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**SAU 50 Director of Facilities - Administrator Report**  
**Brian C. Helfrich – Rye**  
**October 18th - 2023**



\*Thank you Jim Gordon for working tirelessly to set-up and break-down for these types of events.

**Accomplishments and Successes**

- ★ Exterior ground improvements took place over the summer. From a new sign, plantings, mowing company, tree removal, crack-filling, seal-coating, edging, trimming, tree planting, stone work and other projects ... combined it has all really made an impact in a short time at both Rye schools. Our hope is to continue investing/maintaining in the exterior curb appeal which I truly believe directly impacts the education, morale and pride each of us has while students and staff are inside the school. Like the saying goes, “the little things are the big things”.

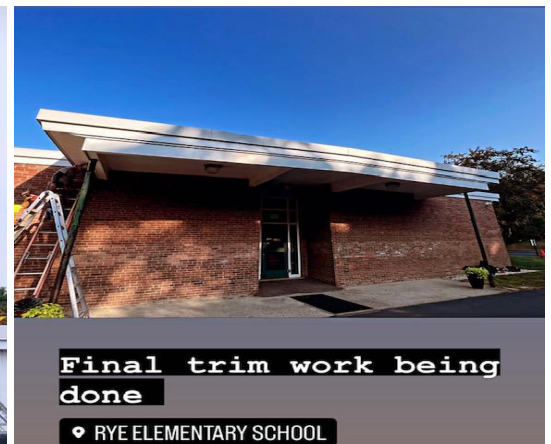


- ★ [Seacoast Security](#) located in Portsmouth, NH has now taken over all 6 SAU 50 facilities security systems. The next step in the Rye schools is to upgrade the DMP (data management panel) control to [XR550](#). This control panel is fully scalable and flexible giving us years and years of smooth security upgrades should we determine they are needed. The main bonus to this upgrade short-term is the use of a virtual keypad so we can remotely access the doors. This system is in place at Newington and New Castle.



- ★ The massive Rye Elementary roofing project is complete. As Steve Burns (SAU 50 district roofing consultant) said to me “*this could not have gone smoother given the amount of rain this summer*”. His critical eye along with

Jim Gordon and I doing spot walk-throughs ensured a completed project that will last for 35-40 years. We also identified areas of trim work that were added to save us extra costs in the near future with rotten wood and brickwork that needed to be cleaned/resealed. Those areas are now covered in aluminum cladding and are maintenance free.



- ★ The RJH basement was filled floor to ceiling with various items from the past 20-30 years. Covid made matters worse as all classrooms at RES moved items to RJH basement. The situation reached critical mass as teachers worked all summer to prepare new classroom spaces. Palmer Cleanouts (thanks Sue Penny for find this company) was able to do record work in short time and during a tropical storm. This is an example of how we must continue to be nimble with facility budgets and funding in order to meet unplanned challenges for the betterment of the school. *“Expect the best, plan for the worst, and prepare to be surprised.” Denis Waitley*



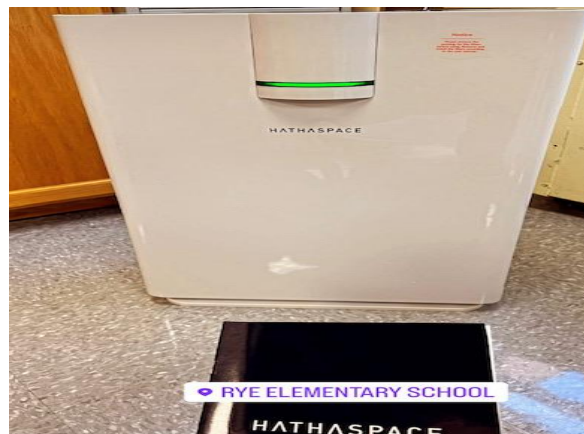
- ★ The upgraded radios for Rye are finally here and working wonderfully. Growing pains learning a new system are to be expected but overall these radios came at the perfect time for SAU 50 and especially for RES/RJH whose older radios were at end of life and requiring investment. The new radio signal strength inside and outside the school is unmatched and was tested at RES recently when students were in the Riptide Reserve and needed to communicate a hornet nest attack to the front office/emergency services. This simple upgrade increases overall safety, communication and security for the entire school community.



- ★ Increasing security at the schools is always a focus. This summer we installed bullet resistant glass panels inside the front foyer at Rye Junior High. This was highlighted to me both by Rye Police Chief Kevin Walsh and NH Division of Homeland Security School Liaison Steven Cooper during our school security assessments last spring.



- ★ The RJH library has been super uncomfortable in warmer months ever since it was added in 2009. Global climate changes have made this issue something we cannot ignore as it now affects education. We were able to source Esser 2 funds to add AC to the library. As part of our regular budget, we also added new RTU's at RJH over the summer. [Palmer and Sicard](#) who does much of our HVAC work will be adding new units to RES next summer. This is all part of our phased approach to upgrading the 30 year old units at both schools.
- ★ Part of operating a school is to ensure clean, healthy air. At both RJH and RES we were able to source clean air purifiers for the classrooms. This will cut down on sickness/allergens, reduce sick days for students and staff and help foster a better environment for education and learning.



### **Challenges/Future Budget Implications**

- ★ During a recent board meeting a leak stemming from the old 1933 chimneys was clear to all who entered the building. We had hoped the leak stemmed from unsealed/poor weather treatment around windows on the second floor but those fixes didn't solve all the leak issues. After meeting with several masons (very hard to find in 2023) we were able to pinpoint bricks that need to be repointed, unsealed parts of the chimney and a cement chimney cap that might be from 1933 that is taking on water and needs to be ground down and worked. I have added a mason request to next years budget to address this issue.

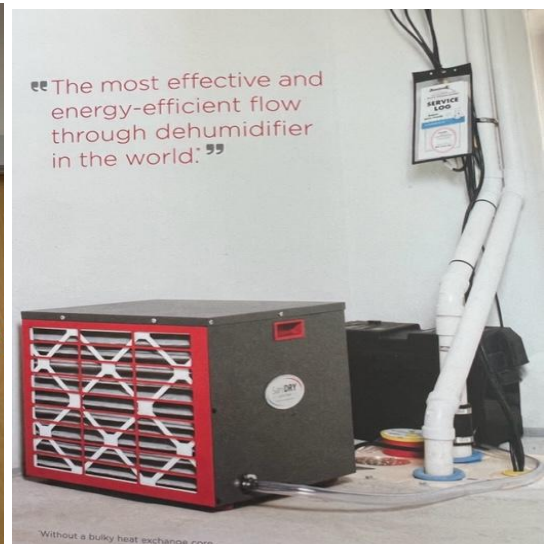


- ★ Water testing is once again a central focus of mine to remain in compliance with the EPA. Rye schools are both due to have round 3 of lead testing with the “**GetTheLeadOut**” for NHDES (NH Department of Environmental Services). As always we want to be ahead of the curve and proactive. I conducted water testing at the schools in April to see exactly where our levels are in regards to PFAS/PFOS and submitted to [Absolute Resources](#). Good news is we are below the state levels. But there is still work to do in town as building of a water treatment facility is supposedly in the works. I reached out to Arik to see what information he could share with me on that project.

*Currently NH regulates PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) at 12ppt and PFOS (perfluorooctane sulfonic acid) at 15ppt. The EPA is proposing stricter regulations to bring it down to 4ppt across the board. RES tested most PFAS at 1.67 with one type of PFAS at 2.98. RJH tested all types of PFAS*

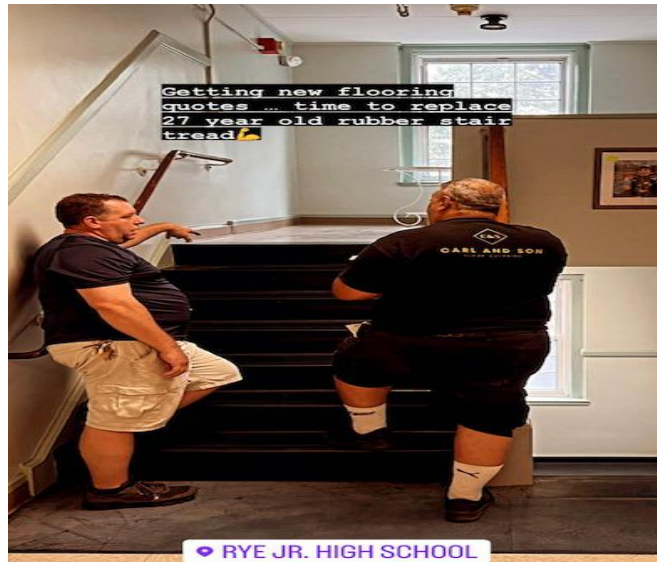
between 1.63 and 1.71. My test results for RJH can be found [here](#). My test results for RES can be found [here](#). More information on the EPA PFAS Strategic Roadmap can be found [here](#). Recent announcement of reporting of PFAS data can be found [here](#).

- ★ Doors - Our recent Homeland Security Assessment highlighted the need to start replacing our exterior doors at RES. They are all 30+ years old or “Pre-Columbine” as was used recently. Some have been there since Deputy Chief Blaisdell was a student. Having also spoken with Chief Walsh, he agrees. This will be a focus of mine in the coming budget season as well as future budgets.
- ★ STEAM Room/PIT - If you have been to the STEAM classroom at RJH, you might have seen the “PIT” across from it. Apparently there is an underground river that flows outside that portion of the school. This is a storage room (I recently found out it was actually the teacher lounge in the mid 1990’s until it started flooded) that has flooding, water seepage and mold. I reached out to TC Hafford Basement Solutions (they are installing a commercial dehumidifier at the Central Office) to see what they can do to install a sump pump and take the humidity out of the room with a commercial dehumidifier so it can safely store robotics/engineering equipment and tools from the STEAM room. This is also a safety concern for the building overall and the exact type of project we should tackle at RJH to increase usable storage space. This has been added as a request to the budget for next year.





- ★ Stair treads at RJH have been an issue for years. This year it has hit a new level of need as the only fix is to duct-tape sections of the tread that have broken off. This is not only an aesthetic issue but a safety issue as well. The current tread is from the mid 90's and every step has cracking. We reached out to numerous companies and one in particular who has done work at Greenland gave us a good walkthrough to see what our options are. I have added this request to the budget to address the treads at RJH. Doing them all at once will yield better pricing.



**Various:**

- ★ RES Playground - We are looking at a May install timeline at the earliest. Details to follow as soon as we receive more information.
- ★ RES Solar - David Webb at Revision is going to firm these dates up and re-send a contract with the added information of the PPA smaller design option. Below is a rough idea of the timeline:
  - Execute Contract - October 2023
  - Start Development Activities (permit, interconnection, etc) Fall/Winter 2023
  - Complete System Impact Study with Eversource - Winter/Spring 2024
  - Hit Notice to Proceed - Spring 2024
  - Close with Investor - Spring 2024

- Mobilize to Site - Summer 2024
- Complete Install - Fall 2024

★ I wanted to highlight and shout out the hard work Jim Gordon has done this summer. This was an extremely busy summer and had its share of challenges for everyone. Jim has put in so much time after hours, on weekends doing physical hard work. His recent custom built shelving and hooks for the main wing at RES has transformed that part of the school. We are truly blessed to have Jim and his 15 years of experience in the Rye School District. He saved the school budget thousands and thousands of dollars had we hired a carpenter to attempt this. Thanks Jim!



