



RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Susie Da Silva, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

November 5, 2021

Dear RPS Community,

It has been a busy week here in Ridgefield, we have had much excitement with homecoming, spirit days and professional learning. It is such a good feeling to see the energy across our schools.

Our team is hard at work with the District Priorities, and preparing our budgets for FY23. It is hard to believe that we are already thinking about FY23!

Friday BITS this week includes important information about Governor Lamont's announcement about "Screen and Stay."

Warmly,

Susie

Susie Da Silva, Ed. D.

Friday BITS

Board of Education Meeting

Our regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting is Monday, November 8th-we have a full agenda and looking forward to sharing our work. We will also thank Board of Education members Margaret Stamatis, Nora Gaydos and Kathleen Holz for their years of service and commitment to the students, families and community of Ridgefield. Thank you!

To watch the board meeting use the Youtube link below.

YouTube Link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFK7CGQjWPQQO05N2_2zROA

View Agenda Here:

OR

If you would like to participate in Public Comment, use the link below to register.

Registration:

https://uso6web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3QSS-hC9QoGMibQ8Vqm19A

Once registered you will receive an email to join the BOE meeting as an audience member. When it is your time to speak you will be promoted to address the board for three minutes.

**Be sure to have a working microphone/WebCam on your computer or device.*

**You may register as early as today, however, be sure to access the link from your email on the day of the meeting*

30 Minutes

Dr. Da Silva, Dr. Hannaway and Ms. Gillette interviewed for “30 Minutes” this past week- you can watch this brief video on a variety of topics happening in our schools, [here](#).

PreK- Gr 6 COVID-19 Screening Program

We had another successful week of screening tests at RPS. On Monday, Quest ran close to 500 screening tests of unvaccinated pre k-6th graders. One of these tests came back positive and was confirmed positive by a 2nd PCR test. Contact tracing for this case was done. So far this school year we have not had a case of confirmed student to student COVID-19 transmission in an elementary school.

Next week screening will be conducted on Monday and Tuesday according to the following schedule.

Monday, November 8

- **East Ridge Middle School: 12:30 pm**
- **Veterans Park Elementary School: 9:15 am**
- **Branchville Elementary School: 8:50 am**
- **Farmingville Elementary School: 12:00 pm**

Tuesday, November 9

- **Scotts Ridge Middle School: 12:00 pm**
- **Barlow Mountain Elementary School: 12:00 pm**
- **Ridgebury Elementary School: 9:00 am**
- **Scotland Elementary School: 8:50 am**

Health and Safety

5-11 year olds are now eligible to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. To schedule a vaccine for your child visit <https://portal.ct.gov/vaccine-portal> or <https://www.vaccines.gov/>.

RPS has reached out to the state of CT to schedule a mobile vaccine clinic to visit the district in the coming weeks for parents who would like to utilize that option. We will share more details as soon as we have them.

Screen and Stay

On Thursday the commissioner of the DPH and the Governor announced a transformative change to COVID-19 protocols for CT schools called “Screen and Stay.” [Here is a link to the press conference.](#) CT schools and families will be given the option to end the practice of quarantine after exposure to COVID-19 at school as long as the exposed individual remains free of COVID-19 symptoms and completes a daily screening tool. Students and staff with symptoms of COVID-19 and no known exposure will still be required to get a negative COVID-19 test or isolate for 10 days before returning to school.

The following information is from the CT DPH:

Students and staff are eligible to participate in Screen and Stay if the close contact with a COVID-19 case occurs under the following circumstances:

- Exclusively during the school day. (no extra curricular or social contact)
- If indoors or on a school bus, other school transportation, and both the contact and the COVID-19 case were consistently masked during the exposure even if brief unmasked periods (e.g. snack time, cafeteria) occurred , as long as six feet or more of space was consistently maintained.
- If outdoors, the individuals were masked or unmasked but were supervised by staff (e.g. mask breaks, physical education, recess).
- The close contact remains asymptomatic (any symptoms revert to regular isolation/quarantine).

Examples of close contact scenarios that do not support a Screen and Stay approach would be:

- Contact with a case during interscholastic or other athletic activities (other than during supervised outdoor physical education and recess)
- Contact occurring during social interactions or similar activities outside of school (e.g. birthday parties, dining out, sleepovers)
- Contact where the individuals were not consistently and correctly wearing masks indoors and six-foot distance was not maintained
- The contact occurred between members of the same household (e.g. the contact lives with the case)
- If, upon return to school, the contact cannot consistently and correctly wear a mask.

Families will not be required to participate. Families may still elect to have children quarantined after exposure to COVID-19 if they chose to do so.

Our health and safety team including Ridgefield Director of Health, Ed Briggs, RPS Medical Advisor, Dr. James Ahern, and Aaron Crook, RN, Director of Nursing have reviewed this new option. This information will be shared at the BOE meeting Monday evening.

Ridgefield Tiger Talk: Joining us on week's show is Physics & Robotics teacher Michael Murphy and 11th Grader Heather Wallace. We chatted about RHS's robotics courses and the robotics club. There are a lot of cool things going on in these courses! Planning, building, coding, collaboration, friendly competition, and simulating a real engineering working environment are just a few things we talk about. We also discuss next week's first ever RHS robotics competition! Thanks for listening!

Curriculum and Instruction

On Tuesday this week, teachers across the district spent the day engaged in professional learning by department. This included time to focus on acceleration in core courses, alignment in humanities and stem from elementary through high school. Outcomes from this work directly tie to department goals.

On Monday night the RPS Music Department will present to the Board of Education about their current programming and their ideas for innovations for the department moving forward. Representative members will showcase the impact of the department which serves over 1,000 students in instrumental music and almost 3,000 students through general music.

Transportation

All parents should have received an email message on Wednesday requesting their assistance with a short ridership survey. For those who have already participated, we thank you! If you have not already responded to this survey please do so as soon as possible. The results will help us formulate possible future efficiencies with our bussing.

Food Service

Chartwells understands and is very sensitive to all students with food allergies. Lately we have been focusing on the many students across the Ridgefield school district with mild to severe Gluten and Celiac disease. We, as a team, are trying to accommodate all by providing multiple options for these students. The supply chain has been quite a challenge, but we wanted to share with parents that we are able to secure and offer some options which will be in all the schools for the upcoming weeks.

RPS News found [here!](#)

Follow us here:

Twitter: @RPS_DaSilva

Instagram: rpssuper

Quote of the Week

“No one is perfect that’s why pencils have erasers.”--Wolfgang Riebe