



Rye Junior High School

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August 7, 2018

Dear Parents & Guardians,

It is my pleasure to welcome everyone back for another great year at RJH. I hope your summer vacations have been restful and filled with time to enjoy family, friends, and the beautiful Seacoast. Our custodial staff has been working hard over the summer to get the building ready for the start of the year. The teachers have also been meeting and planning together to ensure a successful year for all students. We are all anticipating the arrival of our students. Below are some updates and information which may be helpful for the start of the school year.

STAFFING UPDATES

We would like to welcome John Hirsch as our new World Language teacher. John is coming to us with over 20 years of experiencing teaching middle and high school languages. He will be teaching both French and Spanish to 6th and 7th graders next year. Jennifer Bell will be responsible for teaching 8th grade, both the French and Spanish sections.

Leslie Bayse will also be joining us for 1 year in Art. She has an extensive background in the arts and we are positive she will provide a seamless transition while Laura Sunderland is out on maternity leave.

We are pleased to announce Terri Hogan as our new Secretarial Assistant. We are excited to have her on staff and are positive Terri will make a great addition to our office team. Please stop in to meet her at the start of the year.

PROJECT BASED LEARNING

Last year we successfully “Found our Swing” with a schoolwide theme, building of boats, and a culminating event of the Rye Regatta. Grade level teams will again be looking to teach their curriculum through projects this year. We have chosen a school wide theme of “POWER”, which you will see woven into our projects in various ways throughout the year.

SECURITY UPDATES

Over the summer, we moved the second set of doors in our main entryway. Visitors will now be able to interact with the office before getting buzzed in. For overall building safety during the day, parents dropping off picking up their child will wait in the vestibule, rather than coming in to the school. We have also been awarded money through a grant that will allow us to make additional security updates this year. The entire building is being programmed with a new keyless door system so that we know at all times who has access to the building. We will also be installing more security cameras throughout the building and on the outside grounds.

H.O.W.L.s

Another area of focus this year will be to improve the grading and reporting of student performance. One of the ways to achieve this will be to monitor and report the academic performance separately from work habits, character traits, and behaviors such as attendance, class participation and work completion. We have identified three Habits of Work and Learning, or H.O.W.L.s, to focus on as a school; Respect, Responsibility and Perseverance. This year, trimester report cards will reflect student growth on their academics as well as their H.O.W.L.s. More information will be presented at the Open House and as we progress through the year.

BLIZZARD BAGS

Last year we had six snow days that interfered with many families and their plans for camp or family vacations. This year we will be applying to the state for permission to have Remote Instruction Days, commonly referred to as Blizzard Bag Days. Blizzard Bags contain work sent home for students to do so the day will count as a regular school day. Teachers put together lessons based on their curriculum that students can easily complete at home. The teachers are available by email or phone for questions your child might have completing the work. 80% of the students must complete the work sent home in order for that day to be counted. The Rye School Board has approved piloting this program for three days.

COMMUNICATION

Throughout the school year, you will receive a “Principal’s Notes” electronically on Fridays with announcements, information and upcoming dates. Each grade level team also sends out newsletters on a regular basis with information pertinent to your child and his/her classes. These newsletters are a good way to *stay in the know* about your child’s academics, school activities, as well as other events and happenings. We also encourage you to reach out to us at any time with questions or concerns. Our staff has many years of experience with early adolescence and can be a great resource to you during this time. The middle school years can be quite tumultuous and a strong home-school connection is key to your child’s success.

UPCOMING DATES

- August 15th at 10:00am: New Students Orientation (grades 6-8)
- August 28th: First Day of school for all
- August 31st & September 3rd: No School-Labor Day
- September 13th at 6pm: RJH Open House

I am honored to serve as the principal of Rye Junior High School and look forward to another year. It is truly a privilege to be a part of a community where parents, teachers and students are committed to the academic success and overall well-being of all children.

Best,

Marie Soucy

Principal, Rye Junior High School