



Rocky River
CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Caring · Exceptional · Competitive



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Happy New Year!

I hope that you had a wonderful holiday season with family and friends and are well rested as we begin the second half of the school year.

As I reflect on the first part of the 2019-2020 academic year, I could not be more proud of the accomplishments of our students, teachers, and staff.

In the classroom, the Rocky River City School District once again earned an overall grade of an "A" on the Ohio School Report Card from the Ohio Department of Education. The District ranked second overall in the state of Ohio and was one of just 31 Districts to receive an overall "A."

Outside of the classroom, our students and staff continue to excel by demonstrating leadership and success in activities, athletics, clubs, fine arts, music, organizations, and volunteering in the community. With more than 90 extracurricular activities available to students, these opportunities help further our mission to provide exceptional opportunities in a caring and globally competitive environment.

I encourage you to stay connected and get involved with your school district. We continue to value the support from the community and are excited to share all of the wonderful things happening throughout the district.

Best wishes for continued educational success!

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael G. Shoaf
Superintendent

ROCKY RIVER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT EARNS STRAIGHT A'S AND RANKS #2 IN STATE ON OHIO SCHOOL REPORT CARD

The Rocky River City School District (RRCSD) earned straight A's and an overall grade of an A on the 2019 Ohio School Report Card, which measures the 2018-2019 school year. It was also ranked the #2 school district in the state, marking the 10th straight year RRCSD has ranked in the top 10.

Rocky River was one of four districts in the state to earn A's on all reported components of the State Report Card, receiving A's in Achievement, Progress, Gap Closing, Graduation Rate and Prepared for Success. In addition, Rocky River was one of only 31 districts throughout the state to earn an overall A. This was RRCSD's second consecutive year of receiving an A grade.

"We could not achieve this ranking without the strong, daily collaboration between our students, parents and guardians, teachers, staff and administration," said Elizabeth Anderson, assistant superintendent. "We are thankful for the continued support we receive from the community and our parents and guardians, which leads to the high achievements and success of our students."

"The report card reflects the hard work and passion for learning that goes on in every school in the district. Our students, faculty, staff, parents and guardians, and community should be extremely proud of this accomplishment."

We're social!

@RrCitySchools

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SAVE THE DATE FOR THE SECOND ANNUAL FAMILY FIRST NIGHT

Feb. 24, 2020

This initiative provides an opportunity for families to spend an uninterrupted evening together.

The district is asking families to put events, activities, and work on hold on Feb. 24 to spend time together. Teachers across the district will not assign homework, projects, or tests for the next day. There will be no practices, games, activities, or clubs scheduled on Family First Night.



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NEW AND NOW - #RRSCHOOLS PODCAST

Have you checked out the latest #RrSchools Podcast? Beginning in September, the Rocky River City School District launched its monthly podcast series. Each month, Communications Specialist Greg Murphy dives into the latest news at #RrSchools with special guests. Past guests have included Superintendent Dr. Michael Shoaf, Mr. Bill DiMasico, Coordinator of the West Shore Career Tech Program and other teachers and students. The podcasts discuss a variety of projects, programs and events happening in the district.

Visit www.rrcs.org/RrSchoolsPodcast.aspx to see the latest podcast or listen to past editions.

RRHS STUDENTS NAMED NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS AND COMMENDED STUDENTS

Six students from the Rocky River High School Class of 2020 have been named semifinalists in the 65th annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

Kira Katterle, Kaitlyn Nock, Joshua O'Halla, Eric Peters, Morgan Schuld and Jack Sierputowski have been recognized for their academic achievements by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

In addition, three seniors - Melanie Ahmetspahic, Andrea Lasher and Grace Suhadolnik - were named National Merit Commended Students.

The National Merit Semifinalists are six of the



approximately 16,000 students nationwide to be named semifinalists in the prestigious program, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors. The group now has an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$31 million that will be offered next spring.

To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the Finalist level of the competition. More than 90 percent of the semifinalists are expected to attain Finalist standing and about half of the Finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar title.

National Merit Scholarship winners of 2020 will be announced beginning in April and concluding in July.

ROCKY RIVER STUDENTS CELEBRATE HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

National Hispanic Heritage Month takes place from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 every year. It celebrates the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. Rocky River Middle School and Rocky River High School chose to honor the month through murals.

At the high school, 96 students from Kari Marks' Level 2 Spanish classes created a colorful mural with the theme of "Hispanic Americans: A History of Serving Our Nation." The mural showcased relevant information about notable Hispanic Americans throughout history and their impact on American culture. The students collaborated on the design, concept and layout of the mural but worked individually on the person they were highlighting.

"The idea of a mural was inspired by the Mexican Muralist Diego Rivera, who has

several murals in the US, and how he used his art to promote awareness of political and social issues affecting cultures," said Ms. Marks.

At the middle school, Spanish Teacher Andrea Reynolds used a mural of prominent Hispanic Americans to teach her class. Each morning, students would read, in Spanish, a digital slide containing a brief bio and picture of a new historical figure.

"We used this as a way to infuse culture into our class and it helped students with their language learning journey while celebrating the contributions of different cultures," said Ms. Reynolds.

Through both approaches, students were exposed to other cultures and learned how they were all greatly impacted by the influence of Hispanic culture.



RRMS STUDENTS AND STAFF SHOWCASE KINDNESS AND ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES



At Rocky River Middle School, the students are working together to overcome bullying and put a focus on kindness. The Be the Change-Interact Group, led by Mary Fancher, actively works to change students' attitudes about bullying and looks for ways to make the school a friendlier place. The group plans and hosts events to accomplish their goal.

Events this year have included the new student welcome party on Sept. 11, walking in the RRHS homecoming parade on Sept. 27, Mix-It-

Up Day at lunch on Oct. 22 and, most recently, Impact Week from Nov. 18-22.

Members of the Be the Change group welcomed 33 new students to RRMS during the party in September. They enjoyed pizza, games and getting to know one another. For taking part in Mix-It-Up Day, RRMS is designated as a "National Mix It Up Model School." The day gives students the opportunity to sit at a new lunch table and interact with different people. Impact Week consisted of five days that encouraged students to make a difference in someone's life or in the world. The days were: Make New Friends Monday (start a conversation with someone you don't know well, just saying hello could save someone's life), Thank a Teacher Tuesday (a sincere word of appreciation means so much), What-a-World Wednesday (reminding everyone to recycle at home and school), Thanks for Staff Thursday (thank the bus drivers, secretaries, custodians, librarians, cafeteria workers, nurses, etc.) and Funny Joke Friday (tell a joke at your lunch table, everyone needs to laugh – it's good for your body and mind).

"I feel very happy with the results of Be The Change and some of the events we have worked on," said Krista Ehrma, eighth-grade student at RRMS. "Our club has welcomed new students and gives us an opportunity to make our school better and help with the anti-bullying cause. It is a very fun and exciting club for people to participate in."

GOLDWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL IS FOCUSED ON GRATITUDE

An attitude of gratitude is celebrated and encouraged at Goldwood Primary, and it is really benefitting the students and staff members alike. As a continuation of embracing mindfulness and last year's theme of kindness, this year, Goldwood has a "Focus on Gratitude" and it permeates through the whole school.



"It's really unbelievable the effect it has," said Peg Liberatore, school counselor at Goldwood. "You feel the positivity when you come in, and there is a noticeable calm in the classrooms that really practice mindfulness."

As part of the Focus on Gratitude initiative, students who showcase an attitude of gratitude are highlighted every day as part of morning announcements. The students are also encouraged to add a "leaf" to the Attitude of Gratitude bulletin board in the lobby of the school. The library has a station with the colorful leaves and students are encouraged to write down what they are grateful for. The children are eager to take part in these activities to share what they are grateful for with the school and their peers.



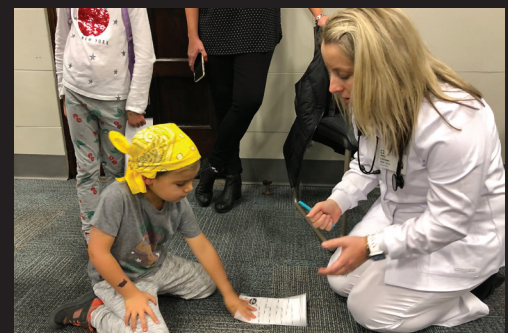
BEACH SCHOOL HOSTED SALUTE TO HEROES EVENT

On Oct. 16, from 5-7 p.m., Beach School celebrated local heroes, including firemen, policemen, military members, nurses, doctors, dentists and scientists, at its Salute to Heroes event. Students and their families were invited to attend in their favorite hero costume.

Students were encouraged to use their words to request autographs or ask questions of the local heroes. They also had the opportunity to tour a fire engine and a police cruiser. Mr. Science also put on a show to entertain attendees.

There were also raffle baskets donated by PNC, local businesses and staff along with donation boxes, and the Barrio food truck was available to hungry families. All proceeds raised from the raffle baskets will go toward the Rocky River Assistance Program, fulfilling holiday wish lists for children in need.

"The best part of the event was the authentic learning experience our Beach children and families experienced together," said Tara Zbin, preschool administrator. "The children were fascinated by our local heroes and excited to be surrounded by their friends. Plus, everyone came together to be heroes themselves by providing happiness to other children in our community that are less fortunate."



SAVE THE DATE FOR THE HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT TOWN HALL AT RRMS

March 9, 2020

Learn how you can spot the signs of drug, alcohol or tobacco use in your student. In collaboration with the Rocky River Police Department D.A.R.E. program and the school resource officer (SRO), RRMS will host a Hidden in Plain Sight Town Hall on March 9.

D.A.R.E. Officer Chris Camp and SRO Matthew Blazer will recreate a teen bedroom, complete with areas to hide drugs and alcohol. Parents will have 25-30 minutes to walk through the bedroom to spot as many hidden items as they can find. Officers Camp and Blazer will then show them what they missed.

They will then go over current drug trends as well as vaping and alcohol use. The PowerPoint presentation will also give parents ideas on how to talk to their children about these tough subjects. The officers will also discuss how the juvenile system works.

“We are really trying to build awareness and build trust with their teenager so they can know who they are hanging out with and what they might be getting into so it can be addressed before it turns into something more serious,” said Officer Camp.



RRHS AUDITORIUM REFRESH PROJECT

If you have stepped foot into the Rocky River High School auditorium lately, there are some noticeable changes to the venue that hosts more than 100 scheduled events each year.

The auditorium houses the RRHS Fall Play and Spring Musical, band and choir concerts, Town Hall Meetings, assemblies, Talent Shows, award programs, NHS Induction, and many other events throughout the course of the year.



This project was made possible through a generous donation from Ken and Martha Taylor.

We are looking forward to showcasing our updated auditorium with the community.

KENSINGTON STUDENTS TAKE CENTER STAGE WITH GREAT LAKES THEATER

Members from Great Lakes Theater spent the week of October 14-18 at Kensington Intermediate School, presenting and working with 5th grade students to tap into their creative skills and tell stories through acting. The actors brought costumes, props, and scripts, giving students the opportunity to rehearse and act out scenes. The Great Lakes Theater's acclaimed educational programming has positively impacted the lives of students since it was founded in 1962.



FENCE AROUND RRHS



The Rocky River Campus Foundation partnered with the Rocky River City School District to build a fence with brick pillar columns to replace the chain-link fence outside the Rocky River High School stadium. The fence will help improve the overall appearance and aesthetics of the campus, while also capturing a larger green space on

the north end of the stadium. The brick pillars match the exterior of the high school building and are connected by spans of black aluminum bars.

The Campus Foundation raises funds and develops sponsorships to enhance the landscaping and outside areas at RRHS. The Foundation has funded previous improvements at RRHS, including the stadium wrap, landscaping outside of the science wing, and pavers at the main entrance.

AS PROMISED, ALEX SHEEN OF BECAUSE I SAID I WOULD RETURNS TO RRHS



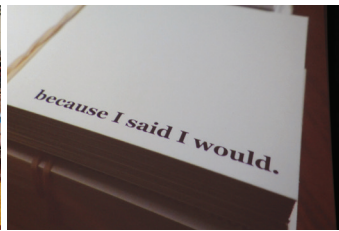
Rocky River High School was happy to welcome Alex Sheen, the founder and CEO of social movement and nonprofit *because I said I would*, back for a second visit on Nov.

6, 2019. This time around, he brought his message of the importance of making and keeping promises to ninth and 10th-graders. Sheen visited juniors and seniors and RRMS students on September 16. His visits were made possible through grants from the Rocky River Education Foundation, a nonprofit designed to support and enhance the educational experience of students in the Rocky River City School District.

The purpose of Sheen's visit was to inspire students in grades 6-12 to persevere and overcome adversity. During his presentation, Sheen told a number of stories and about going to extraordinary lengths to keep promises. At the end of his speech/presentation, he gave each student a set of 10 "promise cards" for them to take home and write their promises on.

He also held a meet and greet after his presentation with students who have accepted leadership positions within each school, such as student council, class officers or peer mentors. Students and staff were extremely receptive and thankful for the opportunity. Many students have used the promise cards as a way to refocus on their specific goals, ambitions or interests.

To learn more about the *because I said I would* movement and get your own promise cards, visit becauseisaidiwould.com.



FACES OF #RRSCHOOLS



Elizabeth Anderson
Assistant Superintendent

Anderson received the PwC LeadDIVERSITY Alumni Award at the 65th Annual Humanitarian Award Dinner. A 2016 graduate of the LeadDIVERSITY program, she was chosen for the 14th annual award by fellow alumni of the program for her continued work in successfully demonstrating appreciation of the LeadDIVERSITY trainings.



Renni Burke
Kensington Intermediate School



Burke's painting titled "Regatta" was selected to be featured at the Baldwin Wallace University Student Art Exhibition. The exhibition was one of six held annually at Baldwin Wallace's Fenwick Art Gallery.



Samantha Coleman
Rocky River High School

A sophomore cross country standout, Coleman qualified for the OHSAA Girls State Cross Country Championship for the second time in as many years. A two-time Great Lakes Conference MVP, she ran a personal-best time of 18:59.70 to place 36th in the Division I race.



Neil Czaplicki
School Resource Officer

Officer Czaplicki is in his first year as an SRO serving at Beach Preschool, Goldwood Primary School, and Kensington Intermediate School. A nine-year veteran of the Rocky River Police Department, he has worked to develop a positive connection with students and staff, focusing on school safety, security, and prevention initiatives.



Luke Obrycki
Goldwood Primary School

Obrycki was featured as a Kid-ventor on an episode of Strahan, Sara, and Keke for his invention, the Refresh-Mitt. He showed off the invention during the You Gotta See This: Kid's Inventor's Edition segment.



Trang Ngo
Rocky River Middle School

Ngo won the Rocky River Middle School Grade 7-8 Spelling Bee on Nov. 25 and will now represent the Rocky River City School District at the Scripps Regional Cuyahoga County Spelling Bee on March 7 at Cuyahoga Community College.

STUDENTS GET Z PASS FOR BUS SAFETY

New this school year, students riding the bus now have the Zonar “Z Pass” to help keep them safe. The “Z Pass” is a passive RFID identification card that each student scans every time he or she enters or exits the bus. The pass also alerts parents via push notifications through the SafeStop app every time the card is scanned.

The main purpose for the cards was to improve student safety, but it also tracks information, such as where the bus is located, who is on the bus and more. That information is easily accessed in the case of an emergency. The cards work in conjunction with the new mobile tablet system installed on the buses. The tablets have each route, bus stop location and student information downloaded onto them so that the driver is able to visually see who has scanned on the bus, which bus stop they are at and if a student is still on the bus. The driver will also be notified if a student tries to scan on a bus they are not assigned to or if they try to get off at a stop they are not assigned to.

Students received their cards on the first day of school.



NEW FITNESS EQUIPMENT AT RRMS

The West Gymnasium at Rocky River Middle School recently underwent a bit of a makeover with the addition of cardiovascular machines and weights in a project was aided by a grant from the Rocky River Education Foundation.

The new set-up features treadmills, ellipticals, and rowers, as well as a full racks of free weights and kettlebells, and a power rack. The equipment will be used as part of the Fitness curriculum to teach students how to achieve lifelong fitness concepts.

The RRMS Fitness staff has already received rave reviews about the equipment from students.



K-KIDS COLLECTED CLOTHES FOR PEOPLE IN NEED

Kensington Intermediate School came through in a big way for local families in need this winter. Through a winter clothing drive, organized by this year’s K-Kid students, more than 10 boxes of clothes were donated to Twice Blessed Free Store, which, every Saturday, provides free clothing and housewares for an average of 90 families from the Greater Cleveland area.

The clothing drive happened during the month of October and students were asked to collect and donate gently used or new winter clothing of all sizes, including mittens, gloves, scarves, boots and coats. A flyer was created and shared on the website to let the community know of the donation drive as well. The K-Kid members came up with the idea to help people during the cold months ahead. The students wanted to help people in the community who may need some extra support to remain warm and healthy.

Thank you to everyone who came out to support #RrSchools Homecoming.

HOMECOMING 2019



FALL ATHLETICS HIGHLIGHTS



Rocky River High School won four conference championships during the fall season.

Girls golf started off the impressive campaign by winning its fourth

straight Lake Erie Girls Golf Association title. Boys golf followed by capturing its fifth straight Great Lakes Conference (GLC) crown and went on to advance to the district tournament following a third place showing at sectionals.

The girls tennis team won its fifth straight GLC title and the girls soccer team rounded out the fall by claiming the GLC Championship, the Elyria District title and advancing to the regional semifinals of the OHSAA state tournament.

Freshman girls tennis player Samantha Robertson and sophomore cross country runner Samantha Coleman both qualified for the OHSAA state tournament. For Coleman, it was her second appearance at the state meet in as many years.

At Rocky River Middle School, the girls cross country team won the GLC Championship, logging five top-seven finishes and scoring 20 points. Eighth-grader Mackenzie Russell won the event with a time of 12:35.80.

TEAM UNIFY RECEIVES NEW UNIFORMS FROM BROWNS



Rocky River's Team Unify had the experience of a lifetime on Sept. 24 as the group visited the Cleveland Browns facility in Berea and received new jerseys as part of the inaugural Ohio Unified Sports Play Football! Clinic.

The Pirates were introduced by Browns quarterback Baker Mayfield and showed off their new uniforms, which feature Rocky River school colors and the Browns' orange and brown striping. Mayfield was joined by fellow teammates Garrett Gilbert, Willie Wright, and Brandin Bryant who cheered and welcomed the student-athletes onto the stage for a team photo with players.



The students also had a chance to meet other players, play catch on the football field, and receive autographs from players. One student was gifted a pair of gloves from tight end David Njoku.

Team Unify is dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition. It is inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding.

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Residential Customer

RREF GALA SAVE THE DATE

Save the Date for this year's Rocky River Education Foundation Gala which will take place on Saturday, March 28, at 6 p.m. at Westwood Country Club. Tickets for the Gala will go on sale in January at www.rrefoundation.org.

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Save the Date
ROCKY RIVER EDUCATION FOUNDATION
2020 FUNDRAISER GALA
SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH • 6:00PM
WESTWOOD COUNTRY CLUB
22625 DETROIT RD., ROCKY RIVER

*Our Children,
Our Future*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 30	Kindergarten Information Night RRHS Talent Show
February 7-8	Kensington Talent Show
February 8	RRHS Winter Formal
February 24	Family First Night
March 9	Town Hall Meeting – Hidden in Plain Sight
March 12-14	RRHS Spring Musical
March 20	Challenge Cup Gym Rats Basketball Game
March 26	RRHS Prom Fashion Show
March 28	RREF Gala
April 3	RRMS Maroon & White Night
May 2	RRHS Prom
May 5	District Art Show Opening
May 7	All Schools Band Concert
May 14	National Honor Society Induction
June 5	Commencement

IMPORTANT DATES

January 6	School Resumes
January 17	Teacher Record Day
January 20	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No School
February 17	Presidents Day – No School
April 10	Spring Vacation Begins
April 20	School Resumes
May 25	Memorial Day – No School
June 4	Last Day of School

Sign up for Rocky River Schools updates via email, including a monthly RrSchools e-newsletter. To receive updates, please email Communications Specialist Greg Murphy (murphy.greg@rrcs.org).