

# RPS DISTRICT NEWSLETTER December 2018



**Our Shared Purpose**  
Provide highly engaging, relevant  
and personalized learning for all  
members of the community.

JeanAnn C. Paddyfote, Ph.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools  
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## **Welcome to Dr. William Collins**

New Superintendent of  
Ridgefield Public Schools

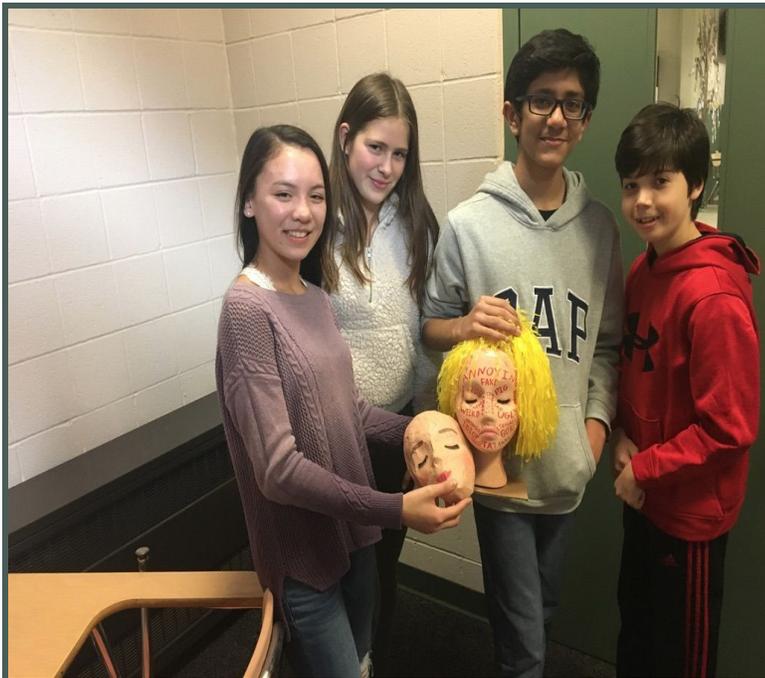
The Board of Education announced the appointment of Dr. William Collins as the new Superintendent of the Ridgefield Public Schools. An experienced and effective education leader, Dr. Collins will take the helm on February 19, 2019. We look forward to working with him to provide the best education to Ridgefield students!

[Read more.](#)



## A Day in the District

Scotts Ridge Middle School



Eighth graders started the holiday season working together with their teachers and artists affiliated with The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in an exciting collaboration that incorporates Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math to foster critical thinking, teamwork, and creativity. [Read more](#) or [watch the video](#).

**What are our students...**

**Curious about?**

**Disappointed in?**

**Excited by?**

**Fearful of?**

**Joyful about?**

**Proud of?**



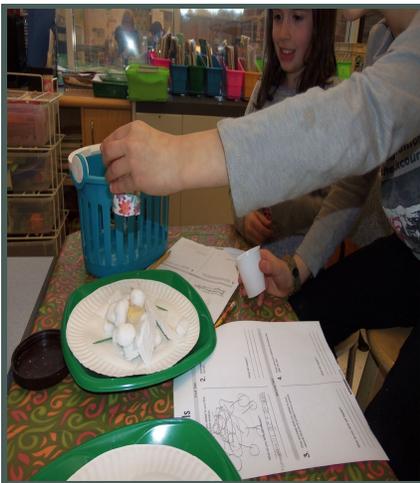
## Dance China Visits RPS Elementary and Middle Schools

In November and December, all elementary and middle schools enjoyed performances by Dance China courtesy of Productions for Young People. Ask your children what they enjoyed about the performance.

[Read more for information, dates, and pictures.](#)

## Community Packs Ridgefield Library for Project Resilience

On December 5, more than 130 people turned out to hear Dr. Paul Foxman, Ph.D. present *The Worried Child: Recognizing Anxiety in Children and Helping Them Heal*. A video of Dr. Foxman's talk is available on the [Project Resilience Facebook page](#).



## Barlow Mountain Elementary School

### Cornmeal Mountains

Barlow Mountain Elementary School second graders are working on a unit entitled, "My Place in the World and My Community" in their integrated studies classes. Some of the questions that students consider are: "How do people and the environment affect one another?"; "What do people do when the environment does not meet their needs?"; and "How do we prevent wind or water from changing the land?". In this picture, Mrs. Andrew's second graders collaborate using heaps of cornmeal "mountains" to simulate creative solutions for erosion.



## Branchville Elementary School

### Fifth Grade Musical

On November 28 and December 1, Branchville Elementary School fifth graders put on three remarkable performances of Peter Pan Jr.! The annual musical production is the result of a joint effort between the PTA and the school. The music teacher, Betsy Anderson, organized a host of parent volunteers to bring the show together. Bravo!



## East Ridge Middle School

### Honoring Our Military Heroes

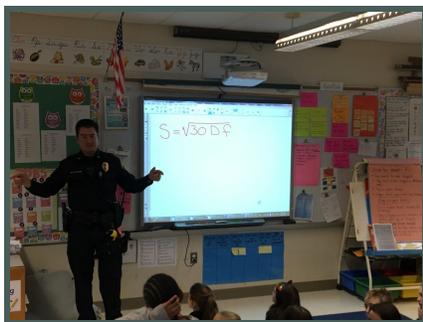
Our hearts are still full of warmth and gratitude after our amazing Veterans Day program on November 9. This program, along with our entire school community, recognized over 50 veterans, many of whom were parents, grandparents or friends of our East Ridge Middle School community. One of the participating parents was Edton Ganal, who served in the United States Navy and deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq while on active duty, shown left with his daughter Sofia. [Read more.](#)



## Farmingville Elementary School

### STEAM-ING Into Invention Convention

Ever wonder what's inside your video game controller or alarm clock, toaster, or laptop? Grades 3, 4, and 5 engineers and their parents came to school on November to "Take It Apart!" Our "STEAMY" kids and parents eagerly enjoyed this opportunity to see how things work and used their hands to explore items they encounter every day. Engineering experts circulated during the evening event, leaning in to help find the hidden treasures inside. Previous Farmingville Elementary School Invention Convention winners and participants joined in to answer questions and share their stories in preparation for our Invention Convention in February. [Read more.](#)



## Ridgebury Elementary School

### Police Visit 4th Grade

Officer Durling, Officer Riley and Resource Officer Daly of the Ridgefield Police Department joined the fourth graders at Ridgebury Elementary School to show students how mathematics and science are important parts of police work. The students learned how to calculate the speed of a car based on length of a skid mark and friction of the road. Students measured three different size skid marks and used their science knowledge and math skills to determine how fast each car was going. They then were asked to figure out how long a skid mark would be if a car was going fifty miles per hour. Students enjoyed the hands-on, real-world experience and many left wanting to learn more about not only forensics but also math and science. Thank you to the Ridgefield Police Department for partnering with us.



## Ridgefield High School

### Thank You Veterans!

On November 13, United States history students at Ridgefield High School (RHS) had the opportunity to meet veterans in an intimate setting. Veterans ranged from many branches of the armed services, and included Jon Marsili (left), a 2006 RHS graduate. This program, where students prepared questions in advance, was a highly engaging learning event that supported the development of resilience, empathy, citizenship, and knowledge. Thank you to Mr. Marsili and all who served.



## Scotland Elementary School

### D.A.R.E. Graduation

At the start of this year's D.A.R.E. Graduation Ceremony, Rudy Marconi charged fifth-graders to act with compassion as they become young adults in our Ridgefield community. He spoke of how the ten-week D.A.R.E. program, led by Ridgefield Police Officer Dave Samoskevich, taught students not only how to empathize with others, but more importantly, how to offer those in need of a "ladder" out of their situation. Before the sixty students received individual recognition on stage for completing the program, nine students read excerpts from their essays in front of friends, family, and Ridgefield Public School Administrators, including Interim Superintendent Paddyfote and Assistant Superintendent Creller. In typical Scotland Elementary School tradition, the fifth-grade class broke out into song, as they brought the event to a close, promising to make positive, future decisions.



## Veterans Park Elementary School

### Winter Concert

This month we celebrated all things *winter* with a concert for chorus, orchestra, and band. Under the direction of Elizabeth Gallagher, the fourth grade orchestra students worked hard to prepare for their first performance, while the fifth grade students perfected their challenging music. Ryan Dunne's fifth-grade band students blended the varied sonic qualities of their instruments to create one collective sound. In addition, the fourth and fifth grade chorus students performed a wonderful chorus concert! [Read more.](#)

# Teacher Spotlight



## Get to Know Charlsie Vanderrest

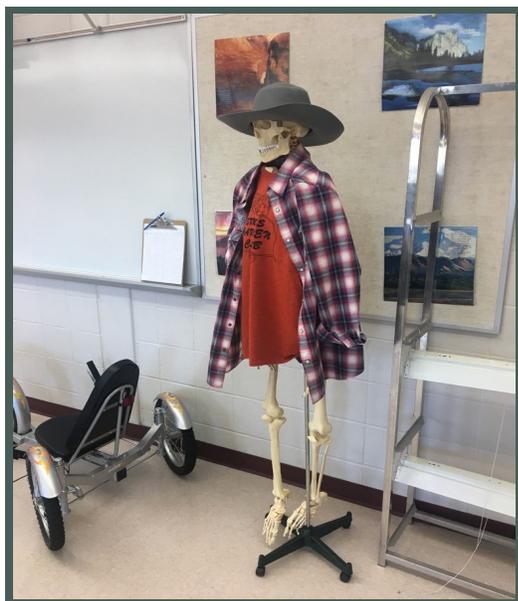
Scotts Ridge Middle School Teacher of the Year

Charlsie Vanderrest is a seventh-grade science teacher and Scotts Ridge Middle School (SRMS) leader in STEAM programming. Inspired by a workshop at The Aldrich Museum, Mrs. Vanderrest started the SRMS Nature Laboratory in a former home economics classroom.

With grants and donations from the Ridgefield Education Foundation, a local nature center, and parents, she equipped the Lab with a mini natural history museum, microscopes, and a bearded dragon the students named Mushu. The SRMS Garden Club and two parent volunteers also contributed a water feature.

As planned, the Nature Lab has been valuable across curriculum areas—growing plants for the school's garden, inspiring stories in English classes, and providing drawing subjects in art class as well as a place for the student-painted mural viewable in the top left photo behind Mrs. Vanderrest.

[Read more.](#)





# Virtual Art Gallery



[Enter our December Art Gallery for more!](#)



## News Flash



### Ridgefield Public School Job Opportunities on Twitter

Ridgefield Public Schools (RPS) is always looking for highly qualified, dedicated, and enthusiastic people to join our team. Check out the [personnel page on our website](#) for more information and current [employment opportunities](#).

Follow our [job-posting Twitter account @JobsAtRPS](#) to learn about new opportunities.

# Calendar Highlights



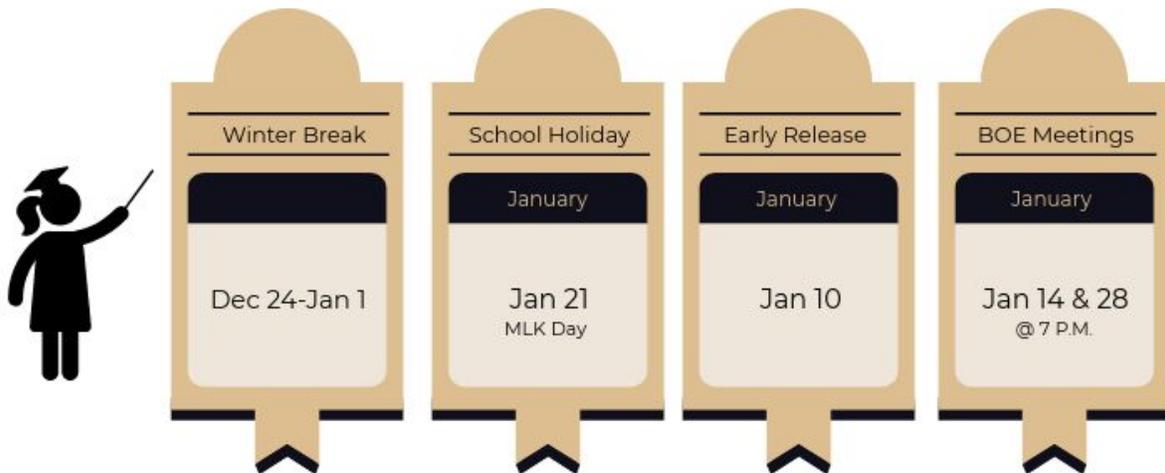
## Parent Workshop - January 16

Project Resilience continues its ongoing series of parent workshops this month with [Birds and Bees 2.0: How to Talk to Today's Kids About Sex](#). The speaker, Jennifer Gaines, is a public health specialist who will offer valuable tips on what to say, how to say it, and when.

[See the full schedule of Parent Workshops for 2018-2019](#)

**Wednesday, January 16 @ 7:00 PM, Ridgefield Library: Register at [ridgefieldlibrary.org](http://ridgefieldlibrary.org)**

## Key District-Wide Dates



You may keep up with **news from the Ridgefield Public Schools** via our [news page](#) on the district site or via social media. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Pinterest](#) or [Instagram](#) as we share happenings, reminders of important events, and more. **Contact us if you have any questions or feedback.** RPS Job Opportunities now on Twitter! <http://twitter.com/jobstrps>

