

Superintendent's Bulletin

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Dear RCSD Community Member,

Each September, just before the start of school, all of our teachers, staff members, and administrators gather in the Performing Arts Center (PAC) at the High School for "Opening Day." Everyone listens to a few remarks to kick off the year and gather our collective focus before heading to the schools to prepare for students to arrive the next day. I want to share what I spoke about this year.

This summer, I spent time looking at what is changing in the education landscape. As I shared last year, New York State has been re-examining what our graduates need and how the education system should change in order to be more equitable and to best prepare students for life beyond high school. That work has progressed and it appears that significant changes will be coming, particularly at the secondary level around how students will meet graduation requirements. These long-standing requirements are expected to shift, adding more flexibility and options for project-based assessments rather than the currently required Regents exams.

The State has developed what it calls "A Portrait of A Graduate," which it considers the desired outcomes for all New York State high school graduates.

They include being a:

- Critical Thinker
- Innovative Problem Solver
- Effective Communicator
- Global Citizen

Students should also possess:

- Literacy Across the Content Areas
- Social Emotional Competence
- Cultural Competence

How does this align with what we have been doing in Rye? I think extremely well! Anyone who has ever come to a Board meeting or watched one online knows that we spend a lot of time thinking about and talking about The Rye Commitment. It's the guiding force behind everything we do. One of the "promises" in The Rye Commitment is to our students, and it goes like this:

TO STUDENTS:

We will provide the necessary support for you to receive an education that helps you become socially responsible, caring citizens who can think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate, and creatively solve problems in a diverse global environment.

For us as a school district, the coming changes to the graduation requirements and newly defined core competencies will challenge all of us to "think again" about how we provide our students with the necessary skills and dispositions to fulfill the promises in The Rye Commitment.

Sincerely,

Eric Byrne, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Think Again...And Again

Every year, at the beginning of the school year, I give every employee in the school district a book. *Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know* by Adam Grant is this year's selection. Published in 2021, the book is a #1 *New York Times* bestseller and a *New York Times Book Review* Editors' Choice. I have Assistant Director of Athletics Al Mercado to thank for bringing it to my attention last spring. I read it then, but shared it with my colleagues just this year.

As educators, we are all about learning. This book is about having the mental muscle and yes, courage, to question what you think you know and re-learn. While it may sound like a hard read, Grant's writing style is very compelling and chock full of real-life situations. For example, to explore interpersonal rethinking by destabilizing stereotypes, he examines the deep divide between New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox fans!

For me, one of the best parts of the book was the third section, which focused on "creating communities of lifelong learners" by depolarizing our divided discussions and teaching students to question knowledge.

Grant is an organizational psychologist and professor at The Wharton School. He is a popular TED's speaker, his talks having been viewed more than 25 million times. He has a podcast called "WorkLife with Adam Grant." He has been recognized as one of the world's ten most influential management thinkers, named to the "Fortune's 40 Under 40" list, and has received scientific achievement awards from the American Psychological Association and the National Science Foundation. Adam received his B.A. from Harvard and his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, and he is a former Junior Olympic springboard diver.

One reviewer put it this way: If knowledge is power, knowing what we don't know is wisdom. Something for all of us to think about!



Congratulations, Teacher of the Year!

The Rye City School District Teacher of the Year is nominated annually by their fellow teachers, administrators, and current and former parents and students. The teacher selected for the next school year is announced at Closing Day at the end of the school year.

Our past Teachers of the Year have personified the finest attributes of the teaching profession: dedication, commitment, and visible caring for their vocation, their students, and their colleagues. Those of you who know our teacher of the year will unequivocally agree that they fit that description to a tee. Drum roll please...she is Osborn School's **Amy Carman**!



"Amy Carman is a model teacher--a mentor for children to learn from, a professional who cares about teaching, and a warm-hearted co-worker."

"With her spirit assemblies focusing on character education and acknowledging great role models in our Ozzie Bear hug nominees, there is no doubt that Osborn would be a much dimmer place if she was not part of it."

"Mrs. Carman cares for all of her students and truly wants them not to just be learners, but to become the best people that they can be. She pushes them to strive for improvement, responsibility and to develop character and strong work ethics. She holds high standards for herself and for her class."

"During COVID when all the students were remote, Mrs. Carman would drive to their homes on their birthday and stand on the sidewalk belting out 'Happy Birthday' and throwing confetti at their house!"

"When she hears of any issue a student or staff member is having, you can practically see the wheels of her brain turning and within a minute she has developed an entire scheme of positivity that she will immediately put into action while shouldering all of the planning and work."

RHS's National Merit Scholar Semifinalists



RCSD administrators with the 8 RHS National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists

L to R: Director of Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education Dr. Erin Vredenburg, Superintendent Eric Byrne, Timothy O'Donnell, Andrea Kamander, Haley Kloepper, Juliet Rotondo, Kiran Gounden-Kobes, Bill Chen, Andrew Chun, Alex Gordon, RHS Principal Andrew Hara, RHS Assistant Principal Mark Bayer, Secondary Pupil Personnel Services Supervisor Amy Osoli

Eight Rye High School seniors were named National Merit Scholarship Program Semifinalists in mid-September. The students earned the recognition by scoring well on the PSAT/NMSQT test taken during their junior year. Of the over 1.3 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools nationwide who took the test, more than 16,000 were named semifinalists. They have an opportunity to continue in the competition for approximately 6,870 National Merit Scholarships worth almost \$26 million. Rye High School's eight semifinalists are **Bill Chen, Andrew Chun, Alexander (Alex) Gordon, Kiran Gounden-Kobes, Andrea Kamander, Haley Kloepper, Timothy O'Donnell, and Juliet Rotondo.** They will be given the Rye Recognition of Excellence Award at an October Board of Education meeting. Congratulations to the students, their families, and teachers!

Commendations

- Senior **Kimaya Agarwal** was awarded a Citizenship Award by Senator Shelley Mayer in June. The awards recognize high school students for outstanding work and dedication to their community
- The **RHS Garnet Garden Club/4H group** was featured in the Giving Tree Global News
- Ninth-grader **Aaron Lynch** scored a perfect score on the 2024 National Latin Exam
- Several RHS orchestra students were invited to participate in the Area All-State Orchestra:
 - **Alice Enokida** (12) - HS String Orchestra (Violin)
 - **Philip Karajannis** (10) - HS String Orchestra (Violin)
 - **Tayga Vural** (10) - HS String Orchestra (Cello)
 - **Lucas Gordon** (11) - HS String Orchestra (Violin)
 - **Jack Graseck** (12) - HS Symphony Orchestra (Violin)

Commendations (cont'd)

- In late June, several RHS girls varsity lacrosse players were named All-American and Academic All-American. They are:
 - All-American:
 - **Mary Sack** (12)
 - **Lilly Whaling** (RHS class of '24)
 - Academic All-American:
 - **Caroline Doyle** (12)
 - **Mali White** (RHS class of '24)
 - Senior **Ella Erickson** was selected for the second year in a row as an All-American for the 2023-24 squash high school season. The announcement was made in July
- RCSD Director of Health, Physical Education, & Athletics **Susan Reid Dullea** was selected to be inducted into the New York State High School Softball Hall of Fame in the Class of 2025. Ms. Reid Dullea played softball for Massena High School in Section 10: Reid, a pitcher at Massena High School, graduated in 1991. Her team had two state runner-up finishes, she was All-State twice, and for five years played on the varsity team. Reid was league MVP four times and went to college at Ithaca. The New York State Sportswriters and Coaches Organization for Girls Sports was responsible for voting for the Class of 2025 for the NYSSCOGS New York State High School Softball Hall of Fame. A committee of more than two dozen people elected 14 people to what will be NYSSCOGS' 14th Hall of Fame Class. The induction ceremony is in June of next year



The RHS 2023-24 NYSPHSAA Award

Rye High School was recognized as a NYSPHSAA School of Excellence. NYSPHSAA is the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, a non-profit voluntary educational service organization comprised of public, parochial, and private schools providing equitable and safe interschool athletics for students in grades 7-12. The award signifies that the following of Rye High School's eligible teams for the 2023-24 school year met the GPA requirement of 90 or above. The following 28 teams are included in the award:

Baseball
Boys basketball
Girls basketball
Competitive cheer
Game day cheer
Boys cross country
Girls cross country
Field hockey
Football
Boys golf
Girls golf
Ice hockey
Boys lacrosse
Girls lacrosse



Boys skiing
Girls skiing
Boys soccer
Girls soccer
Softball
Boys swimming
Girls swimming
Boys tennis
Girls tennis
Boys indoor track
Girls Indoor track
Boys outdoor track
Girls outdoor track
Girls volleyball

The RHS 2023-24 NYSPHSAA Award

Looking Ahead

Thursday, October 3 and Friday, October 4

Rosh Hashanah

Schools and Offices Closed

Tuesday, October 8

Board of Education Meeting: Book Talk and External Audit Presentation

7:30 p.m.

RMS Multipurpose Room

Monday, October 14

Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day

Schools and Offices Closed

Wednesday, October 16

PSAT Administration at RHS

3 Hour Delayed Start (RHS only)

Friday, October 18 and Saturday, October 19

RHS Fall Play

Friday at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

Tuesday, October 22

Board of Education Meeting: Assessment Data

7:30 p.m.

RMS Multipurpose Room

Wednesday, October 23

Early Dismissal for Parent Teacher Conferences (RMS Only)

Saturday, October 26

Rye Harrison Game

3:00 p.m. Kickoff

Rye High School Nugent Stadium

