

VALUE Education

RyeNeck Schools
LEARN • ACHIEVE • LEAD

September 2020

Superintendent's Notebook

by Barbara Ferraro, Ed.D.

Dear Rye Neck families,

Welcome back to the new school year. On Tuesday, Sept. 8, our students returned to a safe and positive environment, eager to learn and grow within a hybrid model. As we approached our September reopening, curriculum development, capital project work, facilities preparation and health and safety measures were our top priority. Throughout this unusual summer, administrators, teachers, custodians and clerical staff worked diligently to ensure a safe return for all in this new reality.

Having embarked on the journey back to school, I ask our families for patience, understanding and flexibility. Rye Neck is a community of caring families and outstanding educators deeply rooted to its schools and its traditions.

This Value Ed newsletter introduces 13 new staff members who were hired this year. The group attended orientation sessions on Aug. 31 and Sept. 1. The highlight of these two days was a virtual tour of the community, conducted by Rye Neck alum and physical education teacher and coach Bryan Iacovelli. He shared interesting historical events and locations in and around the Rye



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An Update from the Board of Education

by Jennifer Rubin, President

"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude." – Maya Angelou



I hope that this communication finds everyone well, and hopefully, Rye Neck families have managed to carve out a bit of fun this summer even with the restrictions of the pandemic. Maya Angelou's quote is one that I have often shared with my own children since the viral outbreak. Attitude and perspective are very important when dealing with the coronavirus - something that is truly out of our control. As we enter this new school year, I believe that we have to look for the silver linings and embrace the positive. As Grace West so eloquently said in her valedictory speech, we should remember to always possess gratitude as well because "gratitude is an expression that allows you to recognize things that are good."

We may have been physically out of the school buildings for an extended period of time, but our hard work has continued throughout the closure. For our construction project, you will notice safety fences around active work spaces, areas for pedestrian traffic,

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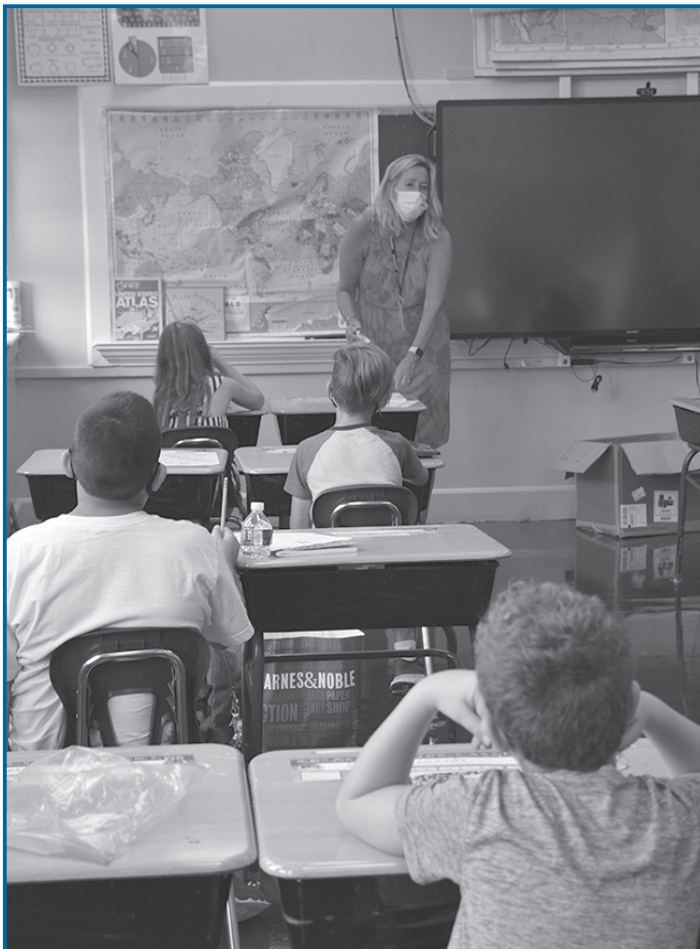
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Neck School District, enhanced by his own experience of growing up and now living in Rye Neck. Rye Neck's character as a supportive and close-knit community was evident throughout the presentation.

Your continuous support of the school district and tireless efforts have enabled our students' successful outcomes each year. Thank you for making Rye Neck such a special place where children learn, achieve and lead. I extend my warmest wishes to all of our families for a safe, enriching and productive 2020-21.

Best regards,

Dr. Barbara Ferraro



Technology Update

District Issues Chromebooks to Students

When Rye Neck became a Google Reference District in 2017, our vision was to increase our use of technology to provide students with more access and equity across our schools. We saw G-Suite and Chromebooks as the means our teachers needed to break down the walls of their classrooms in innovative ways to support teaching and learning. Our experiences with remote learning this past spring proved just how formative our work has been to actualize that vision over the years.

We have used the time to integrate technology into our classrooms purposefully and thoughtfully. Because of this, our teachers and students were comfortable with Google Classroom and other G-Suite features when we transitioned to remote learning in March. Through the success of Google Classroom and the continuity of instruction it provides, we are excited to extend its use down to our youngest learners this year.

In the Google Reference application, we set a goal to move toward a 1:1 Chromebook program that would put a school-issued device in the hands of every Rye Neck student. We are proud to announce that when we reopen on Sept. 8, we will have met that goal for our students in grades 3-12, while maintaining enough Chromebooks to support instruction for our K-2 students both in the classroom and at home as needed.

Our vision in 2017, and the approach we have taken to technology since, left us ahead of the curve when our buildings closed their doors in March. However, we know the success of our choices is because of our community's support. Learning to navigate online instruction, from Google Drive to Advanced Placement exams, required teacher creativity, student responsibility and parental flexibility.

As we look to reopen our doors for the first time in six months, we will rely on those partnerships, and we will use the lessons learned from this past spring to refine our use of technology to ensure engagement and achievement for every Rye Neck student.

An Update from the Board of Education

by Jennifer Rubin, President

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new parking spaces, comfy new chairs in our PAC, ongoing pile installation work on our STEAM wing and foundations being poured at our gymnasium. Our teachers and administrators have been keeping up to date on the most current state-issued mandates and have been actively preparing for a safe return to school. Our custodial staff has been working hard assisting principals as they rearrange classrooms to maintain social distancing guidelines, as well as thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I would like to welcome back our students and families, teachers, custodial and support staff as well as our administrative team for the start of the 2020-21 school year. I am excited to be working alongside Board Vice President Steve Silva, trustees Pietro Fasolino, Gloria Golle, Patty Nashelsky, and our newest elected member of the Board, Devina O'Reilly. Collectively, we have 16 children who are either currently attending or have graduated from Rye Neck. We are fortunate to be able to bring this parental perspective as we continue our commitment to make the best decisions possible for all of Rye Neck's students as we work toward achieving our Board of Education goals for this year.

As always, we welcome your participation at our monthly Board meetings, which are posted on the website. If you have any questions, you can also contact the Board of Education directly via email at: boardofed@ryeneck.org or schedule an appointment to meet in person during our office hours.

On behalf of the Board, I wish you a healthy and successful school year.

Welcome New Staff

Jolie Cohen – Daniel Warren Elementary School Teacher

Jolie has been an early childhood educator for more than 20 years. She holds a master's degree in early childhood/elementary education from the College of New Rochelle and a bachelor's degree in art history/fine arts from Syracuse University. She received her TESOL certification from Manhattanville College. Jolie taught kindergarten for seven years. She enjoys running, yoga, trips to the beach and sea glass collecting.



Morgan Craig – Daniel Warren Elementary School Teaching Assistant

Morgan is a reading teaching assistant at Daniel Warren. She describes herself as caring, creative and friendly. These traits played a major role in her dream to become a teacher. She knew she wanted to be an educator since first grade. Morgan received her bachelor's degree in early childhood and childhood education from SUNY Cortland and her master's degree in literacy and special education from Iona College.



Rachel Franks – F.E. Bellows Elementary School Teacher

Rachel is excited to return to the Rye Neck community. While earning her master's degree in childhood education at Hunter College, she worked in the district as an elementary teaching assistant. She spent the past two years teaching in the Bronx and taking additional education courses at Manhattanville College. She enjoys hiking and being outdoors.



Antoinette Greenland – Rye Neck High School Psychologist

Antoinette is a recent graduate of Mercy College. She worked as a teaching assistant at Mount Pleasant Cottage School (MPCS) for the past 12 years. Her time at MPCS sparked an interest in understanding the feelings behind the behaviors she witnessed in the classroom. Antoinette's interests include spending time with family, traveling, therapeutic art and music.



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Welcome New Staff

Courtney Loper – Daniel Warren Elementary School Teacher

Courtney earned her teaching degree at SUNY Cortland and is working towards a master's degree in literacy at Manhattanville College. She was a substitute teacher at Ridge Street School for two years. Courtney loves going to the beach, reading and spending time with family and friends.



Philece McCoy – F.E. Bellows Elementary School Teacher

Philece received her B.A. in psychology from University at Albany and her M.S. in elementary education from The College of Saint Rose. She taught kindergarten in Albany and first grade in the Bronx. After taking some time off raising her two sons, Philece earned a literacy certification from Pace University and worked as a permanent substitute in Katonah, New York. It was there she realized her love for teaching special education. Philece has her Students With Disabilities certification. In her free time, she drives her sons to sports outings and cheers them on, walks her dog, bakes and reads.



Evan Miller – Rye Neck High School Counselor

Evan received his master's degree in school counseling from Long Island University. He previously worked as an undergraduate admissions counselor at his alma mater, Sacred Heart University, and most recently as a school counselor at Herricks High School on Long Island. Evan enjoys an array of outdoor activities, including golfing and skiing.



Skyler Mosenthal – Rye Neck High School Science Teacher

Skyler received his B.A. from Denison University, M.A.T. (mathematics) from Loyola Marymount University and M.A.T. (biology) from Manhattanville College. He has worked at Achievement First, Breakthrough Collaborative, Cristo Rey Brooklyn, Irvington High School, Rye Neck High School, SWERVE Fitness, and Sacred Heart High School. Skyler's interests include running, triathlon, music, coaching, vegetarian cooking and real estate investment.



Cayla Plot – F.E. Bellows Elementary School Teacher

Cayla is thrilled to be a part of the Rye Neck family. She completed her undergraduate degree in childhood education at Buffalo State College and is currently working towards a master's degree in special education at Southern New Hampshire University. Cayla taught fourth and second grade in East Harlem. She loves spending time with her family in Long Beach Island, reading and snuggling with her Sheepdoodle, George.



Nicole Quigley – Daniel Warren Elementary School and F.E. Bellows Elementary School Teacher

Nicole has been an elementary teacher for the past three years in Yonkers and Mahopac, New York. She earned a bachelor's degree from Manhattan College in childhood education. Nicole is in her last semester of graduate school at University at Albany for instructional technology. She is excited to join the Rye Neck community.



Nicholas Saviano – Rye Neck Middle School/High School Teacher

Nicholas is proud to join the Rye Neck school community this year. He graduated in May with a master's degree in inclusive adolescent education from Pace University and completed his student teaching at White Plains High School. Nick enjoys golf, guitar and Sunday macaroni.



Emily Taylor – Daniel Warren Elementary School Teacher

Emily is excited for this new school year and to join everyone at Daniel Warren Elementary School. She went to SUNY Cortland and graduated with a degree in inclusive education. She spent the past year working as a first grade teacher in Harlem. Emily loves teaching and cannot wait to join the amazing team.



Besa Zabelaj – Rye Neck Middle School Teaching Assistant

Besa is thrilled to join the Rye Neck community. Besa received her bachelor's degree in Italian language from Lehman College and completed a teacher preparation and certification program from Teach-Now Graduate School of Education. She taught English in Italy and math, science and physical education/health in Kosovo. She also coached volleyball in Kosovo. Besa enjoys cooking, baking, swimming, exercising and spending time with her family.



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

- Tara Goldberg
- Tina Wilson

Teachers

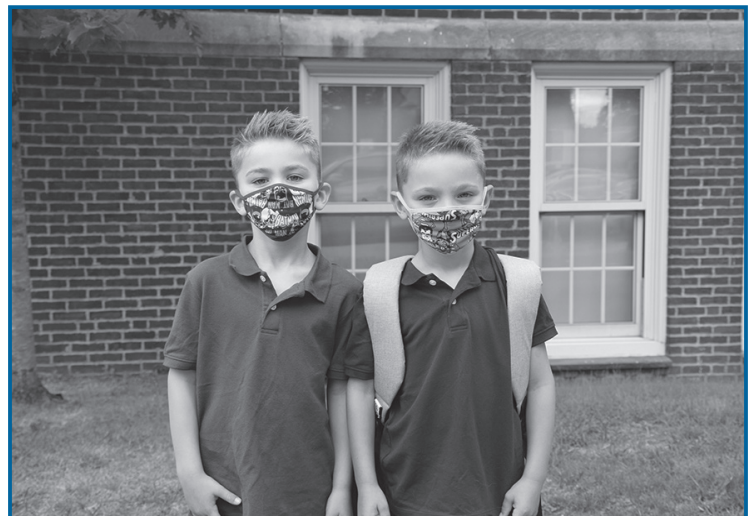
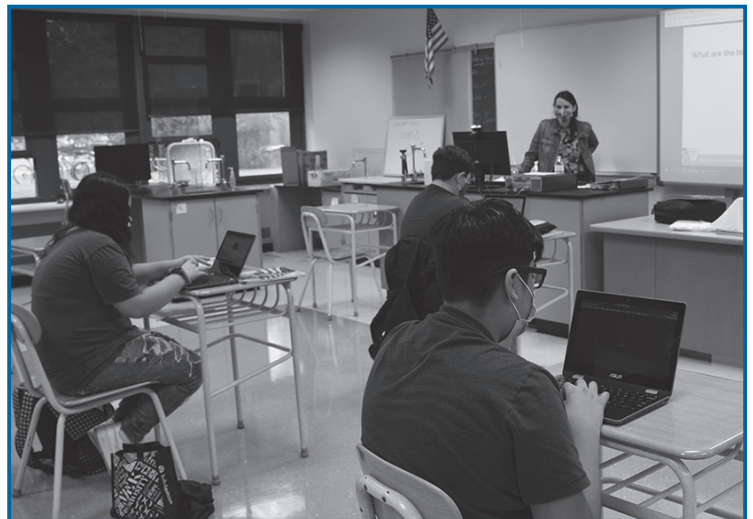
- Bryan Iacovelli
- Eric Rudolph
- Vincent Scozzari
- Colleen Slattery
- Leanne Spadaccino
- Ashley Synowiez

Teaching Assistants

- Ivan Martinez
- Cynthia Mulligan
- Ashley Worley

Rye Neck Mobile App

For easy access to news and information on the District's website from your mobile phone, download the new Rye Neck Mobile App.



Alumni Association News

Greetings and welcome back!

The Rye Neck Alumni Association (RNAA) is dedicated to keeping alumni connected to this wonderful community but, more importantly, uniting alumni to give back. Although our fundraising efforts were cut short by the COVID quarantine, last spring we were still able to award not two, but three \$500 scholarships to Rye Neck seniors. Adding an additional scholarship was our way of showing our growing support, especially to our seniors who needed it more than ever.

During the 2019-20 school year, the RNAA continued to be active in the community by supporting the Booster Club during homecoming and the Panther Parent's Night Out event, touring the Rye Neck MS/HS with Superintendent Dr. Barbara Ferraro, and the class of 1999 celebrating their 20-year reunion and hosting our second annual Alumni Night Out event.

The Friday after Thanksgiving is the standing date of our annual Alumni Night Out event (check our website for any updates on this event). November 2019 was our second annual event and it was a huge success! We laughed, sang karaoke and strolled down memory lane. We raffled off alumni paraphernalia and held a 50/50 raffle. Alumni that attended spanned across 50 years of Rye Neck graduates. All in all, it was a great night!

We are always seeking to grow the RNAA; the more alumni we can reach, the bigger the impact we can make. If you're an alum and would like to be added to our email distribution list, please visit our website to sign up, <https://newalumniassociati.wixsite.com/rnalumniassociation>.

Our website is also a great place to stay informed about upcoming events.

If you would like to donate to the RNAA, please email us at alumni@ryeneck.org.

We look forward to hearing from you and including you in this next school year. Have a wonderful year!

Be safe.

The RNAA

Rye Neck Booster Club We Love Our Schools

The Booster Club is about community, spirit and children. While the COVID-19 pandemic has altered our children's school experience dramatically and challenged our daily lives in so many ways, the Booster Club has reimagined many of our traditions and programs so that we can carry on our mission of bringing school spirit and pride to the Rye Neck community.

The Booster Club strives to build school spirit by supporting athletics, the musical and other initiatives at Rye Neck. While our emphasis is at the middle and high schools, our efforts incorporate all of Rye Neck. Look for our emails for Booster Club news, event information and sport updates. You can find out more about our organization at ryeneckboosterclub.com.

2020-21 BOOSTER CLUB MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Be part of our Panther community and support our efforts by joining the Booster Club for the 2020-21 school year at ryeneckboosterclub.com. Membership fees go directly to our programs and spirit efforts.

GET SPIRITWEAR

Gear up for the new school year with the latest Rye Neck spiritwear. Rye Neck face masks and gators are available. To order, go to ryeneckboosterclub.com, Merchandise tab.

HOMEcoming AND SPIRIT WEEK – TENTATIVELY OCT. 9-10

While COVID restrictions will not allow for our annual tailgate for the community, we plan to hold several virtual events to keep the Panther spirit alive! Stay tuned.

President – Alison Heaton

Treasurer – Suzanne Chamberlain

Spirit Wear – Jocelyn Donat

Communications – Cindy Fasolino

Concessions – Angela Frabasile and Dora Griffio

Membership – Gina Leone

Fundraising – Sally Morningstar

News From the Athletic Department

The 2020 fall sports season was originally scheduled to begin on Aug. 24. Due to COVID-19, the start of the season has been delayed until Sept. 21.

We look forward to having our student-athletes and coaches back on the fields and courts demonstrating Rye Neck Athletics work ethic and sportsmanship.

Coaches will continue to utilize the SportsYou app for team communication as well as practice and game notifications to players and team parents. New this year – the Athletic Department website includes a link to daily contests for fans, staff, families and community members.

You will notice some new faces on the athletics staff this year with the hiring of new coaches. New additions to our fall coaching staff include:

- Ms. Besa Zabelaj – JV Volleyball Head Coach
- Mr. Jean-Benoit Belin – JV Girls Tennis Coach

Thank you in advance for your continued support of our athletic programs. Please follow Rye Neck Athletics on Twitter at @RNHSathletics. Go Rye Neck!

**Photo taken pre-COVID-19.*



PTSA News

The Rye Neck PTSA welcomes you to the 2020-21 school year! We hope that you and your family enjoyed the summer despite these uncertain times. We are excited for the start of the school year at Rye Neck even though it is not the typical start! We encourage you to join the PTSA and assist us in providing all Rye Neck students with enriching educational opportunities.

This school year will look different for all of us. The PTSA has been working this summer to explore programs that will work with the hybrid and remote learning platforms. We are mindful of the economic challenges that many may be facing and have adjusted our budget and fundraising goals accordingly. Ribbons for Rye Neck, which replaced the Balloon Fundraiser last year, will still be held this fall and is our largest fundraiser of the year. This year, the ribbons will read “Rye Neck Together” – a testament to the strength of this community as we stand together when facing adversity. Watch for ribbons throughout the community in October. And if you are able, please donate!

The mission of the Rye Neck PTSA is to enrich the educational experiences and quality of life of each and every student in the Rye Neck Union Free School District; to advocate for all students and to foster a parent/student/school community partnership; and to support the Mission Statement of the Rye Neck Union Free School District.

Please continue to support the Rye Neck PTSA by joining us during our membership drive this fall or online today at <https://rn-ptsa.memberhub.store/>. Please also consider volunteering for one of our committees, participating in our fundraisers, and attending our events. Whatever your level of participation, it is valued and appreciated!

Thank you, in advance, for your support and enthusiasm for the PTSA, Rye Neck’s largest parent organization. Have a wonderful, healthy and productive school year!

Laurel Ryan, PTSA President

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. All Board meeting agendas and minutes are available on BoardDocs.

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Board of Education

Jennifer Rubin, President
Steve Silva, Vice President
Patty Nashelsky, Trustee
Pietro Fasolino, Trustee
Gloria Golle, Trustee
Devina O'Reilly, Trustee

Dear Rye Neck Resident

Administration: 914-777-5252

Dr. Barbara Ferraro, Superintendent
Carolyn Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance

Welcome Back to School!

