



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 3, 2021

Dear Families and Faculty,

What a great start to the school year! Students joined our faculty this week and you could see the joy on their faces- they are glad to be back. There is so much pride in Ridgefield and at RPS, so glad to be a part of it.

We have an extended weekend in recognition of Labor Day, and Rosh Hashanah- Happy New Year! I am hopeful my colleagues can unplug a bit after the fast paced start to the year.

Warmly,

Susie

Susie Da Silva, Ed. D.

Friday Bits

Weather Events

Just like that, we were faced with a weather event yesterday. In an effort for the RPS community to have a common understanding of the process that RPS engages in when making weather decisions, I am attaching our weather procedures for this year. Please note the difference from last year, most specifically, the state department of education is no longer allowing "remote learning days" for weather events. You can find our procedures [here](#).

Health and Safety

We continue to update our RPS Safe Return Plan, which is an active Google Document. Parents may continue to review this [link](#) to see the latest version of the plan. Connecticut is currently experiencing the 4th wave of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Delta variant, predominant in this wave, is twice as transmissible as the original variant. Ridgefield is currently experiencing a significant level of community transmission.

We are awaiting direction from CSDE on our lab partner who will be assisting us with weekly COVID-19 screenings that will be available to students in grades K-6. We will keep families updated, as all families will need to provide permission for their child.

We are following CT DPH and CDC quarantine guidelines when there is an exposure to COVID-19 at school, on a bus, or at an RPS sponsored event. Close contacts will be determined by who was within 3 feet for 15 minutes while seated and masked in the classroom, or 6 feet for 15 minutes outside of the classroom setting. In most cases, full elementary classrooms will be quarantined. This practice will be reviewed later in the fall after we have more data about the spread of the delta variant in classrooms of unvaccinated children.

Contact tracing on the bus will be done by reviewing security tapes at the elementary level and student interviews and/or tapes at the secondary level. We are thankful for your patience as reviewing the tapes is a manual process and takes a considerable amount of time. Please note that this is a correction from our last BOE meeting - we *will* be contact tracing on our buses.

Fully vaccinated individuals who are exposed to COVID-19 do not need to quarantine unless they have a symptom. They should wear a mask in all circumstances including at home until they receive a negative PCR test on day 3-5 after exposure. Per the DPH and CDC They may continue to come to school and participate in athletics and should continue to monitor symptoms for 14 days.

Unvaccinated individuals who have been exposed are required to quarantine at home. They can get tested on day 5 after exposure and return on day 8 if they remain free of symptoms. They should continue to monitor for symptoms until day 14.

Receiving the vaccine once eligible reduces the chances of being placed in quarantine and helps prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the community. [A report released by the CT DPH](#) this week shows the relative risk of COVID-19 infection is 5x less for those who are vaccinated and the relative risk of hospitalization is 16x less if you are vaccinated. Pediatric hospitalizations during this Delta wave of the pandemic remain low.

To report a case of COVID-19 please send an email to Aaron Crook RN, Director of Nursing Services. acrook@ridgefieldps.net Please cc your building principal and school nurse.

Remote Learning

In the event that a student is required to be quarantined, families can expect the school to reach out with a learning plan.

2021-22 Chromebook Distribution

Chromebook distribution took place this past week. For more information on this year's Chromebook distribution and policies. [CLICK HERE](#)

Teaching and Learning Updates

Elementary Schools welcomed students this week with a focus on establishing community, routines and learning goals. Many Hopes and Dreams were shared by students and teachers as

a way to launch the new school year. Our middle school students adjusted to new routines, reconnecting with friends and teachers and lockers! Ninth graders got to navigate RHS on their own on Monday before they were joined by the rest of the community on Tuesday.

Next week be on the lookout for communication from the Curriculum Department and their plans for Parent Workshops 21-22 and newsletters!

School Library Journal

Follow this [link](#) to titles for primary grade Read- Alouds for home or school. The 10 titles offer a “blend of complexity, diversity and artistry.”

Food Service

Food Service welcomes back all students! We have been working very hard to get the school cafeteria ready for the return of students. In addition we have wonderful updated information to help parents. The following documents noted [here](#) can be found on our District website under the parents link: <https://www.ridgefield.org> on the far left side under “Quick Links” click on the “Parents” link, under “Food Service” you will find these documents. We will continue to update this section throughout the school year. Please check back often! VERY IMPORTANT - Although meals are being offered for free it is very important that families in need complete the Free and Reduced application as this application affects my other services available through the state. The application for Free and Reduced meals can be found following the link mentioned above.

RPS News!

You can find it [here](#).

Follow us here:

Don't forget to follow us on social media- plenty of fun to see!

Twitter: @RPS_DaSilva

Instagram: rpssuper

Quote of the Week

“I wanted to go to kindergarten for my whole entire life...” VPES Kindergartner