

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., November 17, 2020
Preceded by a *Setting a Course for Excellence in Technology:
A K-12 Continuum of Technology Expectations* Presentation,
NYSSBA Board Excellence Recognition,
and a Public Forum
Meeting Open to Public and Livestreamed

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Dominick Vulpis, Kristen O'Hagan, Peter McNally, Daniel DeMatteo, Joseph Kilgus, Superintendent Lisa J. Ruiz, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, Jacqueline A. Scio; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Mona Hecht, District Clerk, Vitina Fazi

Absent: None

1. Mr. Vulpis called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. in the auditorium of the East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School.
2. Peter McNally introduced Karolyna Villegas, a 12th grade student who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Ruiz welcomed everyone to tonight's meeting. She asked Mr. Vulpis to join her on the stage for a special award. The NYSSBA's Recognition Program acknowledges the time and effort required of school board members. Mr. Vulpis, our school board president, earned Level 2 status and was presented with a Board Excellence Award. Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Vulpis for continuously attending the many seminars and workshops offered by the NYSSBA on behalf of the District.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Ms. Mona Hecht. Ms. Hecht spoke briefly about tonight's presentation, *Setting a Course for Excellence in Technology; A K-12 Continuum of Technology Expectations*. She then introduced Mr. Lee Araoz. Mr. Araoz conducted a thorough Power Point presentation and spoke about technology's use in the district, specifically, to identify where students should be in relation to technology devices. Mr. Araoz asked if there were any questions from the audience and thanked the members of the Technology Committee for assisting him with this presentation.

Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Araoz for his work in preparing this presentation and thanked all the members of the Technology Committee who participated in putting this presentation

together. As a result of the Committee's work, students and teachers have gained many new skills to advance technology. This is an achievement we should all be very proud of.

At 7:26 p.m. the presentations concluded. The Board continued with the public portion of the agenda.

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items

Mr. Vulpis stated that Board will be managing Board of Education email items this evening. If you have any questions regarding the agenda times, now is the time to contact the Board's email. You will also have an opportunity at the public comments section to contact the Board.

There were no email comments.

4. Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Vulpis asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes below. There were none and Mr. Vulpis asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Upon motion made by Kristen O'Hagan, seconded by Peter McNally, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed, and the following minutes were approved:

A. October 21, 2020, Meeting of the Board of Education

5. Acknowledgment of Monthly Reports and Correspondence

A. Receipt of Monthly Financial Reports – September 2020

B. Correspondence: 5 items of correspondence were received

1. Letter from Councilman D'Esposito
2. Letter from a collective bargaining unit
3. Letter from a Rhame Avenue School parent
4. Letter from the East Rockaway Education Foundation (Dr. Meagher)
5. Letter from Nassau BOCES

6. Recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Vulpis asked if the trustees had any questions regarding Items A-M below. There were no questions. Mr. Vulpis then asked for a motion to approve Items A-M.

Upon motion made by Joseph Kilgus, seconded by Daniel DeMatteo, all in favor AYE,

opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed, and the following Items A-M were approved on a consent agenda.

- A. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept, with regret, the resignation of Susan Glickman, for the purpose of retirement, from her elementary teacher position, effective, January 3, 2021.
- B. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following resignations:
 - 1. Melissa Watson, part-time monitor, effective October 30, 2020
 - 2. Mary Ann McDonnell, substitute monitor, effective November 17, 2020
- C. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Alexandra D'Amprisi to the position of short-term substitute science teacher, effective November 30, 2020, through February 12, 2021, at the per diem salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2020-2021 school year.
- D. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Russell Pajer to the position of Driver and Traffic Safety Instructor, effective November 18, 2020, at the hourly salary established by the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for Other Educational Assignments for the 2020-2021 school year.
- E. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Seanna Silver for an extension of her child rearing leave of absence effective December 5, 2020, through January 29, 2021.
- F. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the continuation of the short-term substitute teacher appointment of Christopher Russo, effective December 7, 2020, through January 29, 2021, at the per diem salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2020-2021 school year.
- G. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of AnnMarie Kenny-Chapur for an extension of her leave of absence for personal medical reasons, effective January 30, 2021, through June 30, 2021.
- H. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Danielle Lundgren to the position of leave replacement school psychologist, effective January 28, 2021, through June 30, 2021, at the prorated Doctorate, Step 1 annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2020-2021 school year.
- I. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Francesca Lagnese for an extension of her child rearing leave of absence, effective January 30, 2021, through June 30, 2021.

- J. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Stephen Smaldone to the position of leave replacement special education teacher, effective January 28, 2021, through June 30, 2021, at the prorated BA, Step Entry annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2020-2021 school year.
- K. Approve the revised Centre Avenue and Rhame Avenue Club Advisor assignments for the 2020-2021 school year as more fully set forth on the schedule of club/advisor assignments at the stipend salaries established by the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2020-2021 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the charters.
- L. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Mary Ann McDonnell to the position of School Monitor, Part-Time, effective November 18, 2020, at the prorated Step 1 annual salary established by the East Rockaway UFSD Monitor and Security Unit and the United Public Service Employees Union agreement for the 2020-2021 school year.
- M. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following temporary assignments at the salary approved by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for substitute workers:
 - 1. Michael Zielinski, substitute cleaner, effective November 18, 2020
 - 2. Madeline Serrano, substitute cleaner, effective November 18, 2020
 - 3. Melissa Watson, substitute monitor, effective November 18, 2020
 - 4. Jenna Zielinski, per diem substitute teacher, effective November 18, 2020
 - 5. Margaret Orgera, per diem substitute teacher, effective November 23, 2020

7. Other Items

Mr. Vulpis asked if the trustees had any questions regarding Items _____ below. There were no questions. Mr. Vulpis then asked for a motion to approve Items A-E.

Upon motion made by Daniel DeMatteo, seconded by Peter McNally, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed, and the following Items A-E were approved on a consent agenda.

A. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts the Independent Accountant’s Risk Assessment Update Report prepared by Cullen & Danowski, LLP, for the period ended June 30, 2020.

B. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts the Extra-Classroom Activity Funds, Report of Examination 2020M-085 from the NYS Office of the Comptroller.

C. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, the Board of Education hereby:

Approves the award of the bid for Contract No. 1 – General Construction, as indicated in the Notice to Bidders published in *Newsday* on October 5, 2020, opened at the District’s Office via remote audio conference on October 23, 2020, at 11:00 am, to Irwin Contracting, Inc., as the lowest responsible bidder meeting the bid specifications, pursuant to Section 103 of the General Municipal Law, and authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute the resulting contract on behalf of the Board of Education.

D. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, the Board of Education hereby:

Approves the award of the bid for Contract No. 2 – HVAC Reconstruction, as indicated in the Notice to Bidders published in *Newsday* on October 5, 2020, opened at the District’s Office via remote audio conference on October 23, 2020, at 11:00 am, to Ultimate Power, Inc., as the lowest responsible bidder meeting the bid specifications, pursuant to Section 103 of the General Municipal Law, and authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute the resulting contract on behalf of the Board of Education.

E. Approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the East Rockaway Union Free School District received and opened bids for Contract No. 3 – Electrical Reconstruction (“Project”), as indicated in the Notice to Bidders published in *Newsday* on October 5, 2020, via remote audio conference on October 23, 2020; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined and recommended, after review by the District’s Architect and the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, that there is sufficient and appropriate cause to reject all bids received in connection with said Project due to necessary revisions in the scope of work and to re-advertise for bids and/or procure services by alternative means, in the best interest of the District; now,

therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that, upon the foregoing recommendation, the Board hereby rejects all bids received for said Project, and directs the District's Business Office and Architect to modify, as necessary, the Project's specifications and to re-advertise for bids and/or procure services in connection with said Project by alternate means, in accordance with Section 103 of the General Municipal Law.

Mr. Vulpis asked if the trustees had any questions regarding Items F-J below. There were no questions. Mr. Vulpis then asked for a motion to approve Items F-J.

Upon motion made by Kristen O'Hagan, seconded by Joseph Kilgus, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed, and the following Items F-J were approved on a consent agenda.

- F. Approve the *Emergency Contract Form 2020* for the Summer Food Service Program ("SFSP") between Aramark and the East Rockaway UFSD, and authorize the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations to execute the Contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
 - G. Approve the Agreed-Upon Procedures (AUP) Engagement Letter between the East Rockaway UFSD and Cullen & Danowski, LLP for employee benefits administration, and authorize the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations to execute the Engagement Letter on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
 - H. Approve the Health and Welfare Agreement between East Rockaway UFSD and Seaford UFSD for health and welfare services for the 2020-2021 school year and authorize the Superintendent and the President of the Board of Education to execute the agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
 - I. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling, the items listed on the Textbook Removal Form dated November 10, 2020.
 - J. Accept the following donations:
 - 1. From Jimmy Lores, miscellaneous garden tools for the District's grounds department, with a total value of approximately \$380
 - 2. From Peggy O'Neil, a Philips 52" Flat Screen TV, valued at approximately \$800
8. Mr. Vulpis asked if the trustees had any questions regarding the CSE and CPSE Recommendations. There were no questions. Mr. Vulpis then asked for a motion to approve the CSE and CPSE Recommendations.

Upon motion made by Joseph Kilgus, seconded by Daniel DeMatteo, all in favor AYE,

opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed, and the CSE and CPSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

9. Budget Transfers

Mr. Vulpis asked if there were any questions regarding the following budget transfers. There were no questions and he asked for a motion to approve the following budget transfers.

Upon motion made by Peter McNally, seconded by Kristen O'Hagan, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the following budget transfers were unanimously approved.

A. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the following budget transfers:

1. Transaction No. 21-0008
2. Transaction No. 21-0009

10. Policy Matters

A. Policy Subcommittee Report

Mr. McNally provided the following report:

The policy subcommittee met twice on October 22 and November 9 since our last board meeting. During those meetings, the following policies were reviewed:

1. 8121.1-R, Opioid Overdose Prevention Policy and Regulation. This policy will be adopted tonight.

2. 4531, Field Trips and Excursions

The Board reviewed the exhibits and the policy. After significant review of this policy and the provisions included with the policy, this policy will be adopted tonight.

3. 0105, Equity, Inclusivity, and Diversity in Education

The entire Board will meet in the near future to review the Equity, Inclusivity and Diversity in Education policy. This policy sets out the Board's commitment to addressing equity in the school district. The regulation provides specific steps and actions the district can take, and the exhibit provides definitions for terms used in the document.

4. 4770, 4770-R, Graduation

This policy was reviewed to add weighting for college level courses. This policy will be ready for adoption in December after the review period.

5. 2520, Board Member Training

This policy was reviewed and will be discussed with the full Board at the December work session.

6. 2120.3, School Board Elections, Poll Watchers

This policy is up for review with one small change to add additional poll watches as per guidance from our school attorney.

7. 5100 Student Attendance

This policy was reviewed and will be ready for adoption in December. Language was added to reflect attendance during the pandemic which emphasizes the importance of student participation during remote learning and allows for various means for students to demonstrate their attendance through documented participation in online or virtual classes, completion of assignments, documentation of daily school activities and learning or correspondence via online platform, email and telephone.

8. 9150, Non-Fraternization

The subcommittee agreed to hold off its review of this policy until after the pandemic.

9. 5500, 5500-R, Student Records

This policy is up for review and will be discussed with Mr. Araoz as this policy must reflect the changes in Education Law 2d – student data privacy law.

The Policy Subcommittee will be working on this policy at our next meeting along with:

6705, Federal Funds Purchasing

0000, Mission Statement and Vision

4000, Student Learning Standards and Instructional Guidelines

4513, Library Materials Selection

9420, Recruiting and Hiring

9700, Professional Learning and Staff Development

Mr. Vulpis asked if there were any questions regarding Item 10 B below. There were no questions. Mr. Vulpis asked for a motion to adopt the policies listed in Item B (For Adoption).

Upon motion made by Daniel DeMatteo, seconded by Joseph Kilgus, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the following policies listed in Item B were unanimously approved for adoption.

After the motion was made to adopt Item 10 B, Ms. Ruiz stated that the policy name in Item 10 B-2 was incorrect and asked the Board to amend the motion to correct the name of the policy from Opioid Overdose Prevention Regulation to Opioid Overdose

Prevention **Policy and** Regulation.

Mr. Vulpis asked for a motion to amend Item 10 B-2 to read: 8121.1-R, Opioid Overdose Prevention Policy and Regulation.

Upon motion made by Joseph Kilgus, seconded by Daniel DeMatteo, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the policy name was amended to read: 8121.1-R, Opioid Overdose Prevention Policy and Regulation.

Mr. Vulpis then asked for another motion to approve Item 10 B-2 as amended for adoption.

Upon motion made by Peter McNally, seconded by Kristen O’Hagan, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the policy listed in Item 10 B-2, as amended, was unanimously approved for adoption.

B. For Adoption

1. 4531, Field Trip and Excursions
2. 8121.1-R, Opioid Overdose Prevention Policy and Regulation

C. For Review

1. 2520, Board Member Training
2. 4770, 4770-R, Graduation
3. 5100, Student Attendance
4. 5500, 5500-R, Student Records
5. 0105, Equity, Inclusivity, and Diversity in Education
6. 2120.3, School Board Elections – Poll Watchers Policy
7. 9150, Non-Fraternization “New”
8. 6705, Federal Funds Purchasing
9. 0000, Mission Statement and Vision
10. 4000, Student Learning Standards and Instructional Guidelines
11. 4513, Library Materials Selection
12. 9420, Recruiting and Hiring
13. 9700, Professional Learning and Staff Development

11. Reports

A. Superintendent’s Report

COVID Update

As you are aware, we have now had three positive cases of COVID-19 and we have been fortunate to be able to reopen quickly. This is due to the procedures and guidelines we have in place and compliance with these procedures by our students and staff. I also believe that credit goes to our community at large for also following social distancing

guidelines. We appreciate the assistance of the Nassau County Department of Health and the skill and efforts of our administrative team and nurses that have assisted with the contact tracing process. Tomorrow you will receive a letter from me regarding travel guidelines that have been issued by the New York State Department of Health. With the upcoming holidays and the uptick in cases we do hope that families who will be traveling will follow the guidelines. This will help to limit the possible impact on our district.

We are very proud that we have been able to stay open during this time and hope to keep our doors open as we move into the fall and winter. We have engaged in extensive discussions with the Board of Education, our administrators, reviewed our staff survey and conferred with our school doctor regarding our instructional plan. We firmly believe at this time it is not in the best interest of the health and safety of our students and staff for us to return more students to our buildings and therefore our instructional plan will stay as it is for the time being. We will continuously re-evaluate our approach depending on the transmission level in our area and when it becomes possible, make adjustments in our plan with the hope that in the future we can return all students to our schools full-time. The Suffolk County Executive in a radio interview reported that it appears that schools are doing a great job and the contact tracing reveals that the COVID cases are NOT coming from inside our schools but rather from the community and schools are managing and controlling the spread. At this time, it is just not advisable given the increase in cases that we are seeing. We thank you for your understanding at this challenging time.

We do however want to know what you are thinking. We will be holding a parent forum on Monday, November 23, 2020, beginning at 6:00 p.m. to hear your concerns, feedback questions and suggestions about how things are going regarding our procedures, as well as our instructional plan. We ask that you submit questions in advance at the link provided on our website so we can be best prepared to respond. We will also be sending out a brief survey with a quick turn-around time to gain some feedback regarding our instructional model to help frame our discussion. Our administrators will all be present, and most of the time will be spent in an open dialogue with families. We look forward to hearing your thoughts, questions, and suggestions. Please respond to the survey and log your questions on our website.

Living with the Bay

The Living with the Bay project, specifically the bulkhead, is moving forward. We have been meeting with the GOSR team regularly. We were hoping that they would have been present tonight to provide a presentation to the board and community about the project; however, they were not able to join us. We are awaiting the final permits from the New York State Education Department and once they are received construction on the bulkhead will begin. A start date of November 1st was established, however, since the

permits have not yet been approved that date has been slightly delayed. You should see trailers on our property shortly, and we are hopeful that the work should begin within the next week or so. We do hope that this project stays on schedule so that the completion can coincide with the beginning of the construction of our athletic complex which is scheduled to start in March. Mrs. Scrio will now provide an update on the bond work.

Report from Mrs. Scrio:

Today we awarded contracts for the Centre Avenue HVAC project which is scheduled for the Summer of 2021. This is the second bond project that has been approved by the SED and contracts awarded. The Centre Avenue masonry work was awarded in June. This project will also take place in the summer of 2021. Both projects came in well below budget and we hope this trend will continue.

Over the past several months our architect has worked closely with our Board of Education, teachers, administrators, and coaches in the design of the high school science labs, art room, Family and Consumer Science classroom and the athletic fields. The plans for these projects are being finalized and will be submitted in the next few weeks to SED for their approval. We hope to begin the athletic fields in the Spring of 2021 after the Living with the Bay project completes the bulkhead which is scheduled to begin this month.

The website has an area specifically designated for the Bond. Timelines are posted on a regular basis for your review. The HS classrooms and Athletic field plans will be posted shortly. Please be sure to visit the website for updated information

Ms. Ruiz thanked Mrs. Scrio and Mr. Daly. She also thanked Mr. Schaffer who has worked hand in hand with our high school staff, coaches, and Mr. Grillo in the design of the high school bond projects.

[Mr. Vulpis commented that the Board appreciates the input from everyone involved in the bond projects. The projects are coming to fruition. In the end it is going to be the users of the facilities who will be the most affected.]

Achievement

Centre and Rhame teachers received training on Superintendent's Conference Day. Teachers were provided with the opportunity to have a deeper understanding of our new *Wonders* Program, with an emphasis on navigating the program's technology resources to support in-person and hybrid learning. They also participated in learning labs, which created the space for teachers to work collaboratively across both buildings to support reading instruction.

The guidance department is hard at work with our seniors to get college applications submitted as early as possible. To date, the Class of 2021 has submitted almost 250 college applications. Some notable colleges that our students have applied to include Columbia University, Cornell University, New York University, Boston University, the University of Miami and a host of SUNYs.

There are 116 students registered to test for 239 AP Exams in May of 2021. This represents a 5% increase from last year, based on the number of students that sat for an exam in May of 2020. Thank you to our high school administrators, guidance department and teachers for providing increased opportunities for our students. That is quite impressive!

School counselors will collaborate with Social Studies teachers in Grades 7-9 to deliver grade appropriate presentations on quarter one academic and personal progress. Students joined a grade specific Google Classroom, participated in icebreaker activities to get to know their classmates a little better and the role of the guidance counselor was discussed.

Opportunity

Centre and Rhame students celebrated Red Ribbon Week. The theme for this year was “Be Happy, Be Brave, Be Drug Free”. Students learned about the dangers of drug use and abuse, and how to make good choices. All students signed a digital pledge committing to be brave and drug free.

Following the success of our fall intramural program, our winter intramural program for all 7-12 students began last week. This program will be led by our coaching staff and is scheduled to run through December 17, 2020. Sports offered include volleyball and basketball at the junior high and high school levels and high school cheer.

The East Rockaway Gull is live on the web with over 30 new student written articles. Topics include student views on hybrid learning, the election, sports, and even a weekly recap of the Masked Singer! I was very impressed with the quality of the articles and I commend our faculty editor, Mrs. Perrone.

This evening we held our first College Digital Portfolio Night. AP art students will be presenting their artwork to representatives from 13 colleges. Each student had 20 minutes to discuss and receive a critique and suggested next steps on their work. This event was created in lieu of the annual portfolio night at The Heckscher Museum which was cancelled due to COVID precautions.

The flutists of the Senior High Band participated in a vibrato masterclass with U.S.

Marine Band, “The President’s Own” flutist Gunnery Sergeant Ellen Dooley. The U.S. Marine Band is widely regarded as one of the best wind ensembles in the world and is known for their educational outreach. During the Virtual Master Class, Gunnery Sergeant Dooley discussed the techniques and concepts necessary to develop a proper vibrato, as well as the history and duties of the U.S. Marine Band.

Innovation

Centre and Rhame teachers received technology training to support the enhancement of current technological practices. Teachers in Grades K-3 participated in collegial circles to support their continued use and growth with the Google Classroom, which is a new addition for them this year. Our 4-6 teachers were able to learn more about how Kami and Google Forms can be used to enhance current instruction and student engagement. Rhame Avenue students started their first STEAM rotation for the year and are learning how to use coding to develop a game. Fourth grade students learned how to create sequences and moves within their games.

Building upon the professional learning opportunities during Superintendent’s Conference Day, teachers at East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School are regularly and successfully using various technology platforms to engage students in learning. The use of break out rooms has allowed students both in school and at home to collaborate on various tasks. The use of Kami has allowed students to annotate and write on digital documents and easily submit their work to their teachers. The use of PearDeck has enhanced asynchronous learning.

Multimedia Technology students learned different video recording "shots." They then used Adobe Premiere video editing software to put the shots together to create a short tutorial video on the different techniques. A sample of one group’s work can be seen on the district website. Now students are applying those techniques to create a silent film.

Connection

Centre and Rhame Newscasters is now back in production. Our daily morning news, presented by our sixth grade students, has helped to promote a sense of community and normalcy for our school communities.

During the 2019-2020 school year, Ms. DiNome’s 7th and 8th grade Advisory Teams raised \$1,200 for *The Pulsera Project*. Through the sale of colorful handwoven bracelets, or “pulseras” in Spanish, high school students and staff helped provide aid to create jobs and educational programs in Central American countries. What an accomplishment-- muchas gracias a todos!

The East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School has created an Alumni Directory. All alumni are

invited to add their name to receive periodic updates about what is going on in the school. With the help of the Alumni Association, there are almost 200 graduates on the list already!

On Friday, November 6, 2020, students Ray Acampora and Emily Hernandez represented the East Rockaway School District at the Long Island Regional Student Forum. Students participated in a virtual discussion about learning and school life during the pandemic. Our students had the opportunity to interact with and hear about the successes and struggles of their peers in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

The ERHS Key Club and ninth grade AVID Classes are holding a Thanksgiving Food Drive to support Senator Kaminsky's yearly campaign. Food donations or supermarket gift cards will be accepted through Tuesday, November 24, 2020, and can be dropped off at the main entrance to the high school.

Ms. Ruiz wished everyone a safe and a happy Thanksgiving holiday.

12. Good and Welfare

- A. Congratulations to Dr. Bradley Krauz on earning his doctorate from St. John's University
- B. Condolences to the Keane Family on the passing of William Keane on October 28, 2020
- C. Condolences to Eileen Hiller and family on the passing of her father-in-law, William C. Hiller, on November 9, 2020
- D. Condolences to Valerie Parasmio and family on the passing of her father-in-law, Mario Parasmio, on November 9, 2020

13. Public Comments

Mr. Vulpis stated that the Board did not receive any email comments this evening. Please direct your comments to boe@esrd.org and we will get back to you on those comments.

14. Board Member Comments

Dominick Vulpis: Mr. Vulpis read the following letter addressed to the East Rockaway Staff:

As we approach this time of the year to give thanks in celebrating Thanksgiving, we find you right at the top of our list. We are fortunate to have an outstanding team of individuals that we call staff, which includes every employee of the East Rockaway School District.

As we entered the 2020-21 school year, there was a lot of uncertainty for all, but you hit

the road running and have gone on to prove you are as strong as ROCKS! We are inspired by your hard work and commitment to our community!

*We cannot predict the future of education during COVID-19, but we do know one thing, **you** will deal with each and every day to the best of your abilities! The board is inspired to be by your side, providing the best of resources we can afford along with creating policy to make the educational process a valid one for all.*

We cannot thank you enough for all you do for our students of East Rockaway. Your dedication, hard work and efforts have gone above and beyond!

Kristen O'Hagan: I would like to begin by thanking Lee Araoz for tonight's presentation. While technology has always played an integral part in our schools, now, more than ever it is a driving force in keeping kids engaged and involved while learning remotely. Your continued expertise, work, and guidance in the district is always appreciated. I would like to congratulate Mr. Vulpis for being recognized by NYSSBA for Board Excellence. Your continued leadership and service to the district are a testament to your love of community and education.

At this time of the year we are reminded of how much we have to be thankful for. I cannot express how thankful I am for the staff of East Rockaway Schools for continuing to go above and beyond their call of duty. I would like to single out the Teacher Assistants – particularly in Rhame and Centre - for all they are doing to ensure our young learners are receiving the best instruction in the split classes. You are working with and troubleshooting technology and ensuring the students are on task. Your commitment to the kids and their education does not go unnoticed and is greatly appreciated. I wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Thank you.

Peter McNally: Mr. McNally thanked Mr. Araoz on tonight's presentation. The presentation was very informative and nicely done. He also congratulated Mr. Vulpis on his well-deserved NYSSBA Board Excellence Award. Mr. McNally echoed the comments of both Mr. Vulpis and Mrs. O'Hagan. Even though he feels badly for the kids this year, he is thankful that they have the administrators and teachers who continue to make learning and coming to school special. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Joseph Kilgus: Mr. Kilgus congratulated Mr. Vulpis on receiving the NYSSBA Excellence Board Award. He is personally thankful for the opportunity to serve as a board member and to give back to the community and school district. He asked everyone to be smart and stay safe and wished everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday.

Daniel DeMatteo: Mr. DeMatteo echoed Mr. Kilgus' good advice and the comments of his

fellow trustees. He shared the following quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson, *“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”* He congratulated Mr. Vulpis on receiving the NYSSBA Excellence Award. Mr. Vulpis is an outstanding individual and being able to work with Mr. Vulpis and to give back to the community is an honor and a privilege. He wished everyone a happy, healthy, and prosperous Thanksgiving Day!

15. Mr. Vulpis asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon motion made by Peter McNally, seconded by Joseph Kilgus, and passed unanimously, the public meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi
District Clerk