



# RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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*Susie Da Silva, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools*

April 30, 2021

Dear Faculty and Families,

Next week we honor our educators- "Teacher Appreciation Week" begins Monday. Ridgefield is fortunate to have such a special group of caring and engaged educators touching the minds and hearts of our children each day. If you have a moment- reach out to a colleague, teacher, support staff member and let them know what makes them special. It feels good to be reminded... Look out for Teacher of the Year announcements soon.

Enjoy the sunny weekend.

Warmly,

*Susie*

Susie Da Silva, Ed.D.

## **A Few Bits**

### **Board of Education Budget News**

The Town held its Annual Town Meeting on Saturday April 24. It was great to see and talk to everyone in person after all these months! During the meeting the Town voted to move the Board of Education's fiscal 2021-2022 general operating budget as approved by the Board of Finance as well as the Town's fiscal 2021-2022 general operating budget forward to referendum.

**The Town Referendum will be on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, at the East Ridge Middle School between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.** In addition, at the April 24 Annual Town Meeting, various capital projects under \$100,000 for both Town and the Board of Education were voted on and approved. Capital projects over \$100,000 will be voted on at referendum.

## **School Status**

There is no change in school status for the coming week. All students are encouraged and welcomed back. We've missed you!

## **Athletics**

The 2021 CAS-CIAC Virtual Scholar-Athlete Banquet will take place on Sunday, May 2 at 6:30 p.m.

RPS Liam Keppler and Rory McGrath will be among the 363 student-athletes honored at this banquet. You may view the show live on Fox 61 TV, Fox 61 Facebook page, CIAC YouTube Page, NFHS Network. Congrats Liam and Rory!!

## **Fall News from CSDE:**

We have attached the CT State Dept of Education (CSDE) [Interim Guidance for Remote Learning](#) for the 2021-22 School Year. Here are a few summary points.

- The CSDE will not be mandating that districts offer an opt-in voluntary remote learning option after this school year.
- Local districts will have purview over the use of remote/virtual learning options for 2021-22.
- The CSDE does not believe districts should automatically revert back to providing education in the same exact way we did pre-pandemic.
- To this end, they encourage districts to consider employing virtual/remote learning judiciously as a dynamic learning option in order to support equity needs, innovation, and address emergency situations.
- A few (not exhaustive) examples in which the consideration of remote learning could be an option include: (1) pursuit of higher level or specialized classes not offered in-district, (2) virtual software or platforms to expand teaching and enhance in-person learning and, (3) emergency building-related issues such as classroom quarantines, facilities issues, or inclement weather issues.
- The CSDE has not commented on remote learning as an option for students with medical issues that preclude them from attending in person

## **RPS Summer Bridge Program**

**Registration for the PK-5 Summer Bridge Program is closing on Monday, May 3.**

On Friday, April 23, we opened the first phase of registration and launched [our website](#). At the PreK-5 level, the response was incredible. As of today, we have had over 850 students express interest across all sessions. We are closing registration for *elementary only* on Monday, May 3. Once we close registration on May 3, we will work with our teams to confirm staffing and space; then will be able to go through the requests and begin finalizing registration with families. We have already established a core staffing structure and facilities assignments but are aware that we may need to make revisions to student enrollment depending on the number of classroom/school space available for use. Expect to hear from us with registration confirmation by May 14 at the latest.

## **Health And Safety**

As a reminder, fully vaccinated individuals should not come to school if they are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19. If you are experiencing a symptom, please reach out to your school nurse for the return to school protocol. All staff, including fully vaccinated individuals must continue to wear masks at school at all times.

## **Vaccinations**

- All CHC mass vaccination sites in Connecticut including the Danbury Mall site are now accepting walk-ins. No appointment is needed. [Click this link](#) for a list of vaccination sites in Connecticut accepting walk-ins.
- Pfizer has applied to the FDA for emergency use authorization for its COVID-19 vaccine in 12-15 year olds. We are now awaiting authorization from the FDA.

## **Food Service**

Governor Lamont declares May 7, 2021, Connecticut School Nutrition Hero Day! Hurray and thank you to all our school nutrition professionals who strive to serve our students healthy nutritious meals. On Friday, May 7 we celebrate the hardworking professionals in our school cafeterias, our School Nutrition Heros! See Governor Lamont's Declaration [here](#). To watch a fun video about School Nutrition Hero Day visit this website, <https://vimeo.com/510805585>

For this coming week, food service schedules will be normal with afternoon meal pick up at our East Ridge Middle School location on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. Barlow Mtn. Elementary and Scotland Elementary

will be participating in the weekend meal program with meals being distributed on Friday. As Earth Month comes to a close, find some fun facts about food waste [here](#).

In addition, a friendly reminder to all high school students- that deli / salads can be ordered ahead of time using the Nutrislice app. Please see our media alert for more information [here](#).

## Curriculum Updates

Math Placement Workshops: The elementary and secondary math placement parent presentations that took place this past week are available to view. [Click here to view the presentations](#) on the RPS YouTube Channel.

Copied below are titles of educational books featured in the New York Times by Michelle Lee on the topic of Asian bias (you can find the link [here](#) with photos of the books).

Children's books:

- *My Footprints* by Bao Phi, illustrated by Basia Tran, age 4-7
- *My Name is Bilal* by Asma Mobin-Uddin, illustrated by Barbara Kiwak, age 6-9
- *Inside Out & Back Again* by Thanhha Lai, age 9-12
- *Count Me In* by Versha Bajaj, age 9-12
- *Fred Korematsu Speaks Up* by Laura Atkins and Stan Yogi, illustrated by Yutaka Houlette, age 9-12

Teenage nonfiction books:

- *They Called Us Enemy* by George Takei, Justin Eisinger, and Steven Scott, illustrated by Harmony Becker, age 12 and up
- *From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry: The Killing of Vincent Chin and the Trial That Galvanized the Asian-American Movement* by Paula Yoo, age 13 and up

Teenage graphic novels:

- *Displacement* by Kiko Hughes, age 12 and up
- *Superman Smashes the Klan* by Gene Luen Yang, art by Gurihiru, age 12 and up

- *Flamer* by Mike Curato, age 14 and up

## RPS Highlights

Enjoy RPS News [here!](#)

[Ridgefield Tiger Talk](#): Recently students from Ridgefield High School (virtually) attended The United Nations International School Conference on the impact of COVID across different nations. On today's show we talk to sophomores Cora Fitzgerald and Jeremy Haber who both attended this conference and tell us about their experiences, how they contributed, and the ideas that they bring back to the Ridgefield community. Also joining us is Christopher Tait, our high school Science Department Chair and one of the organizers of this activity. Thanks for listening!

Check out **SRMS staff** at the RULER Conference, linked [here](#).



Don't forget to sign on to social media.

**Twitter:** @RPS\_DaSilva

**Instagram:** rpssuper

Both are **ridiculously** light and fun- kids can tune in also!

## QuoteS of the Week

"Whatever we do when we return will be historic by definition. If all we come up with is passing out diagnostic tests to quantify learning loss and then track kids into groups for remediation, it will be a terrible failure of imagination." Stephen Merrill in ["Too Much Focus on 'Learning Loss' Will be a Historic Mistake"](#) in *Edutopia*, April 16, 2021

"I could not be more proud of our planning for the Summer Bridge Program- there is no failure of imagination." Susie Da Silva, April 30, 2021