



RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

70 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877

Phone: (203) 894-5550 Fax (203) 431-2810

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

September 25, 2020

Dear Faculty and Families,

Time is going by quickly as we embark on the fall season and approach the end of September. I have included a few updates, some of which you may have already received from your schools. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions.

As a reminder, Monday, September 28th, schools will be closed for Yom Kippur, the Jewish day of Atonement.

Enjoy your weekend.

Warmly,

Susie

Susie Da Silva, Ed.D.

A Few Bits

Reopening of School

On Monday evening, we held our Board of Education meeting where we provided an update on the Reopening of Schools. You can watch the meeting [here](#). Our primary goal for this meeting was to update the Board of Education and the public on our ability to open schools with all of the mitigating measures in place.

During this meeting, we shared that all of our elementary students will return by October 5. Our ability to have students return is based on our ability to implement the following mitigating measures: masks, hand washing, cohorting and proper social distance. Temporary remote learners will continue to access their learning through our streaming model. We will continue to assess this model and make adjustments as needed.

We also provided an update on the reopening of our middle schools. Our efforts in the middle school reopening process have focused primarily on our ability to socially distance. We explored as many options as feasibly possible in order to reopen schools, including, surveying parents to inquire if they'd be interested in continuing with a hybrid

option, even if the middle schools reopened fully. The hybrid "option" in a full return did not result in an adequate reduction to the daily middle school attendance to meet proper social distancing. In consultation with our Public Health Director, Medical Advisor, and COVID Liaison, it was determined that we are not able to open schools fully at the middle school.

Here is a summary of where we are now:

- Our Pre-K will continue with its full reopening, half days. Four days per week for AM classes, and five days per week for PM classes.
- Our K-2 students will return fully on September 29, and our 3-5 students will return fully on October 5. Students in grades 3-5 will continue with the hybrid schedule for the week of September 29 (AA/BB).
- Our 6-8th graders will continue in a hybrid model (A and B cohorts). Students with IEPs, students receiving MTSS intervention services, and students receiving English Learner services will be offered the option of returning fully, five days/week.
- Our RHS plan will not change - we will remain in a hybrid model until the end of the quarter.
- Students will continue to have the option of learning from home/virtually as a "temporary remote learner."
- We ask that parents who are either newly electing or continuing to opt for the "temporary remote learning" option communicate their choice with their building administration directly via email.
- Parents of students who are shifting out of temporary remote learning to in-person instruction are also asked to communicate their choice with their building administration directly via email.

Health and safety protocols updates:

- Students at the elementary level may be having lunch in their classroom, the cafeteria, or in an alternate space in the building.
- Lunch will be held with either six feet of distance between students, or three to six feet with a plexiglass or polycarbonate barrier.
- If the cafeteria is being used for lunch, the same social distancing rules apply. If the cafeteria space is large enough, two classes can be accommodated with proper distancing between classes and separate entrance and exit routes so that students do not come within proximity of others in a different class.

- For K-12 and beginning September 29, students in music classes will be permitted to perform inside, in accordance with [Addendum 7](#) guidelines from the State of CT.

Where we are going:

- Analyzing teacher feedback, and monitoring and adjusting as appropriate. Updates will be provided to the BoE on September 29.
- Assessment of social distancing at the high school is currently taking place and will be discussed at a future BoE meeting in October.
- Continuing to revisit middle school possibilities/structures

We continue to review data weekly, along with new guidelines/guidance from the State of CT, and will keep you as informed as possible.

DPH RELEASES COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL ORGANIZED SPORTS

Released today (9/25/20) and can be found [here](#).

RPS Highlights

Enjoy the RPS News [here!](#)

[Ridgefield Tiger Talk](#): Ridgefield High School's Athletic Director Dane Street joins Dr. DeSantis for today's show. They discuss how sports will be running this year, measures to address COVID-19, the many positives sports bring to teenagers, how those skills translate into their adult life, and well, we can see Dr. DeSantis' learning curve in his sports knowledge. Thanks for listening!

We honored our RHS *National Honor Society Students on September 25th- Congratulations!*

Don't forget to follow *fun* and important news on social media at: **Twitter:**
@RPS_DaSilva Instagram: rpssuper

Resources on Topics of Diversity, Equity and Racism

Grace Enriquez, Katie Egan Cunningham, and Gilberto Lara share books that spark students' belief that they can make a positive difference in "For a Better World: Children's Books About Student Agency and Activism" in *Language Arts*, September 2020 (Vol. 98, #1, pp. 36-45). Here are a few titles:

- Let the Children March by Monica Clark-Robinson, illustrated by Frank Morrison (Harcourt Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)
- Dictionary for a Better World: Poems, Quotes, and Anecdotes from A to Z by Irene Latham and Charles Waters, illustrated by Mehrdokht Amini (Carolrhoda, 2020)
- Shaking Things Up: 14 Young Women Who Changed the World by Susan Hood with a group of illustrators (Harper, 2018)
- Ban This Book by Alan Gratz (Starscape/Tom Doherty Associates, 2017)
- Count Me In by Varsha Bajaj (Nancy Paulsen, 2019)
- Nowhere Boy by Katherine Marsh (Roaring Books, 2018)

Quote of the Week

"Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you." Ruth Bader Ginsburg