

**Rochelle Park Board of Education
Caucus Meeting Minutes– 7:30 P.M.
May 5, 2014**

I. Call to Order and Flag Salute

II. Roll Call

Board Members	Present	Absent
Mr. Mark Scully, Vice President	X	
Mr. Sam Allos	X	
Mrs. Arlene Ciliento-Buyck	X	
Mrs. Teresa Cravello	X	
Mrs. Maria Lauerman	X	
Mrs. Dimitria Leakas		X
Mr. Jay Esposito, President	X	

Others Present:

- Dennis McDonald, Interim Superintendent
- Christine Werner, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
- Cara Hurd, Principal
- Ellen Kobylarz, Board Recording Secretary

III. Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P. L. 1975 Announcement – by Board President

In accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, I wish to announce that: “The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. Notices announcing the date, time and place for this Regular Meeting were sent to all concerned individuals, associations and sent to the The Record and The Our Town, in accordance with Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.

IV. 2014-2015 Budget Presentation

- Mrs. Werner presented the budget presentation.
Total 2014-2015 proposed budget is \$12,301,617.00. That’s an increase of \$1,273,156 over the 13-14 school year. Percentage increase is 11.54%. Total 2014-2015 general fund budget is \$11,733,311.00. General fund operating budget increased \$1,089,684.00 over the 13-14 school year. Percentage increase is 10.24%.
General fund budget increases are due to tuition contracts, staff salaries, health care benefits premiums, maintenance/insurance/utilities and fuel, purchased services, staff development, business office salaries, textbooks, capital outlay projects technology sprinkler system. Hackensack High School tuition alone is a \$145,010.00 increase due to more ingoing students to Hackensack than graduating. State aid figures are at a 40% decrease. The 2014-2015 general fund tax levy per average household is \$89.91 plus the 2014-2015 referendum tax levy

of \$96.97 would make the 2014-2015 tax levy \$186.88. The Board of Education decided to make a capitol reserve withdrawal option making the annual increase for the 2014-2015 school year \$126.23.

At this time the floor was opened for questions, there were no questions from the public. Presentation will be posted on the website. Mrs. Werner thanked the Board of Education, Dr. McDonald. She also thanked Tatyana and Mrs. Hurd for their experience, help and support.

V. Presentation on School Uniforms

- Mr. Allos started the presentation by stating that a committee was formed, it consisted of teachers, parents and board members. He introduced Mrs. Minichetti who gave the presentation.
Mrs. Minichetti highlighted the pros to having school uniforms- Easy to identify a RP student, safety, identifiable, improve security, economical- affordable- they are durable- could start a swap. Less peer pressure, bullying due to clothes, eliminates wardrobe battles between parents and kids, easier to get kids ready and out the door, improved classroom climate. Increase in student achievement and attendance, saves on instructional time used to educating children on appropriate attire. Increase classroom concentration, decrease in administrative discipline referrals, students who dress well perform well, prepares student to dress for success.
Encouraged children to express themselves in other areas – academic pride, school pride, sense of unity, belonging. Mrs. Minichetti read letters from teachers in other districts where they have uniforms- all were advocates for uniforms.
At this time the floor was open to questions from the public.
K. Rogers started by reading a prepared speech. She researched the topic found that there was no correlation between academic achievement and dress code. She feels that Midland School doesn't need school uniforms; dress code is not a major problem in Midland. Instead of imposing uniforms enforce the current dress code the school has now. A petition was circulated and since Saturday 69 students signed the petition against uniforms. She stated students care and want to be included in this decision.
Mr. Allos and Mrs. Minichetti – both thanked K. stated they were not here to force the idea, just to explore the option, are open to feedback.
O. Vladyka- stated that Midland is a safer district than others in the area. Students are told to be a leader not a follower, they want to be individuals, uniforms takes that individuality away, some students like to be creative with what they wear.
Mrs. Azzolino asked how many students are reprimanded on their dress. What are the stats? Are students bullied because of their attire?
Mrs. Minichetti- stated students have been sent home.
Mrs. Hurd responded stating that in the beginning of warmer weather season, a few problems pop up, not a lot. Bullying due to attire has not been an issue.
A prekindergarten parent was excited about the positive aspect. Commended the student on her research on the subject, but also liked the idea of dressing for success.

Mr. Ramirez- Thiem Ave stated he was neutral, feels school culture is a bigger initiative, with changes it could be a lot better for different reasons, need a broader issue of school.

Mr. Allos asked him to help with culture ideas.

Mr. Borchard Forest PI- thanked the students, stated they have bright futures.

Added that the statistics show no significant change with or without uniforms.

Looked at Midland's factor group- none of the other districts in our factor group have school uniforms. Stated that uniforms may look good but this district has test scores where 57% failed Language Arts. We have to look at priorities how do we get good to great. He went on to say look at achievement- not a single question on the Budget everyone is here for uniforms.

President Esposito added two years ago no one came out about test scores, but they came out when baseball was cut. There are bigger issues here, Uniforms are exploratory.

Mrs. Pascarella Thiem Ave- agreed that children should have their individually, There should have more focus on the budget.

Mr. Allos stated that the individually comes in achievement not on your attire, added consistency is important to learn.

Mrs. Minichetti – came with the best possible intentions, one more thing to make it better.

Mrs. Rogers- read several articles on the subject, feels that this school got her daughter here, it's a collaborate effort; a uniform will not make her better. Don't punish the good. Rochelle Park doesn't need it. The police know the kids, test scores need to go up. Her daughter is happy wants her to stay that way.

G. Esposito- stated she helped K with the survey, the majority of students wanted to sign, they are happy with what they wear to school.

VI. Superintendent's Report- Dr. McDonald Reported the following:

- Thanked Mrs. Werner for the budget presentation, the ad hoc committee for the presentation on school uniforms as well as the students for their opinion's and research they did on school uniforms.
- Resolutions on the agenda for 3 workshops- Bi-lingual Education, Strauss Esmay Associates 29th Annual educational Policy and School Law Seminar and Gang Awareness.
- Congratulations to the Midland School students and Hackensack High School students who made the third marking period honor roll.
- Congratulations to Olivia Vladyka who has been accepted to the Bergen County Academies in Hackensack.
- At next week's meeting the Board of Education will honor the Teacher of the Year Mrs. Hernando and several students for their art work.

VII. Principal's Report- Mrs. Hurd reported the following:

- Climate and Culture surveys were done in the fall and they are now being done again in the spring. Surveys will be available through May 15, 2014, check the school website.

- School Improvement Plan Status- will meet with RAC on May 14th to discuss the revisions made to the SIP process for the 2014-2015 school year.
- Exiting focus school status- Mrs. Hurd outlined the goals the school needs to meet to not be considered a focus school- 1 is to no longer meet the definition of focus school for two consecutive years. 43% achievement gap or less, currently we are at 48%. All interventions required through its QSR are implemented. If identified as category F (gap) or G(subgroup) performance, its lowest performing subgroups have met their annual measureable objectives for three years, and/or have demonstrated high growth for two consecutive years as measured by SGP or 65 or higher.

VIII. Business Administrator’s Report- Mrs. Werner reported the following:

- Resolutions on tonight’s agenda include the passing of the school budget, recognizing Teacher Appreciation Week, National Nurse’s Week and Special education Week.

IX. Reports – Committee Action Items – (deferred to regular meeting)

X. Items for Board Action - Resolutions

Note: Resolutions marked with an asterisk are as a result of Executive Session Discussion.

1. POLICY # 6220 BUDGET PREPARATION

Adoption of the 2014-2015 School District Budget Statement:

WHEREAS the Rochelle Park Board of Education approved a tentative 2014-2015 school district budget on March 19, 2014; and,

WHEREAS the Rochelle Park Board of Education advertised the 2014-2015 school district budget on Monday, April 28, 2014 in The Record; and,

WHEREAS the tentative 2014-2015 school district budget met the criteria for a pre-budget year adjusted tax levy, which includes a weighted increase for enrollment, inflated by two (2) percent for a Commissioner’s Automatic Tax Levy Adjustment in the amount of \$214,928 for a total adjusted local tax levy of \$10,381,784; and,

WHEREAS P.L. 2011, c. 202 eliminated the annual voter referendum on the proposed general fund tax levy if the tax levy is at or below the statutory cap of 2.0%;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 2014-2015 school district budget is as follows:

	Budget	Local Tax Levy
Total General Fund	\$ <u>11,733,311</u>	\$ <u>10,308,529</u>
Total Special Revenue Fund	\$ <u>130,000</u>	<u>n/a</u>
Total Debt Service Fund	\$ <u>438,306</u>	\$ <u>243,931</u>
Totals	\$ <u>12,301,617</u>	\$ <u>10,552,460</u>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the available Banked Cap in the amount of \$252,979 be carried forward to be appropriated in the 2015-16 school district budget.

Motion by Mr. Allos, seconded by Mrs. Cravello
Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried

2. TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

WHEREAS, Teacher Appreciation Week will be celebrated the week of May 5th through May 9th, 2014; and

WHEREAS, the Rochelle Park Board of Education is aware of the vital contribution of our teachers, who are responsible for the translation of district ideas and philosophy, which they have helped to formulate into our students' programs and activities in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, the dedication, intelligence, creativity, sensitivity, and high standards of our teachers are a source of inspiration to the hundreds of students whose lives they touch, and

WHEREAS, teachers make public schools great, work to open students' minds to ideas, knowledge and dreams, keep American democracy alive by laying the foundation for good citizenship, keep American democracy alive by laying the foundation for good citizenship, continue to influence us long after our school days are only memories; and

WHEREAS the excellence of the services provided by our teachers are crucial to the success of the Rochelle Park Midland School #1;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that on behalf of the Administration, Parents, residents and Rochelle Park Board of Education, we express our gratitude to our professional staff for exemplary service to the district; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Tuesday, May 6, 2014 be designated as National Teacher Day for the Rochelle Park Public School District and that we take this opportunity to extend an official thank you to all District staff whose devotion enriches the lives of the Midland School #1 students and community.

Motion by Mrs. Cravello, seconded by Mr. Allos
Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried

3. NATIONAL NURSE'S WEEK

WHEREAS, National Nurses Week begins each year on May 6th and ends on May 12th, the birth date of Florence Nightingale, and National School Nurse's Day is celebrated on Wednesday, May 7th; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 theme "Nurses: Leading the Way", captures the significant role in improving students' health and academic outcomes. As school nurses, we lead the way by ensuring a healthier and more sustainable future for our nation's children; and

WHEREAS, children are the future and, by investing in them today, we are ensuring our world for tomorrow; and

WHEREAS, all students have a right to have their health needs safely met while in the school setting; and

WHEREAS, school nurses are professional nurses that advance the well-being, academic success, and life-long achievements of all students; and

WHEREAS, school nurses act as a liaison to the school community; parents, and health care providers on behalf of children's health; and

WHEREAS, school nurses support the health and educational success of children and youth by developing and providing programs and leadership; and

WHEREAS, school nurses understand the link between health and learning and are in a position to make a positive difference for children every day;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that on behalf of the Administration, Parents, residents and Rochelle Park Board of Education, we express our gratitude to our Nurse for her dedicated service to our students and staff and acknowledge the accomplishments of school nurses everywhere and for their efforts of meeting the needs of today's student by improving the effective delivery of health care in our school and show gratitude for the nation's school nurses, not just on this National School Nurse Day but at every opportunity throughout the year.

Motion by Mr. Scully, seconded by Mrs. Cravello
Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried

4. SPECIAL EDUCATION WEEK IN NEW JERSEY

WHEREAS, Special Education Week will be celebrated the week of May 11th through May 17th, 2014; and

WHEREAS, more than 244,000 children receive special education instruction in New Jersey's public and private schools; and

WHEREAS, more than 18,000 special needs children are enrolled in preschool and early intervention programs in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, thousands of parents, teachers, child study team members and school administrators give generously of their time and energy to support the learning needs of special education; and

WHEREAS, the theme for Special Education Week is "Climbing the Ladder of Learning"; and

WHEREAS, the public school districts and the private schools of New Jersey make a major contribution to the public welfare by preparing thousands of exceptional persons to participate as residents of this state and as members of our society;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Rochelle Park Board of Education does hereby recognize May 11th through May 17th, 2014 as Special Education Week in Rochelle Park and call upon all residents to recognize the achievements of New Jersey's special

education students and the outstanding contributions made by educators, school board members, schools and agencies for the disabled and their parents toward quality education for the exceptional citizens of our state.

Motion by Mrs. Lauerman, seconded by Mr. Allos
Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried

XI. Open to the Public (Any Item)

During this portion of the meeting, the residents are invited to address the Board with any questions, comments or concerns that may be in respect to the operation of their school.

Motion by Mr. Allos, seconded by Mrs. Lauerman, to open public comment at 9:15 p.m.
Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried

Mrs. Vladyka- Peek St. expressed what a fabulous job Mrs. Purcell does with her students. She really put time and effort into her classes and students. She is a very special teacher.

Motion by Mrs. Cravello, seconded by Mr. Scully, to close public comment at 9:18 p.m.
Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried

XII. Other Business

XIII. Announcements:

The Regular Meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, 2014. The next Caucus meeting will be held Monday June 2, 2014 at 7:30 P.M. both will be held in the Media Center.

XIV. Executive Session Announcement (if needed)

WHEREAS, the Rochelle Park Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") will convene in Executive Session to discuss confidential matters which include:

_____ Personnel _____.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Board shall move into Executive Session to discuss the above referenced matter(s).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the minutes of the executive session will provide as much information as possible without violating any applicable privilege or confidentiality so that the public can understand what was discussed and when available what the Board decision was.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the minutes of the executive session will be released to the public in an appropriately redacted form within a reasonable period of time after the privilege or confidentiality is no longer applicable to such minutes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the redacted portion of the executive session minutes will not be released until such time as the privilege or confidentiality is no longer applicable.

Motion by Mrs. Cravello, seconded by Mrs. Lauerman, to open Executive Session at 9:15 p.m.

Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried

Motion by Mrs. Lauerman, seconded by Mr. Allos, to close Executive Session at 10:15 p.m.

Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried

Motion by Mr. Scully, seconded by Mrs. Buyck, to resume Regular Meeting Agenda at 10:16 p.m.

Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried

XV. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Allos, seconded by Mrs. Cravello, to adjourn meeting at 10:17 p.m.

Roll Call 6-0
Motion Carried