



# RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

December 17, 2021

Dear RPS Community,

Our week ended with an unsettling social media post threatening children and schools across our country. Every rumor, joke, or threat is investigated thoroughly. Again, we ask everyone to partner with us, and communicate how serious these events are with our children. More than the disruption, these events are frightening to students, faculty and families. Unfortunately, these are becoming a daily occurrence and their impact is significant. While on the back end, our school leaders were vigilant with the implementation of our school safety plans, I am hopeful that RPS students, as best as possible, experienced a typical day of school filled with learning and laughter.

On Wednesday evening our RHS Visual Performing Arts Department provided the gift of music to the community. What a beautiful event. I hope all that experienced the evening enjoyed the performance as much as I did.

This will be our last BITS before holiday break. Unless needed, you won't hear back from us until Friday, January 7, 2022! Wishing you all a peaceful and wonderful holiday and break. [Our holiday card can be found here.](#)

Cheers to a happy and healthy 2022,

*Susie*

Susie Da Silva, Ed.D.

## **Friday BITS**

### **Mental Health**

“Children and Mental Health, Is This Just a Stage?” *from the National Institute of Mental Health* ([Article linked here.](#))

### **Social Media Resources for Families**

A colleague shared these resources: [Internet Safety at Home](#) and [APP Guide for CT Parents](#), I thought the timing was perfect.

## **Parent Workshop**

This past Thursday was our first RPS Virtual Parent Workshop, entitled “Parent Survival Guide Virtual Workshop” for the 2021-22 school year. [Click here for link.](#)

Our next workshop will be “Learning a Language for Life” presented by our World Language leaders. In this workshop parents will learn about the instructional methods that teachers are using across the levels and languages to build student proficiency in the target language. We will advertise in advance of this January workshop when we return from break. To access all of our workshops, head to the RPS website, click on Department/Curriculum and you will see a [button](#) for the RPS Curriculum YouTube channel. They will be livestreamed and then stored on this channel for the 21-22 school year.

## **[Ridgefield Tiger Talk](#)**

For our last podcast of 2021, we welcome Nancy Caron the Principal of Farmingville Elementary School to the show. We talk about FES’ Be Kind Program, Ben’s Bells, teachers/students creating a school-wide “CARES” plan, 5th grade newscasts, and other fun topics. Thanks for listening! *Also, Tiger Talk will be off for the holiday break and return in January.*

**RPS News Found [here!](#)**

## **PreK- Gr 6 COVID-19 Screening Program**

This week there were no positive tests from the screening program. Fully vaccinated children are not eligible to participate in the screening program, which is intended for unvaccinated students only. Once your child is fully vaccinated please email Aaron Crook [acrook@ridgefieldps.net](mailto:acrook@ridgefieldps.net) to remove your child from the testing roster.

## **Health and Safety**

This week the CT DPH and CSDE released a report about Screen and Stay in Connecticut. The report can be found [here](#).

The 7 day rolling average of new cases per day per 100k residents for the state of CT is now extremely high at 72. Ridgefield is at 56.7. Case rates have nearly tripled in the last 2 weeks.

Now that 5-11 year olds are eligible for the vaccine, 45.6% of 5-11 year olds in Ridgefield have already received one dose and 30.1% have already received 2 doses. This data can be found at the [Town of Ridgefield Website](#).

Everyone ages 16 and over are now eligible to receive a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Early studies are showing that 3 doses provide significantly more protection against the omicron variant than 2 doses.

## **Food Service**

Chartwells is pleased to share with students, families and faculty that beginning on Monday, December 20th Chartwells will be rolling out a standardized [Gluten Free Lunch Menu](#), available

in all Ridgefield schools. This menu is designed for students with medically documented gluten allergies, and will be available upon request in the school cafeterias. Each day of the week features a specific gluten free meal that is in alignment with the National School Lunch Program requirements. Additionally, there will always be an alternative meal option, as they always have gluten free bread available to make sandwiches. If you have questions regarding the school lunch program, or specific dietary concerns, please reach out to their Dining Services team, who will be glad to assist you.

John Morris - Food Service Director - [John.Morris2@compass-usa.com](mailto:John.Morris2@compass-usa.com)

Lindsey Brown - Assistant Food Service Director - [Lindsey.Brown@compass-usa.com](mailto:Lindsey.Brown@compass-usa.com)

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**Quote of the Week**

“Self-management skills are often the secret sauce of school success.” Sarah Kesty