

Watchung Hills Regional High School Hall of Fame



René Thomas Rovtar

Class of 1976

Since her graduation from Watchung Hills in 1976, René Rovtar has dedicated her career to becoming an inspiring educational leader, and for the past forty years, she committed to learning as much as possible about how to help important stakeholders collaborate in creating an excellent educational experience for students. She has earned a reputation for improving every district she joined; René also earned a multitude of awards for her service along the way.

René's career started when she was hired as a teacher of French at the middle and high school levels in the Chatham and Madison School Districts. At the age of 22, she became the youngest elected board member at the time for the Long Hill Township Board of Education. In 1983, René transitioned to administrative positions and first served as a school business administrator. She held this position in multiple districts for 13 years. From 1997 to 2003, she served as the Morris County Superintendent of Schools, and subsequently was appointed as the Superintendent for the Butler, Long Hill Township, and Montville Township school districts.

Throughout her successful career, René was recognized for her leadership with many achievements. Her awards include but are not limited to, the State and National District of Character Designation, Morris County Superintendent of the Year, the Public Service Award from Montville Township Chamber of Commerce, the Promising Practice Award from Character.org, the Educational Leadership Award from the College of Education and Human Services at Montclair State University, and the Educational Leadership Award from the New Jersey Chapter of the Northeastern Coalition of Educational Leaders. Outside of the education world, René also remembered not to take herself too seriously; many acknowledge her contagious sense of humor, her family touch, and her pride in accomplishment. She earned the honor of participating on a mother/daughter team, and René as trend-setter was the first grandmother to compete in the Nathan's Fourth of July Hot Dog Eating Contest!