



# RPS NEWS

Ridgefield Public Schools Newsletter | Ridgefield, CT | October 9, 2020

## The Dogs of Ridgefield Public Schools: Part 2

While the SRMS dogs featured in last week's *RPS News* are available to all students and staff, guide dog Flint keeps his eyes only on Karen Dewing. Ms. Dewing (shown right with Flint) is RPS Director of Personnel and has worked for RPS for 24 years. She co-chaired the Reopening Committee, which coordinated the effort to get schools open and keep the community healthy.

Flint is Dewing's first guide dog as her blindness has been progressive. He came from [Guiding Eyes for the Blind](#) of Yorktown, NY. According to Dewing, Guiding Eyes' rigorous training can cost up to \$50,000 per dog and many dogs ultimately do not get placed with a blind person because the dog might not be able to perform all the tasks required. SRMS dogs Grady and Quinn are released as Guiding Eyes dogs.

Flint is trained to be quiet and inconspicuous, and help Dewing navigate her environment safely. "You should see him in New York City," Dewing says. "He can guide me across very crowded streets with no problem. He's an incredibly smart dog."

Dewing wants families to know that guide dogs should not be greeted or touched as that can distract them from their important work of keeping their owners safe. She shared her story to build awareness of some of the differences in our community and the tools that might be necessary for some people to access their environments. Thank you to Ms. Dewing for sharing your story, all you have done to open schools this fall, and for your long term commitment to the RPS District.



## Grades Pre-K to 5 In Person

For the first time since March 15, all RPS pre-kindergarten and elementary students can attend full-time in-person classes. SRO Mark Giglio, shown in the photo right, came up with a new dismissal plan at Branchville Elementary to better accommodate the number of parent pickups. Thank you to everyone for your patience and vigilance in following the rules and keeping students with COVID symptoms home.



## Calendar

**October 9 and 29**

Early Dismissal Students  
Professional Development

**October 12**

No School; Columbus Day

**October 13 and 26**

BOE Meeting

[BOE website for information](#)

[Full RPS Calendar](#)

## Silver Wins Gold!



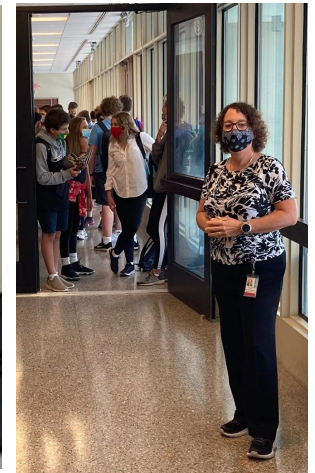
RHS Reading Teacher Judy Silver won Ridgefield Library's 2020 Battle of the Books. Ms. Silver shared her passion for the book, *The 57 Bus: The True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime That Changed Their Lives* by Dashka Slater, and beat a famous Broadway composer, a pair of ukulele playing comics, and other formidable opponents. The Battle of the Books, co-sponsored by Books on the Common, is a Ridgefield Library fundraiser emceed by James Mustich, author of *1000 Books to Read Before You Die*. Congrats!

## Goals, Inside and Out



Veterans Park Elementary Teacher Michael Fraoili posted this shot of a student showing "commitment and responsibility" as well as skill while completing his virtual PE assignments.

## MS Principal Team



Middle School Principals Patricia Raneri (photo above right) and Tim Salem (photo above left) talk with Dr. Wes DeSantis about the hybrid middle school model in this week's [Tiger Talk Podcast](#). Principals share their collaboration and the remarkable work of teachers and students to be flexible, practical, and kind to rise to the challenges of school in the time of COVID.

## Got Guts? Sisters? Bad Kitty?

Barlow Mountain Elementary students in Grades 3-5 had a great virtual author visit with Raina Telgemeier, author of many graphic novels including *Smile*, *Sisters*, and *Guts*.



BMES Grades K-2 met with Nick Bruel, author of the best-selling *Bad Kitty* series. In these engaging visits, BMES students were able to meet favorite authors, ask questions, and learn about great new books.

Keep up with Ridgefield Public Schools News on our website [news page](#) and [calendar](#).

We would love to hear from you, [contact us](#) with questions and feedback.

