, 2027 to on or about April 11, 2027. The employee intends to utilize her available sick time and twenty (20) day entitlement to run concurrently with this leave. If any time should extend beyond her twenty (20) days entitlement, it will be unpaid; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Christina Lee** an unpaid Childcare Leave beginning on or about April 12, 2026 to on or about June 25, 2026; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Cynthia Feinman** paid intermittent FMLA for the 2026-27

School Year. The employee has eleven (11) sick days and three (3) personal days to utilize for this period of leave, the remainder of which will be unpaid; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Employee #444** an intermittent FMLA for the 2026-27 School Year. The employee will utilize her accrued sick time during this leave; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Ana Fraioli** a paid FMLA beginning on or about January 19, 2027 to on or about March 1, 2027; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Ana Fraioli** an unpaid FMLA beginning on or about March 2, 2027 to on or about April 26, 2027; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Marcella Sykucki** a paid FMLA beginning on or about February 8, 2027 to on or about March 21, 2027; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, hereby that the Board grant **Marcella Sykucki** an unpaid FMLA beginning on or about March 29, 2027 to on or about May 16, 2027.

3. Approval of Restatement of 403(b) Retirement Plan

WHEREAS, the Employer has maintained the Rye Neck UFSD ("Plan") since January 1, 2009 for the benefit of eligible employees; and

WHEREAS, the Employer is restating the above-referenced Plan to comply with 2022 Cumulative List of Changes in Section 403(b) Requirements for 403(b) Pre-approved Plans and to continue to receive the tax benefits of an IRS pre-approved plan.

RESOLVED, that the Employer hereby adopts the Rye Neck UFSD as a complete restatement of the prior Plan, to be effective on January 1, 2026; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the undersigned representative of the Employer is authorized to execute the restated Plan document and authorize the performance of any other actions necessary to implement the adoption of the Plan restatement. The Employer may designate any other authorized person to execute the restated Plan document and perform the necessary actions to adopt the restated Plan. The Employer will maintain a copy of the restated Plan, as approved by the Governing Board, along with a copy of the prior plan, in its files.

4. Approval of 2026-2027 Adult Meal Prices

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approve the following price of adult breakfast and lunch for the 2026-27 school year in accordance with State mandates:

ADULT MEALS: Breakfast: $3.11 + tax ($3.37 includes tax)
Lunch: $5.38 + tax ($5.83 includes tax)

5. Approval of Contracts for School Year 2026-2027 Transportation Routes

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District approve the transportation routes and extensions and related estimated costs for the 2026-2027 school year as per the below:

Route Name	Provider	Estimated Annual Cost 2026-2027
Boces Rye Lake Campus	Royal Coach Lines	$45,169.20
Bridge School at CPW	Royal Coach Lines	$68,866.20
Brunswick Upper School	Royal Coach Lines	$20,710.80
Byram Hills High School	Royal Coach Lines	$60,262.20
Eagle Hill	Royal Coach Lines	$6,339.60
Greenwich Academy	Royal Coach Lines	$19,740.60
Hackley Lower School	Royal Coach Lines	$10,836.00
Hackley Upper School	Royal Coach Lines	$10,836.00
Harvey School	Royal Coach Lines	$18,583.20
Leffel Lower School	Royal Coach Lines	$34,095.60
LeffelÂ UpperÂ School	Royal Coach Lines	$19,274.40
Masters School Lower/Middle	Royal Coach Lines	$7,246.80
Masters School Upper	Royal Coach Lines	$24,165.00
Pleasantville Lab School	Royal Coach Lines	$47,070.00
PNW BOCES Lincoln Titus	Astra Tranportation Corp	$98,100.00
Purchase School	Royal Coach Lines	$38,881.80
REACH Academy	Super Wheels LLC	$53,342.10
RNMS/McKV	Royal Coach Lines	$11,716.20
Sacred Heart CT	Royal Coach Lines	$11,577.60
SW BOCES Occ Ed Valhalla	Royal Coach Lines	$73,850.40
SW BOCES Transfiguration School	Royal Coach Lines	$30,657.60
Thornton Donovan School	Royal Coach Lines	$16,691.40
Windward Lower (1-5)	Royal Coach Lines	$23,630.40
Windward Upper (6-8)	Royal Coach Lines	$26,730.00
Winston Preparatory	Royal Coach Lines	$95,929.20
Westchester DOT (Beeline Bus)	Public Transportation	$700.00
Metro North Railroad	Public Transportation	$7,000.00
Parent transportation contracts	Parent contract	$25,000.00

6. Approval of Disposal of Books, Uniforms, Furniture and Equipment

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

7. 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.

8. 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 Gatenio reported that the Board has received 6 communications since the last meeting, 1 regarding property tax exemption for veterans, 1 regarding athletic option for athletes, 1 regarding Rye Neck's AI policy, 2 regarding the bond referendum, and 1 regarding the Route 1 project.

VIII. Citizens' Privilege of the Floor

There were no comments made by the public.

IX. Reports - Community and School Groups

Student Senate - Charlotte Picone

Student Senate Treasurer Charlotte Picone began by reporting that the student body is settling into the routines and expectations of a new year while also looking forward to the many events and traditions that bring our high school community together.

The Student Senate has been preparing for Homecoming by developing Spirit-week ideas and Wellness Week themes for the week leading up to it. Spirit days include pajama day, rhyme without reason, color wars, and Panther pride day! They have aligned Pajama day and Panther Pride Day with the Middle School to create a sense of community between grades 6 through 12.

In addition, they are planning the upcoming pep rally and preparing for the upcoming first-ever bonfire, starting a tradition that provides students with an opportunity to come together outside of the regular school day, getting spirits up even higher for homecoming.

The Student Senate is looking toward the rest of the school year and exploring new events and activities that can bring the high school community together in a fun, meaningful, and productive way. They want to continue creating opportunities for students to connect with one another, get involved, and feel a stronger sense of belonging within our school.

Finally, Charlotte advised that this week the Senate is hosting elections for freshman representatives. They are excited to have the class of 2030 join the senate with their ideas and insight on student events and improving the school community.

PTSA - Elizabeth Gillespie

PTSA President Elizabeth Gillespie began by reporting on the events that have taken place over the past few weeks. Teachers and staff at all the campuses were welcomed back on the Superintendent's Conference Days with the Ramblin' Coffee Truck; they

hosted the Kindergarten Playdate on August 28th and the 1st and 2nd grade playdate last week; the annual Bagels and Locks event took place at the Middle School at the end of August where they distributed school supplies and invited 6th graders into the school for bagels, tours, and to organize their lockers ahead of the school year; the class parents organized a Middle School Welcome Back snack for the students, aiming to foster connection and school spirit; the Welcome Back to School meetup took place on September 5th in the park with the RNIC.

In addition, she reported that the school programs have started up. Instructors from the Rye YMCA started coming to recess at DW and FEB to organize games for any student who would like to join during recess. After School Clubs kicked off this week with 16 clubs at DW and clubs at FEB. They will run through December. **Steps to Success** began last week. Teachers stay after school to help 6th graders adjust to their homework load and answer any questions the students may have. The program is extended to run through February. The first Author Visit took place at the Middle School.

Mrs. Gillespie stated that the first parent social event of the year was held last week at 25 North. Over 150 tickets were sold and everyone had a great time. The first General Membership meeting of the year was held last week where the 2026-2027 PTSA budget, which is $112,000, was passed. The general membership also unanimously voted YES to support the school bond referendum vote.

She then reported that New this year is a PTSA Google Calendar which is updated as events are added and can easily sync to parents' google calendars. All event information is available on the website and posted weekly on Instagram.

They are currently running the biggest fundraiser of the year, Ribbons for Rye Neck. The goal is to raise $30,000. They currently have raised nearly $20,000. Window clings will be hand-delivered this Friday 9/25, just in time to show your panther pride for homecoming. Donations will remain open after this weekend to ensure they reach their goal, which is a big portion of their fundraising for the year.

Finally, she reported that the membership drive is in full swing. Memberships need to be renewed at the start of each school year for $15. The goal for the year is 600 members.

RNSF - Arielle Diskin

RNSF Representative, Arielle Diskin reported that the RNSF has continued to gain momentum thanks to the support of the Rye Neck Community. Last year, they funded 28 grants, valuing just under $100,000. This year, they are already working on 4 Instagrants which will be approved tonight. Those grants are:

1. The premiere of a movie at the HS, "The Vanishing Tour" which is a film written and produced by Rye Neck alum Patrick Meaney;
2. A second round of the College Tour Fund, which will take Juniors and Seniors on 3 college tours this school year;
3. Visiting Pop Artist, Michael Albert, who will conduct a workshop and mosaic art project with DW students

4. Professional Stage crew training/mentorship with stage manager John Baranowski, where students will learn the systems, communication practices, safety procedures, and leadership skills used in professional theatrical productions.

Additionally, the RNSF Polar Plunge will take place on November 14th, and their annual Spring Fundraiser event will take place in late May.

Booster Club - Stacie Brenkovich

Booster Club representative Stacie Brenkovich stated that the Booster Club's mission is to Foster school spirit and Panther Pride by supporting our athletic and theatre programs. Membership is currently at 86% of their $6,000 goal. There are four membership levels starting at $20 for community members to join.

She stated that they piloted their first ever media day at the end of August. They partnered with Portrait Modes photography to have professional pictures taken of the Fall varsity athletes, which will be used for the senior signs and social media posts. They plan to continue this for the Winter and Spring seasons.

Mrs. Brenkovich reminded the community that Homecoming is Friday and Saturday, and spirit week is this week across all schools. All high school students will receive a homecoming t-shirt for the pep rally. This year we are also donating them to coaches and principals to spread even more panther pride. A bonfire is taking place tomorrow night at 7:30 p.m. at the MS/HS athletic fields. All Rye Neck families are welcome.

She reported that sales from panther spirit wear brought in $5,900 from recent open houses and pop ups at Bellows, but they need to sell another $1,700 to be profitable. They will be selling at Homecoming, and are planning an online store soon.

Upcoming events are as follows: Bingo night at the Elks club on Friday, October 16th; A fundraiser/game show night for the Fall play, *Clue*, will take place at Shore Acres Club on Saturday, October 17th; and the Harlem Wizards event is scheduled for Friday, January 29th.

X. New Business

Upon Motion duly made by Trustee Ryan and seconded by Trustee Homberg, 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

XI. Reports - Board of Education

Athletic Director's Advisory Council

Trustee Wagner reported that the ADAC had their first meeting on September 14th. Mr. Ceglia presented a snapshot of the athletic program, including recent trends. They

analyzed athletic enrollment numbers by grade and by varsity, JV and modified sports. They voted to use all available scoreboards for modified contests. The next meeting is scheduled for November 2nd.

XII. Public Comments Concerning Above

There were no comments made by the public.

XIII. Adjournment of Meeting

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

RESOLVED, that there being no further business before the Board, that the Board of Education Meeting of September 23, 2026 be adjourned.

AYES: All Present
NAYES: None

President Gatenio adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____
Mary Ellen Chiera
District Clerk