



# RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

70 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877

Phone: (203) 894-5550 Fax (203) 431-2810

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

January 29, 2021

Dear Faculty and Families,

We meet again this Saturday. This time we meet for a BOE Public Hearing on the Superintendent's FY22 Proposed Operating Budget. The virtual meeting begins at 10:00 a.m. If you are unable to attend the Public Hearing, please feel free to email your thoughts and/or feedback. You may review the Superintendent's Proposed Budget presentation [here](#), and the video can be found [here](#).

The weather is looking interesting for Monday and Tuesday. Keep you posted.

Enjoy your weekend.

Warmly,

*Susie*

Susie Da Silva, Ed.D.

## **A Few Bits**

### **School Status**

Our communication this Wednesday indicated that our elementary schools will return in full beginning on Monday, February 1. We reminded families that it is important to be prepared to shift learning models as we navigate these complex times. Our next update is planned for February 3.

### **Health and Safety**

With Monday's planned return to full in-person instruction at the elementary level, we will continue to closely monitor cases of COVID-19 if and when they appear. We evaluate each case to better understand the potential source of exposure, and if we determine that an active outbreak is occurring due to in school transmission we will respond accordingly.

We will begin introducing a new mitigation strategy at the elementary and middle school levels which is the wearing of face shields during lunch and snack. During our pilot of the shields, students were able to safely eat with minimal difficulty. As we introduce this new strategy in the coming weeks, each child will be given their own individual shield. The shields will be cleaned daily or more often as needed. We understand that there may be more questions than answers at this stage of implementation. We ask for your patience as we add this important mitigation effort.

## **Food Service**

We are excited to start our Weekend Meal Program back up at Scotland Elementary School and will begin the program at Barlow Mountain Elementary School next week.

With the pending wintry weather, please know if schools are let out early, closed, or in remote on Monday due to weather, there will be no evening food distribution at our East Ridge Middle School that day. We will still be offering evening pick up of meals at East Ridge Middle School on Wednesday and Friday between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m.

There has been some confusion as to what is offered as a Free Meal for our K-8 students under the Federal Program. Kindly find attached [here](#) what constitutes a Free Meal based on the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) guidelines. Any purchases outside of this meal option will be a charge to the student lunch account as the state is only offering reimbursement for the meal option under the NSLP guidelines. The High School is not on the NSLP program so any food purchased at the high school will be charged to the student lunch account. However, any student age 18 or younger can receive free meals if picked up at our East Ridge Middle School location between the hours of 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

## **RPS Highlights**

Enjoy the RPS [News here!](#)

[Ridgefield Tiger Talk](#): In this week's episode we learn about Ridgefield's remarkable preschool program. Joining me to talk about all the great stuff that they do is Christina Salvestrini, Tara Dore, Holly Mackey, and Alexandra Lipitz. We cover what a day is like for a preschooler, the standards behind our methods, and how parents can learn more about the program. Thanks for listening!

**Twitter:** @RPS\_DaSilva **Instagram:** rpssuper

## **CSDE**

Connecticut Learning Hub available to families: found [here](#).

## **Quote of the Week**

“Things I never ever want to say after Covid-19: *I can't hear you. You're frozen. It's lagging.*” Vicki Jenkins, a New Jersey dance teacher, on challenges during remote teaching, in “Schools During the Pandemic: A Report Card” in *TheNew York Times*, January 22, 2021