

VALUE Education

RyeNeck Schools
LEARN • ACHIEVE • LEAD

December 2021

Superintendent's Notebook

Eric Lutinski, Ed.D.

Dear Rye Neck families,

Winter has often been the source of metaphor in our daily lives. Typical imagery involves hibernation, isolation, cold, and a general, bleak lack of hope. However, unless you have to study for a test on Monday, schools are exactly the opposite. Anyone who works in schools during the summer can tell you how lonely it is, and how the school returns to life in the form of masses of youth as the weather cools. Isolation is actually hard to come by in all of our schools during the day, and our Middle School and High School campus is busy after the final bell rings. There is always something for students to look forward to, whether it's routine hanging out with friends, a favorite course, a class activity, or an extracurricular pursuit that motivates them. I concede that windows will be open, but that's not cold—it's fresh air! After all the "back to school" transitions have taken place, the heart of the school year brings vitality.

One example of our vitality has been what you see on our new website and the associated Rye Neck mobile app. Now that we have been able to experience the new webtool and superimpose what Rye Neck needs onto the product, we will take the next step and personalize it even further. The initial job for our team was to migrate content from the old website to the new website. It was like moving from one home to another, when you find something in a box and say "oh, remember this?" before throwing it away. The process of deciding what to keep on our new website was focused on value and utility, whether that person is a parent, member of the community, or a teacher. Future improvement of our website will be based upon input from our Rye Neck families.

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An Update from the Board of Education

Jennifer Rubin, President

Rye Neck is flourishing much like Europe did during the Renaissance period. Ok, I admit that may be a bit of a stretch, but the Board of Education is happy to celebrate many wonderful happenings this fall. Unlike last year, when the pandemic prevented everyone from in person experiences, this year, we are enjoying a return to a bit of normalcy as our collective campuses come alive with fun activities.

Our students have enjoyed intramural, modified, Junior Varsity, and Varsity sports all season long. Parents were thrilled to be spectators, cheering on their children and teammates at our football, soccer, field hockey and volleyball games, track meets and tennis matches this fall. The 6th grade Senior Buddy Day, Pep Rally and Homecoming festivities kicked off a weekend of athletic triumphs. The sun was shining Homecoming weekend and the Booster Club did a wonderful job of creating an atmosphere of Rye Neck spirit all around.

The Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon, our first live stage production in over 20 months was a huge hit with talented high schoolers receiving an abundance of audience laughs as they recreated fairy tales with humor and wit.

Students and staff alike enjoyed Halloween at the elementary schools as costumed children paraded around and sang spooky songs for the enjoyment of all while



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Superintendent's Notebook

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We have collected qualitative information internally (from our PACs) and will be distributing a survey to parents about what content they access online, how they access content (i.e., from our website or our app), and seek suggestions for making our online platforms a more useful, dynamic, and easy resource to navigate. A parent survey was sent out this month to collect this important information.

By far the best signs of our vitality are the foundational improvements we are making across our schools. On the structural side, you are aware of the impending conclusion to our capital project, which is the result of need, much forethought and conversation, and commitment by our community. The Middle School Gymnasium has already been valuable as a student event venue and a COVID-19 vaccine clinic for our youngest students, in addition to its use for physical education classes and after school sports. The Collaborative Science Center, or "STEAM Wing," is almost ready for occupancy.

Yet those structural additions are just one means to an end. They will help us along our path of curricular and professional development. In November, we presented a snapshot of our progress with our science curriculum. The transition to New York's "P-12 Science Learning Standards" has led to the introduction of Science 21 at the elementary level and a focus on the new Regents science assessments due in two years. All these things contribute to more collaborative and inquiry-based instruction that facilitate the shift toward Next Generation standards. Students will have a greater role in determining how they engage in learning.

Finally, our commitment to creating a learning environment that is welcoming and inclusive to all students, reflective of their personal experiences, and adaptable to all types of learners is critical for ensuring the longevity of the institutional vitality that will lead to greater success for all. Students need to be in a state of physical and mental comfort to be successful when learning. Of course, the parents, staff, and other adults that cooperate and partner with us to provide education for our students also need to understand that they have an interest in those same advantages, both for student instruction and their own personal mental health. Rye Neck's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee has begun the important work of comparing New York's DEI Framework with our school environment to set the stage for thoughtful and honest dialogue so that all of our students can learn, achieve, and lead.

I wish you a happy and healthy holiday season.

Best regards,

Eric Santoro

An Update from the Board of Education

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kindergarteners participated in their annual PumpkinFest. When a high wind weather advisory prevented Middle School students from having an outdoor Halloween celebration, we were delighted to use our new Middle School Gymnasium for a night of spooky dancing, oodles of candy, and raffles for prizes at the PTSA sponsored Middle School Spooktacular.

As each day passes, we are grateful to be able to have the customary school photo days, Honor Society Induction Ceremonies, book fairs, winter concerts, and after-school clubs in full swing this year. Circus Week at F.E. Bellows was a big hit and parents are beginning to plan for upcoming winter holiday celebrations in their children's classrooms.

As the first half of this school year comes to a close, the Board would like to acknowledge our amazing teachers whose daily dedication, love, and guidance continue to advance the intellectual development and social growth of our children each and every day. And to our staff and administrators whose consummate professionalism and hard work serve to support our children while continuing to raise the standards. Last but not least, to our treasured community, a kinship of neighbors who maintain Rye Neck traditions by steadfastly supporting our schools in countless ways. We are grateful for all of you.

On behalf of the Board of Education, we wish you the gifts of love, friendship, joy and good health as we set our sights on 2022 when the opening of our newly built Collaborative Science Center, or "STEAM Wing," will serve to extend our proverbial Rye Neck Renaissance well into the New Year and the future beyond.

Warmly,

Janet Jan Puck

PTSA News

Megan McFarland, PTSA President

Thank you to our Rye Neck community who once again made the PTSA Ribbon Fundraiser a great success! It was amazing to see all the families and local businesses who supported the PTSA. We raised over \$37,000 and our school pride was strong throughout our community! All funds raised go directly to support PTSA programming.

We are overjoyed to continue with our Author Visits programs. This fall, Kelly DiPucchio, author of *Grace for President* and *The Sandwich Shop*, spoke to students at Daniel Warren Elementary. At F.E. Bellows, New York Times bestselling author, Stuart Gibbs, spoke to the 4th and 5th grade students. Gibbs is the author of the *Charlie Thorne* Series, the *FunJungle* series, and the *Spy School* Series. Jerry Pallotta, creator of the *Who Would Win* books, spoke with 3th grader students.

Our STEAM programming has been going strong. In October, students at F.E. Bellows enjoyed a 'Crime Scene Investigation' virtual program where they solved "The Great Cat Caper." In November, the New York State Museum held a virtual "People of the Longhouses" assembly for 4th grade students. And, students in 3rd grade enjoyed "Pathway to Rhythm Drumming Circles" while 5th grade students experienced the "SkyDome Planetarium" (these were both in-person workshops!). At the Middle School, a staged adaptation of *Black Boy* was performed for the students in 8th grade.

We were also able to bring back the 4th Grade Circus! Students learned circus skills, which they showed off for their parents and siblings. The Rye Y Recess Program also continues for all students at Daniel Warren Elementary and F.E. Bellows, providing an instructor to lead games and activities during recess.

The PTSA Committees also organized many community-based environmental and health and wellness events including the walk, bike, scoot to school week in October. In addition, we hosted the annual Daniel Warren Elementary and F.E. Bellows Candy Drive, where many students donated their Halloween candy to our troops. Finally, our Coat Drive will run through mid-December.

We brought back many of the social events that were put on hold over the past year and a half. The Rye Neck International Committee held their potluck dinner in October. This was a huge success with over 100 people in attendance. The Middle School Spooktacular also made a triumphant return with over 200 students in attendance. Finally, thank you also to those of you who participated in our sold-out Parent's Night Out. It was our first social event since February 2020!

We could not accomplish any of the above-mentioned programming without your support. We have many ongoing fundraisers and there are many ways to support the PTSA. To find out more, please go to our website www.ryeneckptsa.org.

Thank you for your continued support of the Rye Neck PTSA.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy holiday season!

Updates from the Booster Club

Alison Heaton, Booster Club President

The Rye Neck Booster Club is about community, spirit and our children! We strive to build school spirit by supporting the athletics program, school musical, and other initiatives across Rye Neck. We were thrilled to be back at it with our typical Autumn programs and events.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FALL

- The Fall Festival for parents at the Whitby Castle had a tremendous turnout with a successful auction. It was a fun and memorable night in our Rye Neck Community!
- Homecoming was exceptional in every way—there was great weather, amazing spirit, good food, outstanding community participation, and a win for most of our sport teams. *It was a wonderful weekend of celebrating Rye Neck!*

Thank you to everyone who helped make these initiatives so successful: our volunteers, participants and contributors! We're an all-volunteer organization that likes to have fun doing what we do. If you haven't already, we hope that you will consider joining us! We have lots in store for this winter and spring, and welcome all ideas.

CONNECT WITH THE RYE NECK BOOSTER CLUB!

Email: Look for Booster Club news, event information and sport updates – please mark us a "safe sender."

Twitter: Follow Rye Neck Booster Club Twitter for the latest game stats, highlights and team news for your favorite Rye Neck sport teams.

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

Web: RyeNeckBoosterClub.com is also a tab on the Rye Neck School District website.

The Booster Club wishes everyone health, happiness and peace this holiday season! **WE ARE RYE NECK!**



Latest News from the Rye Neck Athletic Department

Joe Ceglia, Athletics Director

Homecoming 2021 was a successful community and school event. Spirit week kicked off Tuesday night with the annual Pasta Dinner where the Rye Neck Booster Club provided dinner and dessert for 400 modified, junior varsity athletes, varsity athletes, and coaches. The pep rally on Friday was filled with excitement and Rye Neck pride as the student body organized and coordinated a spirit filled event. Once again, our Rye Neck athletes, teams, and coaches represented Rye Neck well in their hard-fought contests and thrilling victories. Community spirit and pride filled the stands as thousands of people came to campus to attend games over the weekend. The Booster Club reestablished their annual tailgating party at the Athletic Center in cooperation with food trucks and other family friendly activities.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FALL SEASON

400 athletes in middle school and high school participated in our interscholastic athletic program at the Varsity, Junior Varsity, and modified levels.

🎾 Varsity Girls Tennis players who qualified for Section 1's Doubles Championship Tournament:

- Katie Lipman and Olivia Tobin
- Lily Peterson and Amadea Toutoungis
- Carolina Doherty and Lucy Paumier
- Dylan White and Abigail Heaton

🎾 The Varsity Girls Tennis Team earned the #3 seed in the Section 1 Girls 3/2 Team Tennis Tournament and advanced to the semifinals.

⚽ The Varsity Boys Soccer team earned the #14 seed in Section 1's Class B Boys Soccer Tournament.

🏒 The Varsity Field Hockey team earned the #8 seed in Section 1's Class C Field Hockey Tournament.

⚽ The Varsity Girls Soccer team earned the #7 seed in Section 1's Class B Girls Soccer Tournament and advanced to the quarterfinals.

🏐 The Varsity Volleyball team earned the #9 seed in Section 1's Class B Volleyball Tournament.

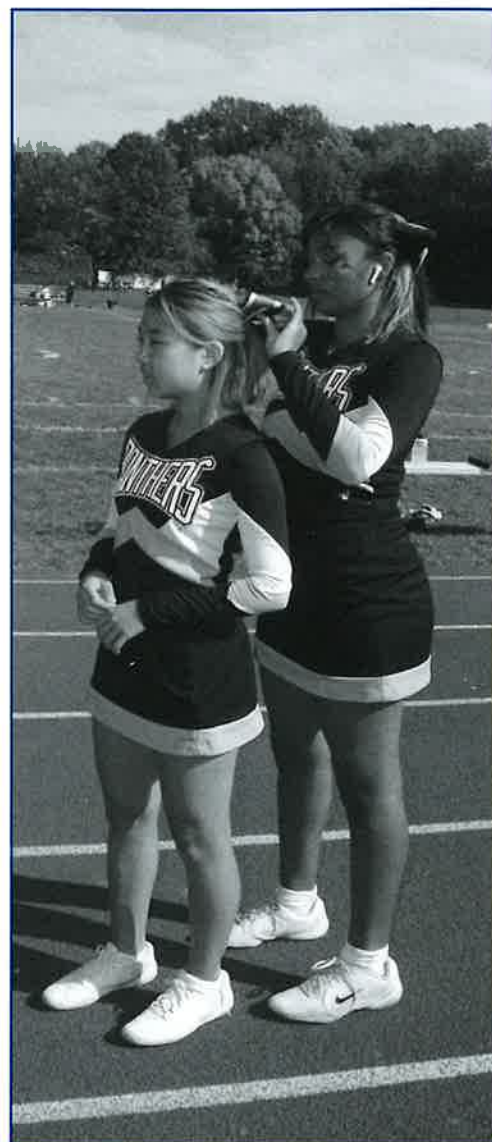
🏃 The Boys and Girls Cross Country teams competed at the Class C Section 1 Championship races at Bowdoin Park on November 6. Team members included:

Boys Cross Country Team: Joe Lavelle, Ben Taffet, Micah Taffet, David Magill, Linus Ringstad, Matthias Lauvau, Kimichika Irie, Ryan Baio, Will Johansen, Ensar Burrja

Girls Cross Country Team: Phoebe Carmel, Ainara Schube Barriola, Valentine Casciano, Hanae Daumasson, Kiera Ronan, Catherine Sykes, Linda Vasquez

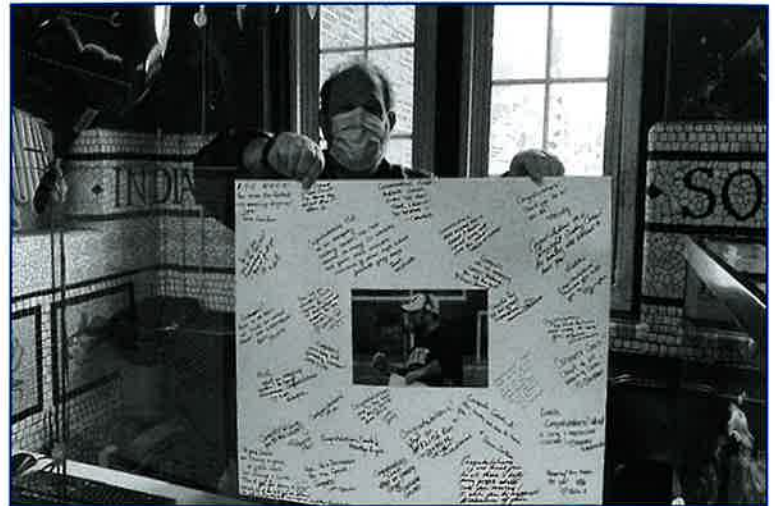
🏆 Senior three sport athlete Carissa Pecchia was selected as a Wendy's Heisman Scholarship School Level Recipient.

🏆 The 6th grade intramural program hosted 100 students across 6 sports offerings and will continue to run through the school year.



Together, we all recognized retired Coach Nick Ianello for his 19 years of service to the Rye Neck community as Head Coach of the football program on October 23 during halftime at the varsity football game.

Junior Captain Joe Lavelle came in 4th place in the Class C Cross Country Sectional Championship race. His top 5 finish earned him a place in the state championship race where he represented Section 1 and Rye Neck on November 13 at Chenango Valley State Park. In the state championship race he finished 10th in Class C and was a member of the Section 1 State Championship Winning Team. His strong finish in the state race earned him a spot in the New York State Federation Race at Bowdoin Park. The Federation race includes representative from the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), the New York City Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL), Catholic High School Athletic Association (CHSAA), and the New York State Association of Independent Schools Athletic Association (AISAA).



COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

As of November 16, 2021, the following athletes have made commitments to continue their athletics careers in college. Congratulations to:

- Sam Dalsimer, Baseball - Skidmore College
- Jack Edwards, Baseball - Tufts University
- Ava Liebmann, Crew - Duke University
- Carissa Pecchia, Softball - Springfield College
- Evelyn Picone, Softball - Western New England University



Follow Rye Neck on Social Media

 @RyeNeckSchools

 @RNHSathletics

 @RyeNeckUFSD

Mark Your Calendar!

- January 1, 2022 | New Year's Day (schools closed)
- January 17, 2022 | Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day (schools closed)
- February 21-25, 2022 | Winter Recess (schools closed)
- March 11, 2022 | PTSA Dad's Night Out
- April 11-15, 2022 | Spring Recess (schools closed)
- April 21, 2022 | High School Science Fair
- April 25, 2022 | High School Spring Concern
- May 12, 2022 | PTSA Mom's Night Out
- May 26, 2022 | Prom
- May 30, 2022 | Memorial Day (schools closed)
- June 20, 2022 | Juneteenth (schools closed)
- June 23, 2022 | Last Day of School + High School Graduation



Watch our Board of Education Meetings

Our monthly meetings are televised through LMC-TV and can be found on these channels (as well as online):

- Cablevision Channel 76
- Verizon Channel 35

Previous meetings can be viewed by visiting LMC-TV's website (lmcmedia.org) and selecting Watch & Listen and then selecting School Board Meetings. All Board meeting agendas and minutes are available on BoardDocs.

Message to Members of our Community

As a member of our community, we invite you to deepen and expand your engagement across our four schools. Throughout the year, we have many events that are open to the public, including sporting events, theatre and musical performances, volunteer events, and so much more! If you reside within the borders of the Rye Neck Union Free School District, you are also eligible to receive information about budgets and elections, inclement weather alerts, and notifications from the Board of Education. To receive email updates throughout the year, please visit our new website (www.ryeneck.org) and select from dropdown tab marked Community—from there, select Rye Neck Resident. You will then be directed to an email registration form.



Get Involved with the Gold Card Club

The mission and goal of our Gold Card Club is to create strong and meaningful connections between our four schools and the local community, as well as our neighbors, building upon existing ties and historical knowledge of the Village of Mamaroneck and City of Rye. Members of the Gold Card Club enjoy volunteer opportunities at each of our school libraries, help support our athletics program, contribute to extracurricular events, and have the opportunity to make in impact with our students, families, teachers, staff, and the community at large. In turn, members of this important group help represent the interests of senior citizens and older adults who live in our district, and gain exclusive access and invitations to other district events. For more information, please contact Mary Ellen Chiera by phone at 914-777-5200 or by email (mchiera@ryeneck.org). Additional information can be found here: www.ryeneck.org/domain/325.



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Dear Rye Neck Resident

Administration: 914-777-5252

Dr. Eric Lutinski, Superintendent
Carolyn Mahar, Assistant Superintendent
for Business and Finance

Happy Holidays!

