

Digital Citizenship Week, started by the non-profit organization Common Sense Media, is always the third week of October. The idea is to specifically reinforce concepts that are part of today's schools, namely digital responsibility, safety and security, and etiquette.

To that end, each of our schools has been engaged in age-appropriate activities. Daniel Warren's message can be seen on their morning announcements in the classroom. Those include Saying Goodbye to Technology (when you don't want to) and privacy and security through the Internet Traffic Light. At FE Bellows, students learn about The Power of Words and how to be Super Digital Citizens. At the MS/HS lessons are provided by the English department. 6th and 7th grade are defining AI; grades 8 through 11 are delineating AI and plagiarism and our seniors are learning the role of AI in generating college essays. Please ask your children what they have learned about digital citizenship.

Also this week we will be celebrating the opening of our new MS/HS parking lot and walk/bike path, this Friday at 1:15, with a formal ribbon cutting ceremony. The ceremony will be held early in the afternoon so that our Senior Buddy Day groups, the 6th and 12th grade, can attend. These groups represent our current and future drivers as well as walkers and bike riders. Also present will be members of our board, our administration and staff, representatives from community groups such as Rye Neck Safe Routes to School groups, and the event will be covered by LMC media. Monday, October 21st, is both the timely beginning of the PTSA's Walk to School Week and the official opening of the lot for senior parking.

School board members oversee the education of the community's youth, one of the most important things adults could do with their time. School boards are volunteers who don't receive compensation, yet they work year-round for students.

The week of October 14th through the 18th is also recognized as this year's School Board Recognition Week by the New York State School Boards Association. School boards help create a shared vision for education; they help ensure positive outcomes and the success of all students; they set the direction of the school district to achieve the highest student performance; they support a healthy school district culture in which to work and to learn; and they develop a budget aligned with those aims.

Rye Neck is joining all public school districts across the state to celebrate School Board Recognition Week to honor local board members for their commitment to our community and its children. Each of our board members has been given a certificate of recognition; please join me in congratulations and thanks.

I conclude my remarks by introducing tonight's presentation. As you know, our District Strategic Planning team created a triad of goals to achieve the changes we want for our students, now and in the future. To reach those three goals, which are to promote problem solving, to create connections with purpose, and to transform professional learning, an Action Team was created for each. These teams of administrators, teachers, and support staff broke down each goal into parts that will collectively result in the outcome we want. Since our first two goals are somewhat sequentially dependent on the professional learning of the third, we begin our three meeting series of Strategic Planning presentations with the leadership of our Goal 3 group, DW principal Tara Goldberg and Linette Milo, who is both a HS AP Biology teacher and the chair of our staff Professional Development Committee.