



48 SCHOOL STREET
EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK 11937
PHONE: 631-324-0144 • FAX: 631-324-0269

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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OCTOBER 20, 2014 BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The October 20th board meeting shared some welcomed news: Superintendent John J. Finello received a waiver from New York State to continue serving in this position. The meeting also included an overview by the school's External Auditor Ali Battaglia from R.S. Abrams. Ms. Battaglia stated that Springs School received an "unmodified opinion" which is the "best opinion a school can get." She commented that her audit was "smooth" and there were "no material weaknesses." She commented that the issue of Springs School having an unallocated fund which exceeds the state-allowable 4% is something that the Board has been aware of. Board President Liz Mendelman explained that it's important to have a "rainy day fund" and for a small school like Springs, small fluctuations in student enrollment can mean a difference of needing an extra \$100,000 but that the 4% is "Our basis for starting the next business cycle."

Springs community member Kate Rabinowitz, who created the Anna Lytton Foundation for Arts & Wellness in memory of her daughter, announced that the Foundation will be offering a sample of nutrition, wellness and "mindfulness" classes on November 4 which is Superintendent's Conference Day, to teachers and staff. If teachers are interested in bringing

this into their classrooms, the Foundation will be available. "I hope Springs could be an example to other schools in the country for what schools can do," said Ms. Rabinowitz. Poetry workshops, trips to the Long House, yoga, and other ideas are planned to be offered for grades K-4.

PTA Report - PTA President Lisa Matz announced a number of activities that the PTA has planned. She began by sharing that this year's Back-to-School BBQ had a great turnout, with a record number of food tickets being given out (525), along with a "ton" of food this year. Mrs. Matz also updated the audience that the Bocce court is now 100% complete. On October 29 at 1:00 p.m. there will be a Bocce Ball tournament against Southampton's Special Education Department. Representatives will be here from the Board of the Special Olympics. "Bring a chair!" Mrs. Matz exclaimed. Other announcements were that the PTA-sponsored Junior High dance is being held this Friday and the Fall Book Fair will also be open during the dance so parents are encouraged to come in and shop while their children are at the dance. The Book Fair will have "A Kingdom of Books" theme this year. Family night is Wednesday, October 29th. Mrs. Matz also said that a PTA "Turkey Trot" fundraiser is planned: On the morning of Monday, November 24th - there will be a Turkey Trot on School Street - students are encouraged to seek sponsorships from family members. Parent volunteers will be posted throughout the walk to help supervise. More information will be sent home shortly.

President's Report

a. Safe Routes to School –Mrs. Mendelman announced that Springs School received a \$554,000 grant from NYDOT to improve the intersection at Gardiners & School St. "It's dangerous and it floods," she said. Construction is planned to start this summer.

b. Committees – In an effort to continue to keep the community informed, Committee Meeting Notices and Minutes will be posted on the website in the near future.

c. Basic Demographics – Hamlet Comparisons Prepared by TEH Demographics from the most recent Census data from 2010 (compares to 2004) shows that the population has grown 9% in East Hampton (most growth in Springs). Demographic data will be posted on the website as

soon as the school receives a finalized copy.

d. COMPTROLLER'S REPORT - Direct Consultant Carl Fraser looked at the school's financial condition in 2012-2013 and stated that the Comptroller's Office cited the school district for exceeding the allowable 4% in an unassigned fund balance and also noted a variance in employee leave accrual. "We're moving in the right direction and we will be working towards that compliance in the next budget," said Mr. Fraser. "There is also a variance among staff members' actual sick day accrual and the numbers that show up in Aesop." Mr. Finello stated that they plan to "check and balance" staff members' sick day accrual on a monthly basis rather than on an annual basis. The "Corrective Action Plan" is planned to be implemented by the end of this school year. The accrual analysis is very "time-consuming" but Mr. Fraser plans to have it completed by the end of December.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Enrollment - Principal Eric Casale stated that "enrollment is starting to plateau." Enrollment is now at 739 students. "We are still seeing some increases at the Charter School and the high school," he stated.

Mrs. Mendelman spoke of the community's concern about students who may be entering the school district and registering without immunizations. School nurse Debra Gherardhi confirmed that students are admitted as long as they show proof of immunization or immunizations in process. She also confirmed that the school would be notified by the Department of Health if any student was entering the district with a contagious virus. She also confirmed that enterovirus is "just like the flu" and is very common. A notice was posted on the website several weeks ago from the Principal and the Nurse's Office citing guidelines to avoid spreading a virus and staying healthy.

Personnel and financial motions were passed. These can be found on the Agenda listed on the school's website.

The next Board of Education Meeting will be Monday, November 10th.
More information can be found on the Springs School homepage.

Mission Statement

"Springs School is dedicated to providing a foundation for personal and social growth in order to develop students of exemplary character who become responsible, productive and caring citizens."