

# VALUE Education

## Superintendent's Notebook by Eric Lutinski, Ed.D.

Welcome back to our Rye Neck community! Whether home or away, I hope our students, families, staff members, and greater district community enjoyed the summer they hoped. Some of us need to travel to an exciting new environment, others find peace and comfort at home, and many use July and August for both. Although we often feel that summer days pass and September approaches more quickly than the rest of the year, there is a motivating rhythm to the start of a new school year. As I reflected on June's High School Graduation, I was reminded that such ceremonies are also called "commencements" to signify the end of one phase and the start of another. Each new beginning in September is a step toward our ongoing mission to position our students for future success.

An annual effort to align our resources to fit the needs of our students is to make appropriate changes or additions to district staff. This year we have added to our capability to address special education needs at both Daniel Warren and F. E. Bellows; increased our academic intervention services at F. E. Bellows; and augmented our HS Counseling Department by 33%. We have also included several positions into our budget that we had previously added temporarily, including part-time nursing assistance and hall monitors at the MS/HS.

One big change is the departure of our high school principal, Dr. Tina Wilson. Dr. Wilson is the new Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction for the Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District. Dr. Wilson served as principal of RNHS for the past six years, helping to design our new Collaborative Science Center and guiding the school through the COVID-19 pandemic. We were "principal partners" on either end of the building and I valued her capacity to multitask and think on her feet. I wish her well on the north side of Rye Town.

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## An Update from the Board of Education

by Rebecca Mansell,  
President



On behalf of the Rye Neck Board of Education, welcome back to school! As the new president of the Board, I look forward to working alongside Vice President Erica Wagner and trustees Patty Nashelsky, Gloria Golle, Elizabeth Yong and Jason Carmel. Together, we are dedicated to making sure our schools are safe, welcoming, and inspiring places for all students to learn and grow.

This year, Rye Neck will develop an updated strategic plan. The strategic plan will clarify Rye Neck's mission and provide a blueprint for improving student engagement and achievement. We have contracted with esteemed educator Judith Wilson to guide us through this work. Ms. Wilson will begin by gathering input from stakeholders, including parents, students, staff, and other community members. The Board is committed to this collaborative process and to ensuring success for all our students.

The Board welcomes community feedback at Board meetings, providing two opportunities to speak at each of our formal monthly meetings. Community members are also encouraged to observe our monthly planning sessions. Prior to each planning session, two board members will be available to meet with members of the community for "office hours." Please schedule these appointments at least five days in advance by contacting our district clerk. Additionally, the entire board can be reached via email at [boardofed@ryeneck.org](mailto:boardofed@ryeneck.org).

We look forward to your partnership as we prepare for another exciting and productive school year. Best of luck to all our students and staff.

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by Eric Lutinski, Ed.D.

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We spent much of the spring discussing school safety, both in terms of physical security and mental wellness. Changes include improvements to our infrastructure, including new doors and door hardware; new technology, including the introduction of an interior keypad system for classroom doors, the next generation of screening kiosks for main entrances, and an expansion of our silent remote alarm for staff; new personnel, specifically unarmed ex-law enforcement personnel at each campus; and enhanced training and communication for staff, students, and families.

The introduction of Effective School Solutions will provide us with a full time on-site clinician at the MS/HS campus. Services from ESS will include the ability to address the needs of students who may otherwise have been placed out-of-district at our schools with their peers; broad staff training and resources to identify and address students in crisis; and resources for parents.

I was eager to see our students return on September 5th and look forward to an exciting year ahead.



Thank you to our clerical, custodial, nursing and network staff for all of their hard work getting our schools ready for September 5th.

## Welcome New Staff

**Martin Alvarez – Rye Neck Middle School, Special Services Teaching Assistant**

Martin Alvarez is currently attending Mercy College for a Bachelor of Science in music production. He loves audio and film production. His last job was at Greenburgh-Graham UFSD.



**Julia Blondel – Rye Neck Middle School, Monitor**

Julia graduated from Rye Neck High School in 2017. She received her associate degree from American Academy McAllister Institute and became a resident funeral director at Coxe and Graziano Funeral Home prior to her employment at RNMS. She has a keen interest in studio arts and enjoys cooking and baking.



**Jordan Breslaw – Rye Neck Middle School, Science Teacher**

Jordan graduated from Towson University in Maryland this past May with a middle school education degree with tracks in math and science. He attended sleep away camp for seven years before working there for another three. He loves working with kids and his favorite food is Korean Barbecue.



**Emma Brewer – F.E Bellows, Special Services Teaching Assistant**

Emma graduated from Pace University with master's in childhood education and special education. She taught at a private school for the past two years. Before becoming a teacher, Emma was an accountant and earned an MBA from Pace University. In her free time, she enjoys reading and hiking.



**Alexandra Campana - Rye Neck High School, Art Teacher**

Alexandra Campana went to the College of New Rochelle to receive a bachelor's in visual arts and a master's degree in special education. She worked in the New York City Public Schools for 11 years as an art teacher. Alexandra enjoys making art, decorating, and spending time with family and friends.



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# Welcome New Staff

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## Dr. Steven Coleman - Rye Neck High School, Psychologist Leave Replacement

Dr. Coleman is a retired school psychologist who worked for Southern Westchester BOCES for almost 33 years. There, he worked with students with classifications of Autism, Multiple Disabilities, Intellectual Disabilities, Emotional Challenges and several more. He is a graduate of Hofstra University with a Ph.D. in school and clinical psychology. He welcomes this opportunity to work in a small and well-regarded school district that has been so friendly and welcoming!



## Jessica Cuevas - Rye Neck High School, Counselor

Jessica Cuevas is a native New Yorker, born and raised in East Harlem. She has supported high school students in both public and non-profit settings for over 15 years. She enjoys gardening, cooking, photography, volunteering in her local community, and traveling with her two daughters.



## Whitney Da Silva - F. E. Bellows, ENL Teaching Assistant

Whitney Da Silva worked in special education at the RCSD for five years. She also taught after school clubs such as S.T.E.A.M, Lego engineering and art. She is a Rye High alumni and cheerleader. She speaks three languages: English, Portuguese and Spanish. She's studying to become a K-5 teacher. She enjoys fitness, reading and the outdoors.



## Anthony Ferdinandi - Rye Neck Middle School, Science Teacher

Anthony is very excited to be joining the Rye Neck community. This will be his third year teaching, and his first year teaching 7th grade. He received his undergraduate and graduate degrees from SUNY Binghamton.



## Yvette Goldman - Rye Neck High School, English Teacher Leave Replacement

Yvette Goldman is a familiar face at Rye Neck. She taught English and Theater in the middle school for 18 years. She then spent time working and living in the Catskill mountains, as well as returning to Rye Neck in various positions. Yvette is thrilled to rejoin the Rye Neck family as a leave replacement English teacher in the high school.



## Regina-Grace Mackin - Rye Neck High School, English Teacher and Teaching Assistant

Regina-Grace "Gracie" Mackin is thrilled to continue her career at Rye Neck! She recently returned from teaching English abroad in Valencia, Spain for the past year. This fall Gracie is starting her master's program at SUNY New Paltz for social justice education.



## Amanda Muccioli - Daniel Warren, ENL Teaching Assistant

Amanda graduated from Pace University with her bachelor's in applied psychology and graduated from Manhattanville College with a master's in early childhood education. For the past seven years, she taught at a private preschool and Pre-Kindergarten. She is currently taking courses to extend her teaching certifications to include childhood education. Amanda is so excited and looks forward to growing her educational experiences at Daniel Warren Elementary School.



## Jennifer Paul - Daniel Warren, Teacher Aide

Jennifer graduated from Rye Neck in 2020 and SUNY Delhi in 2023 after earning an associate degree in liberal arts, humanities and social sciences. Jennifer is looking forward to returning to Daniel Warren, where she also attended, and hopes to gain experience in the education field to pursue a teaching career.



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# Welcome New Staff

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## Natalie Reckson - Daniel Warren, Teacher Aide

Natalie is an experienced educator who has devoted her career to working with children in a variety of PreK-6 settings. She takes pride in providing the best care possible to help children grow. She's inspired by her two daughters, and is excited to be in the classroom doing what she loves.



## Anneliese Rosen - Daniel Warren, Special Education Teacher

Anneliese Rosen has 10 years of experience as a special education teacher. She holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and a master's degree from Bank Street College of Education. She is passionate about building a positive learning community where each student feels valued and experiences personal success.



## Sara Silverstein - Rye Neck Middle/High School, Science Teacher

Sara is a graduate of the class of 2006 and has returned to Rye Neck. She earned her graduate degrees from New York Medical College and Mercy College, where she studied public health and science education. Sara brings her experience from her careers in healthcare and higher education into the classroom.



## Jan Vancraeynest - Rye Neck High School, Science Teacher

Jan Vancraeynest ("Mr. V") earned a MSEE from Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium). After a career in wireless communications R&D, he has taught physics, forensics, and environmental science at various schools in NY starting in 2009. Mr. V. enjoys outdoor activities and takes his chocolates seriously.



# Tenure Candidates

The Rye Neck School District is committed to recruiting and retaining excellent teachers. There are several mechanisms in place to ensure that our professional staff meets this goal, including ongoing feedback from the superintendent, principals, department supervisors, directors and chairs.

Each of these professionals brings a unique and important perspective to the process and works individually with nontenured teachers to foster professional development and provide support. These professional relationships help staff members reflect on their practice, grow and make appropriate adjustments.

From a formal perspective, district administrators utilize a comprehensive evaluation process, frequently observing and evaluating each new staff member to offer suggestions, monitor progress and assess improvement. A four-year probationary period is required before new teachers/administrators receive tenure and a three-year period for teachers who have previously held tenure in another public school district in New York State.

Parents can provide valuable insights and should do so, first to the staff member directly, since this feedback would be most helpful to him/her. Once parents have spoken to the teacher, they may also wish to share their thoughts with the individual building principal or supervisor.

Tenure recommendations are being considered for the following:

### Administrators:

- Dr. Dulce Barker
- Carolyn Mahar
- Corinne Ryan

### School Psychologist

- Elisa Barilli

### Teachers:

- Rachel Franks
- Kaitlyn Gryzlo
- Courtney Loper
- Evan Miller
- Coleen Sullivan
- Shawn Tedrow
- Katie Zarkin

## PTSA News

From Ruth Homberg, PTSA President

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! The Rye Neck PTSA is gearing up for an exciting year, and we're hoping you'll join us.

Each year, we aim to provide more than \$100,000 in programming to Rye Neck students of all ages. Here are just a few of our annual goings on:

- After-School Clubs
- Author Visits
- Book Fairs
- Class Photos
- STEAM programs across all 4 schools
- The Rye Y Recess program
- The Fourth Grade Circus
- Family Fitness Nights
- Middle School Activity Night and the Spooktacular
- All-grade Panther Party (Save the date: 4/27/24)
- Parent Socials

We also host parent workshops and events in partnership with the Special Education Action Committee (SEAC), the Rye Neck International Committee (RNIC) and the Newcomers Committee.

How you can get involved: We are always looking for volunteers! We'd also love it if you considered contributing to our biggest fundraiser of the year: Ribbons for Rye Neck. Our goal is to raise \$40,000 by Friday, October 6th. Anyone who contributes will receive a Rye Neck Ribbon to show their Panther Pride, just in time for Homecoming weekend.

Upcoming Events:

9/19: GM Meeting, 9am in the Daniel Warren Auditorium

9/22: Parent Social at 7pm at Greenhaven Beach

Watch your email for details. In the meantime, you can see our calendar, join the PTSA (which allows you access to the all-school online directory), and find out more by visiting our website: [www.ryeneckptsa.org](http://www.ryeneckptsa.org).

Please reach out to me with any questions at [president@ryeneckptsa.org](mailto:president@ryeneckptsa.org), and I look forward to helping to make the upcoming school year a fun and successful one.

## Alumni Association News

Greetings and welcome back! We hope you all had a wonderful summer. The Rye Neck Alumni Association is dedicated to keeping alumni connected to this wonderful community and, more importantly, uniting alumni to give back. Thanks to the continued generosity of our alumni and our community, we continue to give back by awarding two Rye Neck graduating seniors with a \$500 scholarship each and we also help fund the PTSA annual 8th grade dance.

Congratulations to Tomas Fernandez and Meaghan Fox who were the 2022-2023 scholarship recipients. We wish them much luck in their future endeavors!

This year we found it really hard to get donations for these scholarships, so please consider donating. Any amount is welcome.

The Alumni Association also facilitates campus tours for alumni and their graduating classes. Feel free to contact us to set up a tour.

The Alumni Association hosts an annual softball tournament fundraiser in June (date TBD). This event is not just for alumni, all are welcome so please consider signing up and come play!

We are always seeking to grow the Alumni Association; therefore, if you have any suggestions or ideas, please feel free to email us.

We hope you have a wonderful school year. Please visit our website, and feel free to email us with any questions or if you'd like to make a donation.

[Alumni@ryeneck.org](mailto:Alumni@ryeneck.org).

<https://newalumniassociati.wixsite.com/rnalumniassociation>

Cindy Gutierrez-Fasolino, Class of '94

Lia Pezzola Toscano, Class of '95

Shannon Bolger, Class of '95

Stephanie Davis, Class of '96

Nicole Gagnon, Class of '94

Christina Gori, Class of '95

## News From the Athletic Department

The 2023 Fall sports season commenced on August 21st with over 250 athletes and 30 coaches getting preseason practices under way! The athletic center and fields were filled with high energy and excitement. Come out and cheer on our Panther teams and athletes. Thank you for your continued support of our athletic programs.

Homecoming Weekend is October 13 & 14th. Mark your calendars now. The varsity home contest schedule is as follows:

- Boys Soccer - 4:30 PM - Friday
- Girls Swimming - 4:30 PM - Friday
- Volleyball - 6:00 PM - Friday
- Field Hockey - 11:30 AM - Saturday
- Girls Soccer - 12:00 PM - Saturday
- Girls Tennis - 12:00 PM - Saturday
- Football - 2:30 PM - Saturday
- Cross Country - Manhattan Invitational at Van Cortlandt Park - Saturday

The latest Rye Neck athletes to make the commitment to continue their athletic careers in college include senior football player Hunter Merkel and senior boys lacrosse player Josef (Zefi) Zyngier. Hunter will head to Pomona College to compete for the Pomona-Pitzer Sagehens, while Zefi will join the Red Devils of Dickinson College.

At halftime of the football game on Labor Day weekend Mr. Thomas Pipolo ('14) became the latest alum to be inducted into the the Rye Neck Athletic Hall of Fame for his outstanding career on the football field and on the baseball diamond.

Follow Rye Neck Athletics on Twitter at @RNHSathletics

Go Rye Neck!



Athletic Director Joe Ceglia and Thomas Pipolo ('14) at the Hall of Fame ceremony.

## Rye Neck Booster Club We Love Our Schools

Welcome back to the 2023-2024 school year!

The Booster Club's mission is to build school spirit by supporting athletics, theater and other initiatives at Rye Neck Schools. The organization at its core is about fostering community spirit.

### 2023-2024 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Be part of our Panther community and support our efforts by joining the Booster Club for the school year. Membership fees support our programs, events and spirit efforts. The cost to join the Booster Club: \$15 for a single membership; \$25 for a family; \$50 includes membership and a Rye Neck Lawn Sign; \$125 includes membership and lawn decorations for two days (blow up panther, Rye Neck feather flag and lawn signs). Join online through one of our email blasts or in-person at one of the Open House events held in September.

### FALL FEST FUNDRAISER – SEPTEMBER 30

Save the date for our annual parent's night out being held at Rye Grill & Bar in Rye, NY 7:30 pm – 10:30 pm. This event is our primary fundraiser for the 2023-2024 school year programming. Plan a night out to meet fellow Rye Neck parents, see old friends and make new ones! The event sold out the last few years so be sure to register early. Purchase tickets online via one of our email blasts.

### HOMECOMING – OCTOBER 13 & 14

Homecoming will be filled with Rye Neck varsity sports, activities for kids and other favorite traditions. This community-wide event brings out large crowds including Pre-K to alumni!

### PANTHER SPIRITWEAR

Gear up for the new school year with the latest Rye Neck Panthers Spiritwear. New gear will be available both online and at Homecoming this fall. Stay tuned for the back-to-school online store announcement.

### CONNECT WITH THE RYE NECK BOOSTER CLUB

Email Blasts: Receive Booster Club news, event information and sport updates.

Twitter: Follow your favorite Rye Neck varsity sport teams on their official Rye Neck Booster Club Twitter account for the latest game stats, highlights and team specific news.

Facebook & Instagram: Follow Rye Neck Booster Club on our Facebook Community page.

Ryeneckboosterclub.com: Bookmark our website to stay up-to-date on all our happenings.

RNBoosterclub@ryeneck.org: Email the Booster Club with any questions.

The Booster Club officers and our extended leadership team are looking forward to seeing you all out on the fields or at the shows this year.

President – Jocelyn Donat  
Vice President - Rachel Felenstein  
Secretary - Tanya Preisser  
Treasurer - Laura Evangelista

## Gold Card Club

Would you like to become a member of the Rye Neck Gold Card Club? The seniors in our community have long had a supporting role in our schools. The purpose of the Gold Card Club is to create closer ties between the schools and the community, using their social and historical knowledge of the Village of Mamaroneck and City of Rye. Members of the club have volunteered in our school libraries, supported our athletic and extracurricular events, and represented our schools in the community. In turn, they help represent the interests of seniors who live in our district and enjoy invitations to district events such as the annual Rye Neck High School musical. To join or learn more, please call Mrs. Mary Ellen Chiera in our district office at (914) 777-5200 or visit our website at [www.ryeneck.org](http://www.ryeneck.org): look for the Community dropdown and choose Gold Card Club.

## Board of Education Meetings

Board meetings are televised on LMC-TV. LMC-TV will broadcast the meetings live on both cable (Channel 76 Cablevision and 35 Verizon) and the internet. Previous Board meetings can be viewed by visiting LMC-TV's website and selecting Watch on the top, then clicking Videos, By Category and then School Board Meetings. LMC-TV typically posts all Board meetings within two working days following the meeting. Meeting recordings are also posted on the Rye Neck website. All Board meeting agendas and minutes are available on BoardDocs.



Staff members participate in professional development before the start of school.

## Rye Neck Website

[www.ryeneck.org](http://www.ryeneck.org)

Communication is a critical part of our collective success. The Rye Neck website is a window into our district that has many features designed to make it easy for you to get the information you need and stay updated on what's happening in our district. In addition, it helps showcase the outstanding opportunities that Rye Neck offers its students. Please take some time and explore [ryeneck.org](http://ryeneck.org) to familiarize yourself with the layout and features. You will find access to all four schools, plus departments, grades teams, and every organization that does service for our school community through dropdown menus across the top of the page. In the body of the site is a set of easy-click sections of popular links, latest news, and a calendar of upcoming events.

## Non-School Residents

Attention Rye Neck residents who do not have children in our schools: if you are a community member who either no longer has students attending our schools or if you simply live within the borders of the Rye Neck district, you may still receive district communications about events, the budget and elections, weather, and other important information. If you wish to receive email notifications from the school and the Board of Education, please visit our website at [www.ryeneck.org](http://www.ryeneck.org), use the Community dropdown menu, and choose "Rye Neck Resident." This will give you access to a simple form for signing up for those important messages.

Rye Neck Public Schools  
Administration Building  
310 Hornidge Road  
Mamaroneck, NY 10543

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### Board of Education

Rebecca Mansell, President  
Erica Wagner, Vice President  
Patty Nashelsky, Trustee  
Gloria Golle, Trustee  
Elizabeth Yong, Trustee  
Jason Carmel, Trustee

Dear Rye Neck Resident

### Administration: 914-777-5252

Dr. Eric Lutinski, Superintendent  
Carolyn Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance  
Corinne Ryan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

# Welcome Back to School!

