



## RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

70 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877

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

---

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

June 12, 2020

Dear Families and Faculty,

It's that time of the year, **Celebrate!** It is a feel good time of the year. We started the week by honoring our retirees, as well as our CABE and CAPSS student awardees at the recent Board of Education meeting on Monday night. This week and next allows us to recognize all of our students, specifically in 5th, 8th and 12th grade. Our elementary schools kicked it off with their virtual graduations and celebrations. While attending the virtual ceremonies, I noticed the significant personalization in a "non-personal" event. It was beautiful to see our staff, parents and students doing their best to make these 'virtual' celebrations meaningful and moving. The collective spirit of Ridgefield Public Schools is shining bright. Thank you to all of those who thoughtfully planned each detail for our students. Next week, we will also honor our students at ERMS, SRMS, and RHS. The energy level is high! Congratulations to all of our students, faculty and families!

We are just a few days away from the last day of school (June 17) and the official start of summer. I hope the summer months bring you and your families a well deserved holiday. Like many of life's challenges, there are many gifts that are left behind. I hope you have time to enjoy them. A beautiful book was shared with some of our 5th graders this past week, "*What Do You Do With a Chance?*" authored by *Kobi Yamada*. I think we can all add our own pages to this beautiful book...when you take a chance, many amazing things can happen. May you all have a relaxing summer.

Warmly,

*Susie*

Susie Da Silva, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools

## Updates

### Board of Education Meeting

The District had a Board of Education meeting on June 8; you can find the video [here](#). In addition to finalizing the FY 2020-21 Operating Budget, the Reopening Committee presented the structure for their fall planning. You can find that presentation [here](#).

### ***Nothing about this is Normal Webinar***

Thank you to those who joined our live parent webinar on Thursday, June 4 called *Nothing about this is Normal: helping your child cope with social distancing and online learning*. This event featured a panel of RPS school psychologists who discussed strategies for parents to assist children socially, emotionally, and behaviorally. Linked below are the presentation and the YouTube live recording. Feel free to share with friends or neighbors who were unable to join us (click on the blue links below):

[Nothing about this is normal: RPS Parent Presentation](#)

[Nothing about this is normal: YouTube Live Recording](#)

### Summer School

Save the Dates: July 6 - July 31, Monday- Friday, 8-11:00 a.m.

We are expanding our Summer School options this year to include Biology, Chemistry, Physics, MATH180; and we will continue to offer enrichment Geometry for our rising 9th graders (8th to 9th). The brochure and registration information will be sent to all grade 6-12 parents on Wednesday, June 17.

The State of Connecticut 2020 *Summer Learning Challenges*.

2020 Governor's Summer Reading Challenge: [Imagine Your Story](#); and

2020 Commissioner's Summer Math Challenge: [Mathematics: The Key to the Future](#).

### Feed our Tigers

*A message from the Director of Social Services:*

Ridgefield Social Services has partnered with Tiger Hollow Inc. to continue providing ANONYMOUS food assistance through the summer. We are calling this program *Feed our Tigers*. If you have previously identified yourself as a family who participates in this program, click [here](#) to register to continue receiving food assistance during the summer. Help us help you

by completing the survey. Please share with your friends if you think they may also qualify and be interested in receiving some assistance.

## **Hiring**

We are in the final stage of the hiring of the new RHS Principal. We expect an announcement soon.

We completed our first phase of interviews today for both the FES and BMES Principalships. We look forward to meeting the candidates again next week for the next phase of interviews.

## **SAT**

Save the date: Saturday, September 26. Ridgefield High School will be hosting the SAT on this date. This test can be taken at no cost by our rising 12th graders (students currently in 11th grade) if they register through their College Board account. More details will come in the fall.

## **Shared Racial Justice Resources**

Over the past couple of weeks, I have received emails from parents or colleagues with shared resources to support our work in and out of the school walls on topics of racial justice and relations. I have listed some of these resources here:

### ***Books:***

Between the world & Me, Ta-Nehisi Coates

### ***Podcast:***

1619, hosted by Nikole Hannah Jones (The New York Times)

### ***Read Alouds for Children:***

[Click Here](#) for links to video read alouds for elementary aged children.

### ***Article:***

[How Will Each of Us Contribute to Racial Justice and Educational Equity Now?](#)

Authors: [Linda Darling-Hammond](#), [Janel George](#)

[Video Message from the Superintendent](#)

## **Reopening of School**

The reopening of schools is on everyone's mind and while we have a Reopening Committee at the local level, we continue to wait to hear details from the Commissioner of Education, Miguel Cardona or Governor Lamont. At this point, we do not know whether the reopening of school

and/or the model of reopening will be a local decision. What we do know is that we will do our best to be as prepared as possible for as many scenarios/circumstances as possible. As you may have heard, some of our neighboring New England states have been releasing guidance to schools and we are thinking Connecticut might do the same. Should that happen, we will share information with the Reopening Committee, as well as all of you. Click [here](#) for the Reopening Committee presentation.

## **eLearning**

Our *Elementary Schools Virtual Field Day*: Click [here](#) for a highlight video from our Physical Education Team.

*RPS News*: [Click Here](#)

*SRMS Variety Show!* The show must go on...click [here](#).

*RHS Literary Magazine: "Lodestar"* goes digital: click [here](#).

*RHS Visual & Performing Arts Department (VPA)*: Click [here](#) for the new VPA website to see the work of the RPS' visual and performing arts students. According to Dana Phelan (RHS VPA Department), *"We hope it's a good way to wrap up the school year and celebrate the good and beautiful things our students have created during a tough year. Among the many powers of the arts, is the power to help heal."*

## **Podcasts**

Catch our latest Podcast by clicking here: [Ridgefield Tiger Talk, with Dr. Deeeeeeesantis](#) or search "Ridgefield Tiger Talk" in your favorite podcasting app. Joining us this week are Hildegard Grob and Melissa Houston of the Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center, and Thomas Broderick, a history teacher from Scotts Ridge Middle School. We discuss the historical significance of Keeler Tavern and how we connect the Town's history to our curriculum. The discussion will also include some of the amazing projects between the museum and the school system to bring historical context into today's complex social landscape. Thanks for listening!

## **An Extra Bit:**

[How to Normalize the College Search Process for Juniors](#), By Jeffrey Selingo, NY Times