

Superintendent's Update

October 2023

Dear Rye Neck Families,

Our 2023-24 school year is off to a busy start. All four school Open Houses were well attended, athletic teams are having a successful fall season, clubs and other extracurricular activities are either running or poised to begin, and our parent organizations have already hosted events. Of course, building activities during the school are the lifeblood of our district and interactions between students and teachers bring vitality to each day.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Paul Forbes

Our entire district staff spent the morning of August 31st with Paul Forbes, a Bias Awareness and Equity consultant. Mr. Forbes is the founder of Leading with Hearts and Minds and conducted an Implicit Bias Awareness Workshop for Rye Neck. His message was that “while we cannot eliminate our implicit biases, we can take steps to reduce and mitigate their effects on our behavior, policies, practices, and procedures.” It’s about “doing the work behind the work” and the importance of learning from others’ perspectives because we have more in common than we have differences.

Implicit biases are attitudes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious manner. The staff learned how to identify and mitigate these biases. One tool used by Mr. Forbes was to caution against the “single story”, where we stick to assumptions we have about others, leading to misunderstanding. To help illustrate the [Danger of a Single Story](#), Mr. Forbes had the staff preview a TED Talk from Nigerian author Chimamanda Adichie. This awareness will help educators understand each student as an individual.

Rye Neck Strategic Plan

Strategic planning in a district is a means of assessing the current state of its schools, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and developing a clear plan of action to achieve goals and objectives. Rye Neck has partnered with Judith Wilson, an experienced educator and administrator, notably having

served as the superintendent of the Princeton and Woodbury school districts in New Jersey. Ms. Wilson has been in operation since 2014 as an educational consultant and planning facilitator and is highly regarded by other districts she has worked with, many in Westchester.

The initial process will be conducted during this first semester and will include electronic surveys tailored for Rye Neck for parents, students in grades 5-12, faculty, support staff, administrators, and community residents without children in the schools. Ms. Wilson will review school data, trends, and key issues, and interview our Board of Education, administrators and district leaders. Once data is collected and summarized, a diverse leadership planning team made up of school staff, parents, and students will spend two days in late November on the development of goals for the next three to five years of district growth and improvement. After the new year, we will have overall goals, timelines, measurable benchmarks for each action step and have an annual review and renewal process delineated.

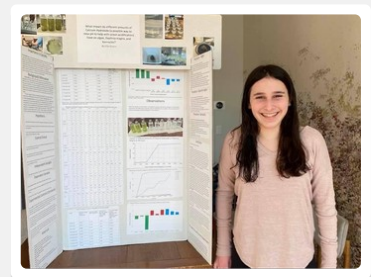
Our end product will be a strategic plan that will help guide how we develop and support our learners over the next several years. As a set of aspirational goals, the plan will inform future decisions that will impact all levels of our district. We will keep the community updated on planning activities and progress.

Student Spotlight

In each monthly message we spotlight high school students who are doing interesting things in or out of school. Based on the relationships our staff members forge with their students and their knowledge of what's going on in their lives, our teachers suggest students for consideration. Mary Lanza, our Director of Technology and Communications, then interviews the students to "get their story." Here are two students for October. **To read about the students, click on the name below their picture.**



[MICHAEL CONAWAY](#)



[ELLA GRANN](#)

Staff Spotlight

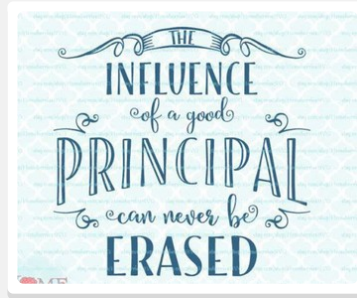
We also highlight teachers and other staff members each month. Each shares personal reflections on how they got into education, memories from their time as students, and their favorite activities outside of school. We are starting with four administrators.

To read about a staff member, click on the name below their picture.



TARA GOLDBERG

Daniel Warren Principal



MIKE SCARANTINO

F. E. Bellows Principal



DULCE BARKER

Middle School Principal



WIL SIEGEL

Director of Pupil Personnel
Services

Weather and Alerts

Our geographical location has once again forced Rye Neck to show resilience in the face of extreme weather last Friday. I know many of our families and staff members dealt with the effects of the storm and I hope all are doing well. Events like those reinforce the need for emergency communications tests such as the one we ran on September 20th. Again, if you received an incomplete series of communications (email, phone, text) from the district, please log in to your Parent Portal account to update your contact information.

Similarly, the Federal Government is testing their own forms of emergency communication with a [FEMA/FCC Alert Test](#) scheduled to begin at approximately 2:20 p.m. on Wednesday, October 4th. The [Emergency Alert System](#) (EAS) portion of the test will be sent to radios and televisions and the [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#) (WEA) portion of the test will be directed to all consumer cell phones.

A banner with a grey background and blue borders. The word "upcoming" is written in a light blue, cursive font at the top. Below it, the word "EVENTS" is displayed in large, white, sans-serif capital letters, each letter contained within a blue square. The squares are arranged horizontally and have a slight 3D effect.

upcoming EVENTS

Board of Education Planning Session

Wednesday, October 4

6:30 PM

Middle/High Collaborative Science Center

School Closed - Columbus Day

Monday, October 9

PTSA Spirit Week

Tuesday, October 10 - Friday, October 13

Homecoming Weekend

Friday, October 13 & Saturday, October 14

Board of Education Meeting

Wednesday, October 18

7:00 PM

Middle/High School Community Room

RNIC Potluck Dinner

Friday, October 20

7:00 PM

MS/HS Dining Hall

Rye Neck High School Drama Production

Thursday, October 26 & Friday, October 27

7:00 PM

Performing Arts Center

F.E. Bellows Halloween Parade/Sing-A-Along

Tuesday, October 31

10:30 AM

Daniel Warren Halloween Parade/Sing-A-Along

Tuesday, October 31

2:15 PM


Rye Neck Schools



 Facebook

 @ryeneckschools

 info@ryeneck.org

 914-777-5200

 ryeneck.org

