

**MINUTES**  
**ROCKY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**October 27, 2008**

**Members Present:**

Joseph Sanseverino  
Margaret Smith  
Edward Darcey  
Diane Burke  
Michael Nofi

**Also Present:**

Carla L. D'Ambrosio, Ed.D.  
Sherry J. Alessandro, Ed.D.  
Michel F. Ring, Ed.D.  
David Pearl, Esq.

At 6:10 PM a regular public meeting of the Board of Education was called to order in the Social Studies office of the Rocky Point High School by Joseph Sanseverino.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 6:11 PM Margaret Smith made a motion and Diane Burke seconded to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss particular personnel matters and contract negotiations with David Pearl, school district attorney.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

At 7:30 PM Edward Darcey made a motion and Michael Nofi seconded to end Executive Session and re-convene to the Regular Public Session in the High School auditorium.

**All in favor** – Motion carried 5-0

**PUBLIC SESSION**

**Mr. Sanseverino called the meeting to order at 7:42 PM.**

Pledge of Allegiance

Present:        Joseph Sanseverino, President  
                  Margaret Smith, Vice President  
                  Edward Darcey, Trustee  
                  Diane Burke, Trustee  
                  Michael Nofi, Trustee  
                  Carla L. D'Ambrosio Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
                  Sherry J. Alessandro, Ed.D., Asst. Supt. for HR/Administration  
                  Michael F. Ring, Ed.D., Asst. Supt. for Finance/Operations  
                  Patricia Jones, District Clerk

**Mr. Sanseverino opened the floor to questions and/or comments from meeting attendees.**

- Ms. Mary Wandle, on behalf of the Executive Board of the Rocky Point PTA, extended her sincere appreciation and gratitude to the members of the Board of Education for their time and dedication to the students of the Rocky Point UFSD. Ms. Wandle expressed gratitude to the members for consistently “putting children first.”
- Mr. Sanseverino thanked the PTA for acknowledging the Board of Education members and noted his appreciation for the work the PTA performs on behalf of the students of the Rocky Point UFSD.
- Mr. Burdette Loomis identified himself as both a resident of the school district and a member of the Rocky Point Civic Association. Reading from a prepared statement, Mr. Loomis expressed his concerns regarding the unsupervised presence of students of the district at the Kohl’s Shopping Center during the “9<sup>th</sup> period.” Mr. Loomis provided the district clerk with copies of documents obtained from the County of Suffolk Police Department pertaining to statistics on youth disturbances occurring at the Kohl’s Shopping Center for selected time frames from 2005 through October 2008. In addition, Mr. Loomis provided the board members with a copy of the statistical findings from his interviews with store owners and managers within the shopping center. Overall, the merchants indicated to Mr. Loomis that the infusion of the unsupervised students in the shopping center during the 1:15 PM to 2:15 PM hour made their customers uncomfortable, hurt their businesses, and presented a major concern. Mr. Loomis asked the board members what the school district was doing regarding this circumstance.
- Mr. Sanseverino noted that the school district does not have a 9<sup>th</sup> period and that the school day ended at 1:22 PM. Mr. Sanseverino suggested that the local merchants of the Kohl’s Shopping Center contact the school district directly to schedule a conference with the administration if they are experiencing problems with students of the district.
- Dr. D’Ambrosio remarked that the district provided specific areas for the student-athletes to attend in order to study and/or do homework. In addition, extra-help sessions were provided during this time period, as well as a supervised study hall environment in the cafeteria.
- Mr. Sanseverino noted that the disturbances in the Kohl’s Shopping Center cited by Mr. Loomis may not exclusively involve Rocky Point students, and, as such, student attendees of the district should not be painted with the same brush.
- Dr. D’Ambrosio advised Mr. Loomis that she would meet with him and Mr. Kessler in order to further discuss this issue.
- Ms. Thérèse King stated that this issue is one that needs to be addressed by the school district and expressed her concerns regarding the potential for possible harm to students. Ms. King expressed her concern that her child was home alone by 1:35 in the afternoon and opined that the school district was not engaging students by offering extra-help in the cafeteria and/or study hall.
- Dr. D’Ambrosio invited Ms. King to join a planned roundtable discussion concerning this issue.
- Ms. Patricia Noto referenced a recent article in *Newsday* pertaining to the nutritional value of school lunches and questioned the nutritional balance of

- lunches being offered at Rocky Point Schools. Ms. Noto expressed her view that lunch menus did not coincide with the current Wellness Program guidelines.
- Dr. Ring reported that he had met with Elena Lynch-Dobert, school lunch manger and that the district is in full compliance with New York State guidelines and deemed to be in good standing. Dr. Ring discussed the fiscal restraints component of nutritional guidelines and welcomed Ms. Noto to contact Ms. Lynch-Dobert directly in order to discuss her concerns. Following further discussion on this matter, Dr. Ring invited all those interested to attend a roundtable discussion to be held in the near future.
  - Ms. Lisa Gasparro, a teacher at the Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School, offered the suggestion that school lunch monitors make certain that students place vegetables and fruits on their lunch trays. It has been Ms. Gasparro's experience that if a student was encouraged to put the nutritious food item on his/her tray, they were more apt to try it.

Dr. D'Ambrosio thanked all for their comments concerning this issue.

- Ms. Melanie Plunkett Connelly expressed her feelings of regret with regard to Dr. Centamore's resignation; however, Ms. Connelly noted that the district was fortunate to have the continued administrative expertise of both Mr. Tapler and Mr. Moeller.
- Ms. Plunkett Connelly continued by reading from a prepared statement, noting that she was not speaking out as an employee of the district, nor a union member, nor community member, but as a taxpayer and citizen of the United States of America. Her concerns involved the request of a school administrator to a district employee to remove from said employee's desk a magnetic United States flag and Support Our Troops plaque. Ms. Plunkett Connelly stated that it was the employee's constitutional right to have such items on her desk and she asked that the members of the Board of Education protect her constitutional rights and rights of free speech. Again, Ms. Plunkett Connelly stressed that her attendance at the meeting was of her own volition.
- Dr. D'Ambrosio informed Ms. Plunkett Connelly that this was the first time she was aware of this situation and that she would investigate same.
- Mrs. Hassett noted that she was the parent of a child with special needs and was concerned regarding the arrangements for special education summer programs in 2009. In addition, Mrs. Hassett inquired about the availability of a sports trainer for the district.
- Dr. D'Ambrosio advised Mrs. Hassett that the district currently employed a substitute trainer and was actively seeking a full-time employee for this position.
- Patricia Scalone, President, School Related Professional Association, thanked and commended the members of the school board for their many hours of service and dedication to the students of the RPUFSD. Furthermore, in appreciation thereof, Ms. Scalone announced that the SRP Association was sponsoring the enrollment of five students to attend the North Shore Youth Council social skills workshop training seminars. Ms. Scalone extended her heartfelt gratitude to the members of

the Board of Education for their dedicated service to the students and families of the Rocky Point UFSD.

- Ms. Carol Tvelia, President, Rocky Point Administrator's Association, expressed sincere gratitude to the members of the Board of Education for their tireless and sincere dedication to the students of the district, noting the many hours of time spent in performing their duties as members of the school board.

Mr. Sanseverino extended his gratitude, on behalf of all of the members of the Board of Education, to each and every faction of the Rocky Point Union Free School District for their efforts expended on behalf of the students of the district. Mr. Sanseverino reminded those in attendance of the opportunity to speak again at the end of the meeting.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. D'Ambrosio provided a brief introduction to a PowerPoint presentation documenting the academic performance for grades K through 8. Dr. D'Ambrosio introduced Dr. Scott O'Brien, principal of the Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School, Ms. Carol Tvelia, principal of the Joseph A. Edgar Intermediate School and Dr. Joseph Tanen Centamore, principal of the Rocky Point Middle School. Each of the principals presented detailed statistical data, grade-by-grade, in the areas of ELA and mathematics. Following the presentation, Dr. D'Ambrosio announced that she was very proud of the accomplishments of the students of the district. She extended her gratitude to the administration, teachers, staff and board of education for their continued support of the instructional programs.

Dr. D'Ambrosio read aloud Governor Paterson's citation in recognition of School Board Members Recognition Week, October 20<sup>th</sup> through October 24<sup>th</sup>. Dr. D'Ambrosio extended her appreciation to the board members for their commitment and contributions to education.

Mr. Sanseverino thanked Dr. D'Ambrosio and the principals for the presentation and asked if anyone had any questions concerning the report.

There were no questions and/or further discussion.

## **MINUTES**

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Minutes of the following Board of Education meetings be accepted as presented: **Regular Meeting, September 22, 2008, Audit Committee Meeting, October 21, 2008.**

All in Favor - Motion carried 5-0

## **TREASURER'S REPORTS**

Upon a motion made by Edward Darcey and seconded by Michael Nofi, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepts the Treasurer's Reports for the months of July and August 2008 as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

#### **EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITY ACCOUNT TREASURER REPORT**

Upon a motion made by Michael Nofi and seconded by Diane Burke, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepts the Extra-Classroom Activity Treasurer's Report for the months of July and August 2008 as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

#### **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepts the Financial Reports for the months of July and August 2008 as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

#### **BUDGET TRANSFER SUMMARY – JULY AND AUGUST 2008**

Upon a motion made by Edward Darcey and seconded by Michael Nofi, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the July and August 2008 Budget Transfer Summary.

All in favor - Motion carried 5-0

#### **2007-2008 AUDITOR'S REPORT**

Upon a motion made by Michael Nofi and seconded by Diane Burke, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the Independent Auditor's Report dated October 27, 2008 with accompanying statements and schedules for the fiscal year ending June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008, which have been submitted by our external auditors, Coughlin Foundotos Cullen & Danowski, LLP.

Mr. Sanseverino commented that the Audit Committee members recommended acceptance of this report and that the auditors will be present at the meeting of November 24, 2008, to provide a detailed accounting of same. Mr. Sanseverino invited meeting attendees to come to the November meeting with any questions they may wish Mr. Peter Rodriguez, CPA, to address.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

#### **INTERNAL CLAIMS AUDIT REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2008**

Upon a motion made by Diane Burke and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the September 2008 Internal Claims Audit Report.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**RESOLUTION TO AMEND APPOINTMENT – DESIGNATION OF AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURE ON CHECKS**

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that Irene Rosener, School District Treasurer, be authorized to sign checks for the 2008-2009 school year, and that Kim Lake, Part-Time Deputy School District Treasurer, be authorized to sign checks for the 2008-2009 school year in the absence of Irene Rosener; and furthermore, that two signatories be required for any check exceeding \$10,000 and that the signatories for such checks be the Part-Time Deputy School District Treasurer or the School District Treasurer and the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**AUTHORIZATION FOR BUSINESS OFFICIAL TO APPROVE BUDGET TRANSFERS**

Upon a motion made by Edward Darcey and seconded by Michael Nofi, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that Michael F. Ring, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, be authorized to approve budget transfers under \$100,000 per occurrence during the 2008-2009 school year.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**CONTRACTS FOR UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN SERVICES FOR THE 2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR**

Upon a motion made by Michael Nofi and seconded by Diane Burke, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with Step by Step Preschool and Trinity Nursery School for the Universal Pre-kindergarten services for the 2008-2009 school year, as per the attached.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**CONTRACT EXTENSION-EXTERNAL AUDITOR FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009**

Upon a motion made by Diane Burke and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Rocky Point Schools, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, awards the External Audit contract for the 2008/2009 fiscal year to Coughlin Foundotos Cullen & Danowski, LLP, at a fee of \$47,200.00, as per the attached.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES CONTRACTS**

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education authorizes the purchasing agent to enter into contracts for special education and related services as required under applicable Individual Educational Programs applicable law and District Policy, from time to time, in accordance with the attached schedule of providers and associated rates.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**BEST BUY TEACH AWARD**

Upon a motion made by Edward Darcey and seconded by Michael Nofi, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the \$2,000 Teach Award from Best Buy; said gift card to be used toward the purchase of Instructional Technology in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in the Best Buy Grant Award.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**TARGET DONATIONS TO DISTRICT**

Upon a motion made by Michael Nofi and seconded by Diane Burke, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves and accepts the donations from Target.

Take Charge of Education – FJC	\$195.27
Take Charge of Education – JAE	\$186.02

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Rocky Point Union Free School District hereby approves, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to increase the general fund budget by \$381.29 as a result of the donation from Target.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the following budget codes be adjusted to reflect that increase:

A 2110.500.01.0000	\$195.27
A 2110.500.02.0000	\$186.02

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT SHELTER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS AND THE ROCKY POINT UFSD**

Upon a motion made by Diane Burke and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education authorizes Carla L. D’Ambrosio, to accept, on behalf of the Board of Education, the Agreement between the American National Red Cross and the Rocky Point Union Free School District, as presented.

Mr. Sanseverino advised that this resolution allowed the American National Red Cross to utilize the schools within the Rocky Point UFSD as shelters in the event of a national emergency.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBER: SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT MEMBER**

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the appointment of Jodie Lomas as a Parent Member to the Committee on Special Education/Committee on Preschool Special Education. (In accordance with the Commissioner’s Regulations, Part 200 and the provisions of the Education Law, Section 4402.)

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**COMMITTEES ON SPECIAL EDUCATION/PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Upon a motion made by Edward Darcey and seconded by Michael Nofi, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education votes to arrange for appropriate services pursuant to the recommendations of Schedule 10-27-08-A and Schedule 10-27-08- B.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**PERSONNEL**

Upon a motion made by Michael Nofi and seconded by Diane Burke, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the attached Personnel changes.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Discussion ensued. Mr. Sanseverino announced that Dr. Centamore was resigning from his position as principal of the Rocky Point Middle School in order to take a position with BOCES. Mr. Sanseverino noted that Dr. Centamore was the first and only building principal at the Middle School since its inception and thanked Dr. Centamore for his dedication and his tremendous contributions to the district. Mr. Sanseverino, on behalf of the Board of Education, extended to Dr. Centamore his congratulations and sincere best wishes.

## **RESOLUTION**

Upon a motion made by Diane Burke and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

**WHEREAS**, the Director of Instruction, Anja Groth, recently gave birth on September 30, 2008, and is currently on sick leave, and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Groth anticipates being medically able to return to her duties on or about December 1, 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, the performance of the duties and responsibilities of Ms. Groth's position are critical to the continued educational operation of the Rocky Point School District; and

**WHEREAS**, filling the position of Director of Instruction on a temporary basis with an outside consultant would be extremely costly and would require a great deal of time to effect; and

**WHEREAS**, until Ms. Groth is medically able to return to her position as Director of Instruction, her position requires someone, on an interim basis, to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of her position; and

**WHEREAS**, the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Administration, Dr. Sherry J. Alessandro, is qualified and certified to perform these duties and responsibilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board has asked Dr. Alessandro to perform these duties and responsibilities of the Director of Instruction on a temporary, interim basis until Ms. Groth is able to return, and

**WHEREAS**, the performance of these duties and responsibilities require Dr. Alessandro to devote significant additional time and effort to those duties and responsibilities above and beyond her usual duties and responsibilities as Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Administration, and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Alessandro has maintained and will continue to maintain a daily log reflecting the additional time spent performing the duties and responsibilities of the Director of Instruction; and

**WHEREAS**, the log has been reviewed by the Board and reflects an average of 10 hours per week being devoted exclusively by Dr. Alessandro to performing the duties and responsibilities of the Director of Instruction in addition to her duties and responsibilities as Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Administration; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board anticipates that Dr. Alessandro will continue to devote an average of 10 hours per week exclusively to performing the duties and responsibilities of the Director of Instruction and will have the log reviewed by the Board at the end of November, 2008, to confirm the number of hours; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education, in recognition of the additional workload placed upon Dr. Alessandro and the additional time expended by her in performing the duties and responsibilities of Director of Instruction wishes to compensate Dr. Alessandro for undertaking these additional duties and responsibilities;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved that, effective October 1, 2008, the Board of Education hereby grants to Dr. Alessandro a stipend to be calculated based upon Dr. Alessandro's usual and customary hourly rate of pay for the 2008-2009 school year determined on the basis of a 240 day work year and an eight hour work day, the total amount of which shall not exceed \$8,000.00.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**Mr. Sanseverino opened the floor to questions and/or comments.**

- Mr. Longman, commenting upon the situation at the Kohl's Shopping Center, suggested that the school district work with the community and civic association directly to solve this problem. Mr. Longman further suggested that school work, other than extra-help, be assigned to the students in order to engage their interests and hold their attention, i.e., games and alternative teaching tools such as an abacus.
- Mr. Longman asked the members of the board to help empower parents so that the parents might be better able to teach their children at home. He suggested parents might work with the PTA to reach this goal.
- Concerning school lunch, Mr. Longman suggested the district provide items such as V-8®, Ensure® and Complete® in order to supplement the nutritional needs of the children. Mr. Longman offered that the school district should look to the long-term solutions to the nutritional needs of the students and not only at New York state guidelines.
- Mr. Lantz stated that it was his pleasure to be in attendance at this board meeting in which the goals and accomplishments of the students were celebrated. Mr. Lantz, a former school administrator from Michigan, recognized the board members for their dedicated service.
- Mr. Lantz noted that the month of October was the worse month for finances since the Great Depression. He stressed his concerns regarding the school budget to be put into place for the 2009-2010 school year and inquired about the measures and procedures the school district would undertake to keep costs down.

- Diane Burke advised Mr. Lantz of the budget workshops that will begin in January 2009. Ms. Burke invited Mr. Lantz to attend these workshops and reminded Mr. Lantz and the members of the audience that they were all a welcome part of the budget process.
- Ms. Maria Farley commented that she was upset that the school district was being blamed for the students' behavior resulting in the situation at the Kohl's Shopping Center. Ms. Farley offered her opinion that if the students were engaging in undesirable and/or dangerous behavior after school let out, it was the responsibility of the parents of the students involved, and not the administration of the school district, to address the issue.

There were no further questions or comments.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 9:08 PM a motion was made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey to go into Executive Session to discuss particular personnel matters.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Jones  
District Clerk

The Board returned to Open Session at 9:20 PM.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:25 PM a motion was made by Michael Nofi and seconded by Diane Burke for the Board of Education to adjourn the meeting.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Carla L. D'Ambrosio  
Superintendent of Schools



