

YOUR SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKVILLE CENTRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Rockville Centre Students Excel in Music
- School Improvement Bond and Capital Improvement Update
- Rockville Centre Education Foundation Celebrates its 25th Anniversary
- Parents as Reading Partners (PARP)

DATES TO REMEMBER

March

- 11 Board of Education Budget Work Session
- 24 Board of Education Meeting & Budget Work Session

April

- 2-10 Schools Closed—Easter/Passover Recess
- 13 Schools Reopen
- 15 Board of Education Public Work Session
- 21 Board of Education Meeting — Preliminary Budget Hearing

May

- 6 Board of Education Budget Hearing & Public Work Session
- 19 Budget Vote
- 25 Schools Closed— Memorial Day
- 27 Board of Education Meeting

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.

Rockville Centre Students Excel in Music

Each year over 100,000 student musicians from across New York State participate in auditions for NYSSMA (New York State School Music Association). The levels of participation vary from 1 – 6 with increasing difficulty and requirement for proficiency. After hours of preparation on their own time, students perform for a NYSSMA adjudicator. Based on the scores they receive, students are selected to participate in various honors groups including All-County, the Long Island String Festival Association (LISFA) and All-State. This year 37 elementary school students, 21 middle school students and 25 high school students were selected for All-County and seven students were selected for LISFA.

The All-State experience is a true achievement for a New York State student musician. The experience begins with sophomore and junior student musicians and an accompanist spending countless hours preparing a NYSSMA Level VI solo which must be selected from repertoire lists in the current manual. Last spring, over 6,500 students from across the state of New York prepared for All-State evaluations in the hope of being selected. Over 2,400 students received scores of 98 or higher. Out of those, 890 All-State musicians were selected. We are proud that Jillian Aicher, Craig Joseph, Grace Michnovicz, and Alexis Waite, students at South Side High School, were among those selected. In addition, Olivia Dowden and Jack McCabe were chosen as alternates.



Pictured: Grace Michnovicz, Olivia Dowden, Alexis Waite, Jillian Aicher, Jack McCabe, and Craig Joseph.

School Improvement Bond Update

South Side High School

At the high school, District architect and construction management companies have been working steadily on the construction of the north addition, the plans of which were approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in spring 2014. The construction of the north addition will hold a new fitness room as well as a music lab, photography room and art rooms which will improve the learning environment for our high school students. It is expected that the north addition will be complete and ready for instruction in September 2015.

At the site of the north addition the foundation walls have been poured, footings and the majority of the steel beams have been installed and, upon completion, the metal decking will be fitted. After this base is constructed, the structure will be tented to allow work to continue during the cold months. This work includes prepping the structure for a second floor, installation of the roof and an electrical upgrade which will support the building's electrical needs.

Once the north addition at the high school is completed, 4 outdoor structures, holding 11 instructional spaces, will be removed and those classes will be held within the main high school building. The remaining portable building, holding 2 classrooms, will be removed after the construction of the south addition at South Side High School which is expected to be ready for instruction in September 2016.



Watson Elementary School

You may have noticed that construction at Watson Elementary School, which began in July 2014, has been progressing steadily. This addition will include three classrooms and one small instructional space. The exterior is almost 95% complete. Steel has been installed, block walls have been put up and windows have been framed out and covered with plastic, awaiting the installation of windows which is scheduled to take place in March 2015. Remaining work on the interior includes installation of drop ceilings, cabinetry, sinks, floor tiles, and doors, as well as paint work, plumbing, and HVAC (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning). Upon completion of this work the classrooms will be fitted with SmartBoards, white boards, computers and classroom furniture in order to prepare them for students in September 2015.

District-Wide

Plans for classroom air conditioning installation were submitted to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and installation of units will resume upon approval. At Hewitt Elementary School an upgrade of the electrical work is necessary before installation of units can resume. This will involve coordination of work with the Electrical Department of the Village of Rockville Centre.

Remaining bond projects, which have been submitted to NYSED for approval, include installing new security locksets throughout the District, updating the high school science labs, reconfiguring the high school kitchen and cafeteria, updating the high school and middle school libraries and auditoriums, and installing new public address systems. In anticipation of approval, the District is working with the architects on a work schedule.

Visit our website at www.rvcschools.org for the latest updates on projects and additional pictures throughout the year.

Rockville Centre Education Foundation Celebrates its 25th Anniversary

For the past 25 years the Rockville Centre Education Foundation has awarded grants to the School District that reflect their continuing interest in providing unique opportunities to the students; particularly in science, math and art. The Board of Directors encourages teachers to think “big” and to broaden their expectations of possible enrichment programs. The Education Foundation makes every effort to raise money to fund proposed projects that will better prepare District students for the demands of the 21st century.

Last year the Rockville Centre Education Foundation granted over \$60,000 to the District and students across the grades are enjoying a myriad of programs that enhance curriculum and create lifelong memories. A total of eighteen grants were awarded to teachers representing all the schools within the District.

Among the elementary school awards, many programs are not school-building based but rather focused on a singular grade district-wide. These include “Learn! Explore! Create!” which enhances the kindergarten curriculum by integrating the science of the four seasons, “Art Travelers through Time: Literacy and History through Art” which exposes third graders to science, history and art through museum exploration, and “Aesop Fables: Theatreworks USA” which allows first graders the opportunity to reinforce language art skills through performance.

At the middle school, “Robotics - Mechanical Engineering and Digital Programming” is a grant that serves as an enriching aspect to the technology curriculum designed to improve problem solving and introduce engineering skills.

At the high school, a grant supporting professional development sessions to teachers, allowed them to create short teaching videos that extend teaching time through technology and exposes students to information prior to classroom instruction. “Flipped Learning,” will prepare students for class and enhance and reinforce classroom instruction. Click [here](#) to watch Dr. Carol Burris give a flipped lesson on how to use the webpage.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Chris Pellettieri said, “The Rockville Centre Education Foundation has been a powerful partner in the education of the children of our school community since day one. On this, we congratulate and thank them for their ongoing support for innovation in our programs and for encouraging “out of the box” approaches to teaching and learning. The members of the Rockville Centre Education Foundation work tirelessly on behalf of our teachers and students. We couldn’t be more grateful and we couldn’t have better partners.”





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L to R: Grace Furey, Brooke DeRespiris, Jack Reisert, Gabriela Guizzo pose for a photo at the vocabulary parade during Covert's literacy week.

Parents as Reading Partners

Parents as Reading Partners (PARP) is a program that creates a bond between home and school to encourage the love of reading in children. Our elementary school PTAs support this program in different ways and work to rally students to read and to show them that reading is fun. The theme of the program is to support the daily activity of reading which strengthens reading and communication skills within the child and also strengthens the parent/child relationship. It encourages parents to read with their children for at least fifteen minutes daily. The choice of reading materials can vary from books to articles, to magazines and even to printed words.

At Wilson School, the Arts in Motion (AIM) Committee hosted Steven James Petruccio, a noted illustrator of books for children. Mr. Petruccio talked the students through the life of a "picture book," describing the manuscript an illustrator is initially given, the research he does about the book's subject, the picture boards he draws and the final paintings he creates to describe the action of the book. He gave each child a small booklet describing the adventures of "Diver Dan" and challenged them to come up with their own illustrations.

At Covert School, students celebrated its 16th annual Literacy Week during the week of February 9th. This year's theme was "A Minion Reasons to Love Reading." To kick-off this special week, students and staff viewed a student-created video highlighting their love for reading. Students also participated in a variety of literacy-based activities including author visits from Brian Heinz and Kally Bougadis. In addition, all children were a part of a school-wide writing contest, vocabulary day parade, and pajama day bagel breakfast provided by Covert's PTA. Once again, Covert's PTA sponsored "The Brain Challenge: A Reading Game Show," a favorite among students and staff. Literacy Week was a wonderful experience for all!

At Hewitt, Mrs. Jaime Devine, the Parents as Reading Partners Coordinator, planned an enticing program for the PARP event this year including book bingo, book trivia and a poetry walk-thru. Kindergarten, first and second grade students read The Year of Billy Miller by Kevin Henke and third, fourth and fifth grade students read No Talking by Andrew Clement, with the help of their parents and special guest readers, such as Hempstead Town Clerk, Ms. Nasrin Ahmad.

PARP is always an exciting time in our elementary buildings.