

VALUE Education

RyeNeck Schools
LEARN • ACHIEVE • LEAD

September 2022

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

Welcome back! September signals a new school year with a new fall season. Rather than lament the passing of summer, I appreciate the annual feeling of reinvigoration and energy that July and August give us. That physical and mental renewal is what positions us for a strong start to the Rye Neck 2022-23 school year.



Many aspects of the foundation for a successful student year were laid during our previous year. Working with our community, the Board of Education and administration created a budget that reinforced our educational technology capabilities, provided professional staff for appropriate class size, and maintained the extracurricular options that our students enjoy. The budget also allowed us to enhance our school security and reorganize our administrative team, all while adhering to the NY State tax cap for an 11th straight year.

Of course, the goal of any budget is to enable us to follow through on Rye Neck's mission: focusing on a strong, diverse academic foundation earned through a challenging instructional program; encouraging students to take ownership of their life-long learning, think critically, and master their ability to communicate; and stressing good character, promotion of ethical behavior, and an appreciation of their multicultural world community. This is how we have established Rye Neck as a special place for students to learn.

We are excited to introduce three new administrators this year. Wil Siegel, our new Director of Pupil Personnel Services, will be responsible for our students with disabilities and special services staff and he will also head our mental wellness efforts. Mary Lanza made the transition from English teacher and technology coordinator to become

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An Update from the Board of Education

by Gloria Golle, President

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year!

September always brings a sense of excitement and energy as we all gear up for the year ahead. As the new President of the Board of Education, I am looking forward to working with Vice President Rebecca Mansell and trustees Patty Nashelsky, Jennifer Rubin, Devina O'Reilly and our newest elected board member, Elizabeth Yong.

We are, as always, in a constant state of forward motion as we continue to work together with the administration and staff to build upon all of the great things Rye Neck already has in place. The Board has been working diligently over the summer, always keeping in mind our first priority of ensuring that all of our students have the tools and guidance they need to be successful in their Rye Neck career and beyond.

We continue to streamline our processes and procedures, including our new consent agenda at board meetings. The consent agenda allows us to focus on the important issues at a meeting such as hearing from our parent, student, and staff organizations, as well as hearing from the public and engaging in mindful presentations throughout the year.

The Board welcomes community input and participation. To that end, the public is invited to both our monthly board meetings and planning sessions. Should you have a question or concern about our schools, we also have office hours prior to each planning session where community members can make an appointment to speak with two designated board members. Additionally, you can reach us by email at boardofed@ryeneck.org.

There is much to look forward to and we wish you and your family a fantastic school year. Welcome back!



Superintendent's Notebook

by Eric Lutinski, Ed.D.

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our first Director of Technology and Communications. She will be a liaison between our IT partners and the needs of our instructional staff and students and will also oversee our website, social media, and email communications. Finally, Jason Doerr is our first MS/HS assistant principal. He will be forming relationships with students in grades 6 through 12 and be able to help Dr. Wilson and Dr. Barker with staff supervision and school management. Additionally, we hired a dozen new employees to provide a variety of services to our students. These people are monitors, teachers, counselors, teaching assistants, and cleaners.

The beginning of a school year requires a great deal of coordination, which makes the staff days prior to the arrival of our students critical and we were fortunate to have had a full week to prepare this year. Our new staff members came in on August 29th for a set of specific activities to get started, including our annual "new staff bus tour" to help familiarize them with our community. The veteran staff returned on August 30th. During the remainder of the week, we trained on new technologies, policies, and programs. For example, all staff received training on recognition of student mental health issues from our psychologists, and both bullying prevention and safety and security from our administrative team. Our custodial and grounds staff put finishing touches on the building and grounds, our clerical staff sent new-year communications, while teachers and assistants decorated each building to make sure they are welcoming environments for our students.

I am eager to see our students on opening day and we are all poised to help them learn, achieve and lead.



Welcome New Staff

Samantha Amar – Rye Neck Middle School Teaching Assistant

Samantha Amar is a passionate and friendly TA who is excited to join the team at Rye Neck. Raised in Westchester, she has a BA from SUNY Purchase and has worked in special education for seven years. She enjoys traveling, gardening and baking.



Jessica Benvenuto – F. E. Bellows Special Education Teacher

Before her graduate studies at Teachers College, 'Jess' taught in Hawaii for 2 years. After graduating she moved back home to Westchester County. This summer she's been busy planning her wedding. Jess loves to travel, hike and spend time with her family. She is very excited to begin her career at Rye Neck and foster relationships with colleagues and the community.



Debby Cohen – Rye Neck Middle School Biology Leave Replacement

Debby has been a science teacher for 20+ years. She has a masters in Science Education and an MBA in Finance. She taught MS science at The Leffell School for 10 years and HS science at Mount Vernon School District for 9 years. Debby has a passion for fitness and exercise. She also loves to travel; her latest adventure was Kenya and Tanzania.



Kelly Davey – Rye Neck Middle School/High School Special Education Teacher

Kelly is looking forward to starting at Rye Neck after teaching in NYC for the past 8 years. Kelly holds certifications in Social Studies, Students with Disabilities, and Childhood Education. She enjoys traveling and cooking.



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Welcome New Staff

Jason Doerr - Rye Neck Middle

School/High School Assistant Principal

Jason Doerr is Rye Neck's first ever assistant principal. He attended Binghamton University and CUNY City College. He previously taught special education in NYC and was a school leader in NYC and Rockland BOCES. When not at work, he enjoys spending time with his wife, two children and dog. He also loves traveling, reading and the NY Jets.



Danielle Evangelista - F. E. Bellows

Special Education Teaching Assistant

Danielle recently moved to this area from New Jersey. She graduated from Georgian Court University with her masters in General and Special Education. She is excited to begin the school year at Rye Neck and meet everyone! When she is not in the classroom, she loves being down at the shore, listening to music, and singing.



Cyndi Feinman - Rye Neck Middle

School/High School Theatre Teacher

Cyndi is ecstatic to join Rye Neck after teaching chorus and theater for 11 years. Her hobbies include playwriting, gardening, and traveling with her family. Cyndi holds certifications in theater and music, is on the advisory board for the Roger Rees Theatre Awards in Excellence, and is a Resources & Repertoire Chairperson for the NY American Choral Directors Association.



Rosa Ferrante - Rye Neck Middle

School/High School Spanish Teacher

Rosa was a Spanish and Italian teacher at Rye Neck from 2004-2010 and enjoyed chaperoning student trips abroad. Rosa competed in college cheerleading and coached Harrison High School's cheerleading team for 17 years. Rosa has volunteered as class mom, chaperoned class trips, and started the elementary Theater club program five years ago here at Rye Neck. Rosa enjoys watching her children in sports, theater arts, and enjoys cooking and traveling.



Geoffrey Fischer - Rye Neck High School English Teacher

Geoffrey studied creative writing and filmmaking at SUNY Binghamton. After a 30-year career in restaurants, the former chef decided to pursue his first love as a second career, teaching about reading and writing as a way to understand yourself, the world, and its people. He has taught English in the Bronx and Chappaqua.



Marie Fuentes - Daniel Warren and F. E. Bellows School Counselor

Marie graduated from SUNY Cortland with a Bachelors of Science in Health Education. She has a masters in school counseling from NYIT. Marie was a Health teacher for the last 6 years and is excited to start her career as a school counselor. Marie will be focusing on individual and group sessions both in and out of the classroom. Marie can't wait to join the team and looks forward to a wonderful school year!



Sanghun Jung - Rye Neck High School Physics Teacher

Sanghun or 'Phil' is an extremely driven physics teacher from NYU/Hofstra who brings the perfect balance of his vibrant energy, teaching expertise, and a tremendous care for each and every student to the classroom. He will continue to inspire and open the door towards STEM to young scientists.



Michael Marino - Rye Neck Middle School/High School Special Education Teacher

Michael completed his undergraduate and graduate studies at Manhattanville College. He started as an ELA teacher in a Bronx charter school. For the last 5 years, he's been teaching Special Education ELA 9-12 in a Westchester school that specializes in educating students on the autism spectrum and those with emotional disturbances.



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Welcome New Staff

Gino Palmieri - Rye Neck High School Physical Education Teacher and Teaching Assistant

Gino will be joining us this Fall as a PE Teacher, TA, and JV Volleyball Coach. He received his masters in Physical Education & Sports Pedagogy from Manhattanville College. At his former school district, Gino was a CTA and 1:1 aide in an 8:1:2 Life Skills Classroom, PE Student Teacher, Baseball Coach, Special Olympics Coach and an Athletic Events Assistant.



Isil Schwartz - F. E. Bellows ENL Teaching Assistant

Isil has been an ENL teacher for more than 20 years. She is originally from Turkey and loves reading, dancing and relaxing at the beach. She lives in White Plains with her husband and two kids. As well as ENL, she has taught ballroom dancing and belly dancing over the years. Her name is pronounced Ishil and means "bright and shiny."



Wil Siegel - Districtwide Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Wil joins the Rye Neck community with 23 years of Special Education experiences supporting communities as an Assistant Director of Special Services, CSE Chairperson, School Psychologist, Teaching Assistant, and as a home tutor. He is a lifelong learner with degrees in school psychology, community counseling, psychology, liberal arts, and administration. Wil is looking forward to making new connections with students, faculty, and families.



Briant Then - F. E. Bellows Security Aide/Monitor

Briant has previous law enforcement experience from New York City Police Department (NYPD). He has extensive experience with first aid and CPR training. He is a father of two and loves football (Fly Eagles Fly). Briant is also Spanish speaking and very proud of his Dominican heritage roots.



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:

Teachers:

- Darien Bica
- Nichole Flasz
- Chelsea Gillespie
- Alyssa Massi
- Mendije Perkovic
- Kristi Rachiele

School Psychologist

- Nicole Crispinelli

Teaching Assistants:

- Lina Amello
- Nathaniel Billy
- Theresa Michna
- Monica Muir

PTSA News

The Rye Neck PTSA welcomes you to the 2022-2023 school year! We hope that you and your family enjoyed the summer and are ready for another exciting year at Rye Neck.

Each year, the Rye Neck PTSA provides more than \$100,000 in programming to Rye Neck students. This year, we have allocated more funds towards the popular STEAM and Health & Wellness programs. We are also working with the school librarians to schedule Author Visits. The Rye Y Recess program, which brings Rye Y staff to lead activities at the elementary schools during recess, continues this year. We also fund the Fourth Grade Circus, along with Afterschool Playdates, Family Fitness Nights, the Spooktacular, Middle School Activity Night, and Senior Send-Off.

Afterschool Clubs will start in October and will run fall, winter, and spring sessions at Daniel Warren and Bellows. Finally, look for information on upcoming Book Fairs, Class Photos, DW Garden Club events as well as news and events from our Environmental Committees.

This year, we will also continue to build a strong and supportive Rye Neck community. There will be opportunities to attend the Heard in Rye Speaker Series. We will host parent workshops and speakers organized by our Special Education Action Committee (SEAC). There will be events and meetings held by the Rye Neck International Committee (RNIC), which is dedicated to creating a network of international parents in Rye Neck. We have started a Newcomers Committee to welcome new families to the Rye Neck community. Finally, we will have parent social events throughout the year.

There are many ways to contribute to the PTSA. You can support the PTSA by simply becoming a member. You can join on our website at www.ryeneckpta.org. Your membership fee goes directly to support PTSA programs. PTSA membership also comes with access to our new student/family directory, Membership Toolkit. Membership Toolkit will replace SchoolBee and our printed directory. We expect to have the new directory up and running by early October.

Another way to support the PTSA is by participating in our fundraisers throughout the year. Our first fundraiser is Ribbons for Rye Neck. Please consider a donation to help support PTSA programming. Visit our website for more information and to donate. Last year the Ribbons Fundraiser raised over \$37,000. Our goal this year is to surpass \$40,000. Watch for ribbons throughout the community on October 14th. The PTSA is also running its first Rye Neck Pop-Up Store in September. You will be able to purchase a variety of Rye Neck merchandise and proceeds from your purchase will support the PTSA. Check your email and the PTSA website for more information and to make a purchase.

Finally, you can support the PTSA by simply participating - volunteer for one of our committees, participate in our fundraisers, and attend our events. Whatever your level of participation, it is valued and appreciated.

Thank you, in advance, for your support and enthusiasm for the PTSA. Please continue to check our website www.ryeneckpta.org to stay up to date on our news and events. Have a wonderful school year!

Megan McFarland, PTSA President

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 Dani Schneider and Katie Lipman who were the 2021-2022 scholarship recipients. We wish them much luck in their future endeavors!

The Alumni Association also facilitates campus tours for alumni and their graduating classes. This summer we toured the Rye Neck MS/HS campus with the Class of '77. It was so much fun to hear stories of their Rye Neck experiences and the memories they shared with one another from over 45 years ago. It was as if we were in a time machine and they were 18 again! They were amazed and impressed with how much the campus has changed and improved, especially the newer buildings. They were thrilled to learn that we have an Alumni Association and were so appreciative of having the opportunity to tour the school that they donated money on the spot to put towards the annual scholarships for this upcoming year. Thank you Class of '77!

The Alumni Association also 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.

<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 2022 Fall sports season hit the ground and courts running!

Preseason started for our student athletes and coaches on August 22nd after a much needed and well deserved summer break. Everyone was filled with excitement and energy as they give it their all in practices and games. Come on out and cheer on our Panther teams and athletes. Thank you for your continued support of our athletic programs.

You will notice some new faces on the athletics staff this year with the hiring of new coaches. Some new faces joining our Fall coaching staff, and familiar faces in new roles, this season include:

- Coach Gino Palmieri - JV Volleyball Head Coach
- Coach John Tessitore - Varsity Football Assistant Coach
- Coach Kathleen Regan - Varsity Field Hockey Head Coach
- Coach Armond Yusi - Varsity Assistant Field Hockey Coach
- Coach Joe Carlucci - Varsity Assistant Girls Soccer Coach
- Coach Jeff Coronel - JV Boys Soccer Head Coach

Homecoming Weekend is October 14th & 15th. Mark your calendars now. The varsity home contest schedule is as follows:

- Girls Soccer - 4:30 PM - Friday
- Volleyball - 6:00 PM - Friday
- Girls Tennis - 11:00 AM - Saturday
- Field Hockey - 11:30 AM - Saturday
- Boys Soccer - 12:00 PM - Saturday
- Football - 2:30 PM - Saturday

Over the last couple of years, several Rye Neck athletes have made commitments to continue their athletic careers in college. The latest Panthers to do so are class of '23 boys lacrosse players Ronan and Luke West. Ronan will continue his academic and lacrosse careers at Haverford College and Luke will do the same at Muhlenberg College. Stay tuned for news of other commitments this year!

Follow Rye Neck Athletics on Twitter at @RNHSathletics

Go Rye Neck!

Rye Neck Booster Club We Love Our Schools

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

2022-2023 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Be part of our Panther community and support our efforts by joining the Booster Club for the 22-23 school year at www.ryeneckboosterclub.com. Membership fees support our programs, events and spirit efforts.

FALL FEST FUNDRAISER – SEPTEMBER 23

Our big annual parents night out helps us raise funds for programming. A great way to meet fellow Rye Neck parents, see old friends and make new ones! The event sold out last year so don't wait to register.

HOMECOMING – OCTOBER 14-15

Homecoming will be filled with Rye Neck's favorite traditions, from Spirit Week to Tailgate to the athletic fields packed with fans. This community-wide event brings out crowds from 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 school functions this fall.

CONNECT WITH THE RYE NECK BOOSTER CLUB

Email: Look for Booster Club news, event information and sport updates.

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

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

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

President – Patrick West

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



Rye Neck Website

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 to showcase the outstanding opportunities that Rye Neck offers its students. Please take some time and explore 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, 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

Gloria Golle, President
Rebecca Mansell, Vice President
Patty Nashelsky, Trustee
Jennifer Rubin, Trustee
Devina O'Reilly, Trustee
Elizabeth Yong, 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!

