

# YOUR SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKVILLE CENTRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

### November

25-28 Schools Closed—  
Thanksgiving

### December

10 Board of Education Meeting  
22–31 Schools Closed—Winter  
Recess

### January

1-2 Schools Closed—Winter  
Recess  
5 Schools Reopen  
7 Board of Education Public  
Work Session  
19 Schools Closed—Martin Luther  
King Jr. Day  
21 Board of Education Meeting

## Elementary Schools Celebrate Red Ribbon Week

Red Ribbon Week was first sponsored in 1988 by the National Family Partnership in an effort to bring drug awareness to children and parents, advocate for policy changes from elected leaders and gather resources and prevention literature. This awareness is observed annually in October across the United States. Since its inception, the campaign has reached millions of children and families and continues to deliver this message of hope every year.

According to Lisa Panebianco, a District Social Worker, “This year’s theme was ‘Love Yourself’ a message that is very important for students. While each elementary school chose different ways to celebrate, the message for students was the same across the District. At Riverside and Hewitt students were asked to think about what they cherished about themselves, and teachers wrote them out on large hearts which were displayed outside the classrooms. It’s important to love yourself.” At Covert & Wilson every student signed a pledge poster with the theme “love yourself and be drug free” and discussed how to show love for yourself, and at Watson students had open discussions in each class about making good choices.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Noreen Leahy said, “Red Ribbon Week celebrations are particularly important at the elementary school level. It is never too early to find teachable moments with our children to reinforce the importance of healthy choices and substance free lives. Raising awareness with continual messages about the dangers of substance abuse is among our most important work as educators.”

## *South Side High School Student Named News 12 Scholar Athlete*



*SSHS Cross Country Coach Chris Webber, SSHS Principal Dr. Carol Burris, Scholar Athlete Kieran McCarthy, and Athletic Director Carol Roseto*

South Side High School student Kieran McCarthy was chosen as News 12 Long Island’s first Scholar Athlete for the 2014/15 school year. Kieran, who has been a part of South Side’s Cross Country team since 9th grade, is an All Division runner and MVP of the track team as well as the defending Nassau County Champion. He has a 97 average and is a member of the Principal’s Advisory Committee. Eligibility for the award requires a minimum GPA of 3.5 out of 4.0., SAT scores of 1950 or higher and outstanding participation in two or more sports or a multi-season sport. Examples of leadership and service to others are also required, and all winners have to demonstrate the ability to get along with others, modesty and sportsmanship. Kieran hopes to attend the Naval Academy in the Fall. To watch the clip visit <http://longisland.news12.com/multimedia/scholar-athlete-kieran-mccarthy-1.9503300>

# School Improvement Bond Update

## South Side High School

It was so exciting to see our homecoming game played on our new turf field. Reconstruction of our track and field was the first school Improvement Bond Project completed at South Side High School.

Work on the north addition of South Side High School is well underway. The footings and foundation were poured, and after a curing period, the installation of the steel substructure will begin. Electricians began working on running conduits that will power the addition and work will continue throughout the year. The north addition is scheduled to be open to students in September 2015. Next school year, all but one of the portables will be removed and most classes will be held within the high school building. The remaining portable will be removed after the south addition is built, which is expected to be completed by September 2016.



## Watson Elementary School

Construction at Watson Elementary School is in full swing. The foundation for the addition has been poured and structural steel beams and the roofing deck have been installed. Currently the plumbing and electrical work is in progress and the masonry work has begun. Work will continue on the interior of the structure throughout the school year. Students at Watson will begin school in September 2015 with a completed addition.



## District Wide

Work on the roofs at Covert & Watson Elementary Schools, which began in June, was completed in mid-October. The remaining projects under the School Improvement Bond have been submitted to the New York State Education Department for approval. Some of these projects include classroom air-conditioning, security locks for classrooms, air-conditioning in the main assembly spaces of the elementary schools, and upgrades to the music rooms and auditorium in the Middle School. Upon approval and award of the project to the lowest acceptable bidder, work will begin.

Visit our website at [www.rvcschools.org](http://www.rvcschools.org) for the latest updates on projects and additional pictures throughout the year.



# Your Schools in the Community

Our students continue to impress us not only with their academic achievements but also with their support and involvement in our community. Family Fun Fitness Day and Substance Use Awareness Walkathon, Spirit Week and Homecoming events, and Take a Veteran to School Day are a few ways that our students have thus far reached out beyond the classroom.

In September at our Third Annual Family Fun Fitness Fair and Substance Use Awareness Walkathon at South Side Middle School, over 600 community members came together to promote healthy living and unite against substance abuse, violence, and bullying. This event was sponsored by the Rockville Centre Wellness Committee and the RVC Drug, Alcohol and Violence Prevention Task Force. Participants were able to visit wellness merchants, consult with medical experts and virtually experience the dangers of drunken and distracted driving at the Arrive Alive booth. Volunteers included students from South Side High School's SADD and Youth Decide, as well as members of the RVC Youth Council. SADD and Youth Decide President Anna Petrocelli said, "A lot of younger kids come to this event and it helps them understand that not everyone drinks and does drugs. We also go to the Middle School & Elementary Schools every year to talk to students and show them that using substances isn't the norm."

In October, Homecoming and Spirit Week brought our community together. High School students in all grades took up a collection of canned foods and small toys. Four large bags of toys and over 4,000 cans were collected for those in need. The cans were donated to three local organizations to be distributed for Thanksgiving and the toys will be delivered in upcoming weeks so that families get them in time for the holiday season. The football game, which was played on the new turf field at South Side High School, resulted in a 38-0 blowout for the Cyclones against Great Neck North. Before the game, senior class cheerleaders and football players received special introductions as they entered the field accompanied by family members. The parade featured floats from each grade based on major theme parks. Judges awarded first place to the seniors, who chose Walt Disney World, followed by the Freshman's Hershey Park themed float, the Juniors with their Lego Land float and finally, the Sophomores with their Epcot float.

In November, South Side Middle School students and faculty took the opportunity to honor and show their appreciation for the brave men and women who have served in the armed forces on "Take a Veteran to School Day." During this event, students had an opportunity to hear about the experiences of both combat veterans and those who served during times of peace from all branches of the military. South Side Middle School Principal Shelagh McGinn said, "We speak about how lucky we are to be able to live in the USA. I think it is really important that the students are able to see and meet the people who have made this possible. These veterans have preserved our freedoms for us and I think hearing their stories, firsthand, has a positive influence on our students."



RVC Schools staff and students with Board of Ed. Members and Senator Dean Skelos at the Third Annual Family Fun Fitness Fair and Substance Use Awareness Walkathon.



Members of the SSMS Varsity Football and Cheerleading Teams pose for a photo before the homecoming parade



RVC Resident and Veteran, Anthony Brunetta, speaks to students at SSMS during "Take a Veteran to School Day"



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### To All Rockville Centre School District Residents

If you believe that your school-age or preschool child may have a disability, please contact Dr. Noreen Leahy, Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education, (516)255-8928, or Dr. Orly Gadon, Chairperson of the Committee on Special Education/Preschool Education at (516) 255-8942.

## RVC Board of Ed. Votes at New York State School Boards Association Annual Convention

New York State School Boards Association held its 95<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention and all Board of Education members attended this event. At the convention, Board members had the opportunity to attend workshops, special networking events, and over 175 educational exhibits. These exhibits included a variety of products and service offerings for classroom instruction, professional development, and facility improvement. The goal of this convention is to share ideas in order to promote student growth and higher student achievement in a rapidly changing world.

Each year at the convention, a Business Meeting is held. At this meeting, delegates vote on various educational bylaw amendments and resolutions pertaining to New York State students. Two of these resolutions were discussed at our October 22<sup>nd</sup> Board of Education meeting. Delegates voted in favor of both those resolutions. The first was to ask for state and federal funding to help districts educate the influx of unaccompanied minors into the state. The second was to support legislation to keep local boards of election from designating public school buildings as polling places without a school district's consent. Voting delegates expressed that in an effort to keep the schools safe, districts should be able to preapprove their schools as polling places.

## Aesop's Fables

Thanks to a grant from the RVC Education Foundation, every 1st grade student in the District went on a field trip to the Middle School to watch puppeteers Jim West and Ian Antal bring Aesop's Fables to life. Using multiple types of puppets, including shadow, paper bag and newspaper puppets, Mr. West and Mr. Antal retold 7 fables including Aesop's most famous, The Lion and The Mouse.

Covert teacher Antoinette Morgan, who co-wrote the grant with teacher Valerie Sprague, said, "This year, first grade teachers have introduced Aesop's Fables and Stories from the Engage NY Module which directly aligns with the New York State Common Core Learning Standards. At this performance, students were able to witness fables studied in class, come to life."

In addition to telling the fables, this interactive show included step by step directions on how students could make their own puppets at home. To continue this fun activity, students can visit Jim West's webpage [here](#) for more tutorials on puppet making.



Puppeteer Jim West teaches students how to make their very own paper bag puppets!



L to R (Back Row) Covert Teacher Valerie Sprague, Puppeteer Jim West, Teacher Antoinette Morgan, Puppeteer Ian Antal. L to R (Front Row) Julie Coles, Joshua DePaoli, Connor Erickson, Liana McCarthy.



Aesop and his dog Moral, used their fables to teach students important lessons throughout the performance.