



RIDGEWOOD

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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The Ridgewood News
Superintendent's Corner
January 2017
by
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The following column appeared in The Ridgewood News on January 27, 2017.

NEW YEAR, NEW WEBSITE AND NEW IDEAS FOR BEATING THE WINTER BLUES

At the half-way mark in the school year our students, staff and schools are humming along. But by no means are we hibernating during these winter months. Our energy is high and we've got lots of new projects going, announcements to share, and ideas for beating the winter blues without venturing too far from home.

From the Ed Center, the big news is the recent launch of our revamped district website. Our IT department and a committee of administrators, tech coaches and web content managers worked on the new site for several months before going live around the holidays. We are excited for you to check out our new look at www.ridgewood.k12.nj.us. You'll find an attractive, user-friendly design that is also mobile-responsive with streamlined navigation, a sophisticated search engine, overlapping calendar functions, language translator links, Board meeting webcasts, and so much more. Whether you have children at different schools and need to coordinate calendars, are searching for information and don't know where to start, or if you simply want to glance at the latest district news, the new website is designed to get you the information you need as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Also big news, we are getting ready to register the first-ever class of Ridgewood full-day Kindergarten students. Thanks to a majority vote by our residents on Election Day, this coming September we will implement a full-day program for our youngest learners. Kindergarten registration will take place at all Ridgewood elementary schools on Tuesday, February 7 and Thursday, February 9, from 3:30-4:30 p.m. The requirements and printable forms may be found on the district website, under the Parents tab at the top of the page. Scroll to "Residency, Enrollment and Health Forms" and click to open and print the required documents.

We also look forward in February to the not so new, but bigger and better each year, Jamboree fundraiser for RHS scholarships. An annual theatrical treat for the entire Ridgewood community, this year's Jamboree show dates are February 8, 9, 10, 11 at the Benjamin Franklin Middle School Auditorium. The theme, "World Tour," promises to take the audience on a

uniquely *Ridgewoodian* journey ‘round the globe, transporting us through the hearts and voices of our own enormously talented community members who, thankfully for our graduating seniors and the Jamboree scholarship fund, just can’t stay away from the stage lights. Visit www.rhsjamboree.org for full information on performance times and ticket sales, and for other special promotions from our local merchants.

Besides showcasing the talents and big hearts of our accomplished residents, Jamboree also serves as a prime example for our children of what success is really all about. Of course, we adults know the importance of teaching our children that success often comes only after we have learned from our mistakes. That topic will be the theme of our next Wellbeing Series program on Wednesday, February 1 with bestselling author Jessica Lahey, who will talk to parents and guardians about *The Gift of Failure*. This free program will be held at the George Washington Middle School Auditorium from 7-9 p.m.

Moving into March, another important topic will be discussed in our adult Wellbeing Series on March 10. Johanna Kandel will speak on *Life Beyond Your Eating Disorder*, providing insight on eating disorders and body image issues, and offering guidelines for restoring health and hope. Ms. Kandel will speak in the George Washington Middle School Auditorium from 7-9 p.m.

Another highlight of the winter season, Super Science Saturday is set for March 4 at Ridgewood High School from 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Billed as the “greatest science extravaganza in northern New Jersey,” this free event is a huge draw for science buffs of all ages and interests, with new presentations each year along with the always-enjoyed traditional egg drop challenge, paper airplane contest and rocket launches that provide thrills for the whole family. Check out www.SuperScienceSaturday.org for details and also for information on the annual presenters’ workshop.

As March also marks the official end of winter season and the celebration of the first day of spring on the twentieth, we’ll kick off the new season with a Coffee and Conversation on March 28. Designed to be a casual evening for residents to chat with the Board members and me, you’re invited to talk shop with us from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Ed Center, 49 Cottage Place. By then we’ll be able to discuss next year’s budget, the upcoming parent/guardian satisfaction survey coming in May, and together start turning our thoughts to graduation and summer break.

So, despite its designation of couch-potato season, winter in the district is certainly a busy time for us all. Please mark your calendars for our upcoming winter events, and if by chance you forget, just refer to the new district website for all the information. And in the meantime, stay safe and warm!

As always, please feel free to contact me with your questions or concerns.

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