

YOUR SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKVILLE CENTRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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DATES TO REMEMBER

February

- 7 Board of Education— Budget Work Session
- 13 Board of Education meeting
- 20-24 Schools Closed — Mid Winter Recess

March

- 2 Board of Education— All day Budget Work Session
- 13 Board of Education—Budget Work Session
- 20 Board of Education meeting

April

- 1 2012-2013 Applications due for non-public transportation
- 3 Board of Education—Public Work Session
- 6-13 Schools Closed—Easter/Passover Recess
- 17 Board of Education meeting— Preliminary Budget Hearing

On Tuesday January 5, Rockville Centre Superintendent Dr. William H. Johnson visited Wilson School parents at their monthly PTA meeting to discuss the Tax Cap Levy and other topics that will affect the Rockville Centre School District in this upcoming budget season.

Dr. Johnson highlighted many important issues, such as the new Common Core curriculum, the buzz-phrase of the moment “college and career readiness,” and the APPR evaluation system, before he delved into the specifics of this budget year. “Twenty-first century skills are something that our community has been teaching kids for more than 26 years; it’s something we’re committed to” said Dr. Johnson while speaking about preparing kids for their future. He then went on to say that Rockville Centre is a school district that is recognized and acknowledged on a national level and that it’s the community that has helped that happen.

When discussing APPR, Dr. Johnson explained that it has not been set up to evaluate our students, but instead to pinpoint 10% of teachers that the State believes need to be fired. “This will have an incredible and problematic impact on how we conduct business in schools. Students will be made to sit through six days of exams for 2-3 hours a day, when these tests do not give any insight between what it means to be at a level 3 or a level 4. Essentially, these tests have very little impact on how the District assesses its students,” said Dr. Johnson.

Another issue that Dr. Johnson highlighted was the sense of competition between teachers that these tests create. He believes that teachers will work to make sure that their students’ scores are higher than that of another child. He went on to explain that this is not the way to prepare students for college. Dr. Johnson then urged the community to work in concert and let the County Association of PTAs know that there are better ways to educate our children.

Finally, Dr. Johnson discussed what the Tax Cap Levy means to residents. He explained that in the past, 50% of the vote would pass the budget, but this year that is no longer the case. The tax cap limits the amount of the tax levy to the lesser of 2% or the rate of inflation. This amounts to approximately \$1.7 million. While 50% voter approval would be needed to pass a budget under the “cap,” the District is able to propose a higher tax levy, but it must be approved by at least 60% of voters, making the vote of those who approve the budget worth less than those who vote no. The District can propose a second budget if the first budget is defeated, but if the budget is defeated a second time, the district will be mandated to have a zero percent increase.

Dr. Johnson explained that there are certain expenditures that the District is required by law to pay, including increases from pension costs, health care, and contractual obligations. He then explained that the amount of money needed to pay for the retirement system combined with health insurance costs already exceed the \$1.7 million that we will be able to increase the budget by under the Tax Cap. He told parents that the District needs their participation during budget discussions to help guide residents through the difficult decisions that the District will face in the upcoming year.

Future budget meetings will be held on Tuesday, February 7, Friday, March 2, Tuesday, March 13, Tuesday, April 17, and on Tuesday, May 1. For the most up-to-date budget information, please visit our website at www.rvcschools.org

To All Rockville Centre School District Residents

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

School Roundup

COVERT

Covert School's Compact for Learning Team has launched this year's installment of Safety Patrol. The purpose of the Safety Patrol is to ensure there is order and structure during the morning line up. The Safety Patrol is comprised of fifth graders who volunteer their time to participate in the program. Some of the responsibilities of the members of Safety Patrol are to be at school early, patrol the front, back and side doors. They help the younger students find their class lines as well as maintain a sense of order during a very busy arrival. The Safety Patrol is something that the younger students look forward to being a part of as they get older. Twenty-seven students have volunteered to be on this year's Safety Patrol. It is a great opportunity for the students to develop a sense of responsibility as they prepare for the middle school. They will be honored during the Fifth Grade Moving Up Ceremony and receive a certificate of participation.



HEWITT

Second graders at Hewitt Elementary School received a very special treat when LI Ducks baseball player Ray Naverrete and team mascot QuackerJack visited their school. This special assembly was made possible when student Daniel Dunlap won TD Bank's "Take a Duck to Class" Essay Contest. In his essay Daniel wrote about all of the reasons why he loves the Rockville Center community.



Second grade classes from Hewitt take a group picture with Ray Navarrete, QuackerJack and Ryan Koutsgianis from TD Bank.

RIVERSIDE

Excitement was in the air at Riverside Elementary School recently with the arrival of the iPad 2 last month! The buzz continues throughout the school as the word of its arrival spreads. The touch-screen tablet is beginning to emerge as a popular and innovative way for students to learn and explore new media. The iPad 2 is also beginning to be used as an efficient way for students to complete various assignments. Teachers and students are clearly benefiting from this wonderful technology and look forward to learning more as the school year progresses.



Riverside's Stellar Teacher, Mr. Saglombeni, models to a group of 4th Graders some of the cool applications the iPad 2 has to offer.

WATSON

Watson School fifth grade students have spent the last month honing their research skills on a project to investigate the Presidents of the United States. The students used a multitude of sources including informational texts in both print and digital form to examine the life of a President and then to compose a written research paper.

All aspects of the research process were utilized as the classroom and STELLAR teachers collaborated to design a step-by-step outline of the research process. Skills in reading informational text, note-taking and citing sources were reviewed. The students are proud of their completed research reports and feel glad to own the skills needed for academic success in middle school, high school and beyond.



School Roundup

WILSON

Many of the students of Wilson School recently participated in the annual PTA-sponsored Reflections Contest. This year the theme was “diversity” – and students were encouraged to submit their artistic interpretations of this theme.

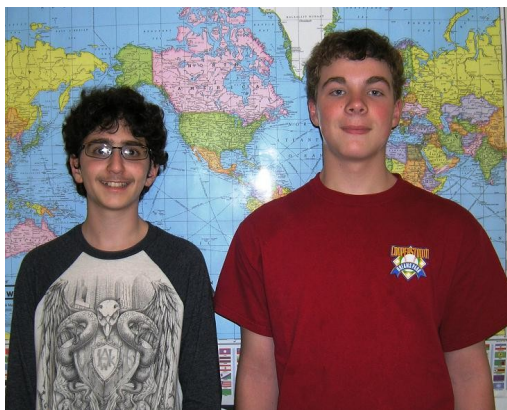
We are proud of the many students who submitted entries. Congratulations to Caroline Ditchik whose visual arts submission was selected by the regional judges to move on to the state level competition! All participants in the Reflections Contest were recognized with a certificate or ribbon.

Front row – (l to r) Connor Langdon, Casey Bender, Julia Coughlin
Back row – (l to r) Gabby Genao, Caroline Ditchik, Devin McCarthy



MIDDLE SCHOOL

School wide
c h a m p i o n
L a w r e n c e
P l o n s k y o n t h e
l e f t a n d f i r s t
r u n n e r u p
M i c h a e l
D e l C a s i n o o n
t h e r i g h t.



On January 3rd, students in Social Studies classes at South Side Middle School participated in the *National Geographic GeoBee* to produce class champions from each grade. Laurence Plonsky, an eighth grader, took the title of School Wide Champion after battling through the semi-finals, finals, and the championship round. The runner up was Michael DelCasino also in eighth grade. Questions in the final round would have stumped most adults; such as, “Barrier islands help shelter a nature reserve on Apalachicola Bay, an arm of what large gulf?” Laurence will now take a written examination to qualify for the State Level GeoBee, then hopefully on to the National Level competition, which is held in Washington D.C.

HIGH SCHOOL

Seniors in IB Theater Arts 4 showcased their multidimensional skills in January when they presented shows that they wrote, casted, directed and produced. Students begin thinking about their plays during their junior year when they were asked to study different ways that plays can be written, and then incorporate one of them into a play of their own. Senior Brian Remy was chosen as the student producer and had the task of making sure the whole evening ran smoothly. Student Directed featured a total of 7 plays, Beep Beep, Written & Directed by Nicole Villallon & Brittany Abrams; V-J Day, Written & Directed by Angela Yamamoto & Caitlyn Mullooly; Freedom, Written & Directed by Rebecca Cooper; Fallen, Written & Directed by Steph Ziegler & Emily Schnee; 343, Written & Directed by Lauren Murray & Keri Grandazza; True Reflections, Written & Directed by Rebecca Heins; and The Broken Marionettes, Written & Directed by Joey Nizich. Profits from the student directed plays will be donated to the International Rescue Committee.



This application must be returned before April 1, 2012 to:

ROCKVILLE CENTRE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Transportation Office
Administration Building

128 Shepherd Street

Rockville Centre, NY 11570-2298

APPLICATION FOR OUT-OF-DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION

I hereby request transportation for:

STUDENT'S NAME

NAME OF SCHOOL

HOME STREET ADDRESS

SCHOOL STREET ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER

SCHOOL TELEPHONE NUMBER

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME

EMERGENCY CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER

DATE OF BIRTH

SCHOOL HOURS

DATE TRANSPORTATION TO BEGIN

GRADE FOR 2012/2013 SCHOOL YEAR

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

DATE

FOR KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN ONLY:

A copy of the student's birth certificate must be attached. Application will not be processed without it.

PLEASE NOTIFY THE TRANSPORTATION OFFICE IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CHANGES OR CANCELLATIONS

If you wish acknowledgment of your application, please send a **self-addressed stamped envelope**. We will return this form as confirmation of receipt. Please insert child's name.

Application for _____ has been received by the Rockville Centre

Transportation Office on _____.

Late Requests For Transportation To A Nonpublic School

- Education Law § 3635-2. requires that parents submit a written request to their public school district, for transportation to a nonpublic school, by April 1, or when not residing in the district on April 1, within 30 days after establishing residency. The purpose of this deadline is to enable school districts to budget funds and make necessary arrangements to provide reasonable and economical transportation. No late request shall be denied where a reasonable explanation is provided for the delay or where there is no additional cost to provide the transportation.
- It is the responsibility of district officials, in the first instance, to determine whether the explanation is reasonable, and that determination would not be set aside by the Commissioner of Education unless it constitutes an abuse of discretion.
- The Commissioner of Education has determined previously that mailing a written request for transportation prior to April 1 will be considered timely, even if the papers are received by the school district after April 1st or not received at all. However, there must be credible proof that the request was properly addressed, stamped and indeed mailed before April 1.
- The following explanations for a late request have generally been held by the Commissioner of Education **NOT** to be reasonable explanations:
 - A belated decision to enroll a student in a nonpublic school.
 - The parent did not know there was an April 1 deadline.
 - The parent requested transportation before April 1 to a particular nonpublic school and then after April 1, changed the request to a different nonpublic school.
 - The parent learned of their child's difficulties in the public school after April 1.



Rockville Centre Union Free School District

REQUEST FOR TRANSPORTATION TO OUT-OF-DISTRICT SCHOOLS

Must be filed by April 1, 2012

Application for transportation of children to **private and parochial schools OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT** by school bus, Long Island Rail Road or MTA Long Island Bus must be submitted to the Board of Education Office as described below:

All requests must be in writing. (Use the form on the reverse of this page. Additional forms can be secured from the Office of the Board of Education, 128 Shepherd Street, Rockville Centre, NY 11570-2298.)

Applications **MUST BE RECEIVED** at the Board of Education office **BY April 1ST** preceding the school year in which the transportation is to be provided. The following exceptions require a written request:

- a. for new residents, within 30 days of establishing residence in the district;
- b. for any resident who had applied for acceptance of a child to a school before April 1st, and who learned after April 1st that the child could be accepted. Application must be made within thirty days of notice of acceptance.

Receiving applications in early spring enables the Board of Education to estimate more accurately the amount to include in the annual budget, which is voted upon in May.

A NEW WRITTEN APPLICATION MUST BE MADE ANNUALLY EACH SPRING FOR EACH NEW SCHOOL YEAR.

It may not be submitted earlier than February 1st. **Only one application per student will be accepted.**

To qualify for transportation: for elementary children (Grades K through 6), the school must be at least eight-tenths of a mile away, and for secondary pupils (Grades 7 to 12 inclusive), the school must be at least one and three-tenths miles away, up to a maximum of 15 miles from home to school.

No transportation is provided for children who do not meet the entrance age requirements of the district's schools. To enter Kindergarten in September, a child must be five years of age by the following December 1st.

Transportation for Handicapped Children

As required by the State and within the limits of the funds approved, the Superintendent will arrange for transportation for handicapped children of school district, public-school age. No application is required for this service.

***NO WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOLS
LOCATED WITHIN THE DISTRICT ARE REQUIRED.***



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(516)255-8957

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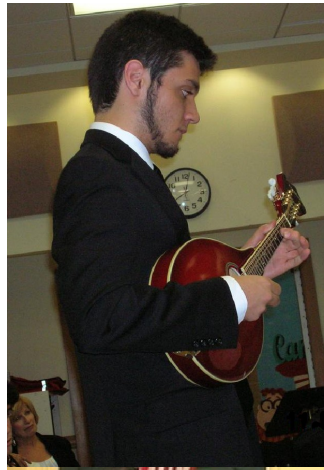
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To visit the Board of Education Blog, use your smartphone's **QR code** reader on the symbol above or visit: www.blog.rvcschools.org/boe/



The District has implemented a new communication process for emergency notifications. School closings and other urgent messages will be sent through ConnectEd, a telephone and email communication system. Contact information on file for students and staff will be utilized for these notifications. Other community members who wish to receive District-wide messages should send an email with their name, phone number and/or email address to connected@rvcschools.org or send a letter to the Business Office in the Administration Building at 128 Shepherd Street, Rockville Centre, NY 11570 requesting to be added to this messaging list. Parents who would like to change their contact information should contact the main office of their child's school.



NYS 3-8 Assessment Information

The NYS 3-8 assessments are scheduled to be administered April 17– 19 (ELA) and April 23-25 (Math). This year NYS has mandated all three grades in a building be tested on the three given days. This will impact RVC as well as other districts by not allowing us to spread out the testing schedule as we have in the past. Having a longer testing window allowed us to utilize staff and space better. As a result of this decision by NYS we may have to alter some of our scheduling in our elementary schools such as when students break for lunch and the like. There was some concern that we might have to close schools to non-tested students on these days but that is no longer the case. We will be able to administer these exams and have grades K-2 in school. In our Middle School we will be on a delayed opening schedule during the administration of these exams. Be sure to check for letters home and/or our website for specific information as you plan for these days. We will continue to monitor this situation and offer information at upcoming Board meetings.