



Rye School District Administrator Updates

Michelle Pitts, Principal, RES

Anne Gilbert, Principal, RJH

February 21, 2024

Goal 1: *Maintain a culture that is positive, welcoming, and supportive to all stakeholders, including staff, families, students, and community stakeholders.*

Rye Elementary School

-We recently celebrated our National Blue Ribbon award by inviting members of the Rye community, as well as several former RES staff members. Students led tours and we had a large celebration that included musical performances by both staff and students. We are very proud of this accomplishment and we will celebrate one last time when we travel as a community to the Seacoast Science Center in May with the funds donated by Dan Brown in honor of the Rye 400th anniversary. Thank you, Dan Brown!

-Students in grades 3 and 4 recently performed at a concert showcasing both their choral and band skills! We were more than happy to invite families and friends to RES to showcase their talents and just recognize Gene Guth for the songs that everyone could sing to and a band that sounded as though they had been playing together for years.

-On February 22, we will be inviting Portsmouth staff, including reading and math specialists to Data Day so they can learn more about our MTSS process. We are looking forward to this collaborative experience and learning more about ways in which we can create common experiences for our students prior to them joining together at Portsmouth High School.

-At our recent leadership meeting, all staff were invited to participate in a professional development opportunity that focused on research and perspectives around teaching students with varying social, emotional and behavioral profiles. Teachers read up to nine articles and we reflected and discussed our learning as a group. We are continuing to have discussions to generate agreements we will make as a community to support all students and better understand the concept, "If kids can, they will" (Ross Greene, 2010).

-Family members were invited to a principal event, RES 101. During this event, parents shared their questions and thoughts about all RES topics including school safety, curriculum and MTSS. There were 9 total parents who attended two different sessions, one at night and one in

the morning. It would be beneficial to host this event one more time in the spring and online in the evening for those who could not attend.

Rye Junior High School

- In January, RJH submitted a [written response](#) to apply for the [NH Excellence in Education](#) Middle School of the Year award. We were invited to present to the committee on Friday, February 9. We learned on Tuesday that RJH is a finalist for the award! The “EDies” committee will be visiting RJH on Wednesday, March 20. More information will be shared when we learn more about the visit requirements and the process.

- The quarterly “Team RJH” meeting was held on January 30, and was well attended. Topics discussed included strategies to increase parent/guardian involvement at RJH, the fifth grade transition, celebrating students, homework expectations between RES and RJH, and curriculum topics. Adults that attended had excellent suggestions about these topics.

- Our staff held the Quarter 2 recognition assembly for students and families. We awarded our RYE awards, focusing on one student per team that demonstrated respect, yes (doing the right thing), and empathy. We also recognized our MathCounts team, that competed in early February at UNH, and our Spelling Bee participants, including the 7th grade champion, Bri.

<p>Goal 2: <i>Ensure students have equal access to a rigorous and personalized learning experience.</i></p>
--

Rye Elementary School

-Students recently completed the winter STAR Assessment. This data will be discussed at the upcoming Data Day and students will continue to receive the support they need based on these results and other data points throughout the year. Our staff is engaging in more discussions around authentic enrichment opportunities, which will also be discussed at Data Day and with families as this must be a goal moving forward now that MTSS and Tier 1 are more established due to the incredible efforts of the teaching staff!

-Report cards went home on February 2 and conferences were held in January or will be conducted in March. Feedback from families and staff continues to be collected as we consider a school-wide reflection about the report card as a reporting tool in the near future.

Rye Junior High School

- Sarah Harrington (8th math) and I met with administrators and math teachers from Portsmouth High School, Portsmouth Middle School, and Greenland Central School to have a discussion about curriculum, instructional strategies, and intervention work from each school. We were able to see the ways in which our instruction is similar, and how we can adjust our instruction to best prepare students entering PHS.

- Our math team has continued to work toward providing an Algebra I class to 8th grade students who fit certain criteria. A team of teachers, the math interventionist, and I are creating a strategic plan that outlines:

- why we are making the move related to the Portrait of a Learner
- how it fits into our vision and values of RJH
- what criteria is needed for a student to enter Algebra I,

- how we will support those students and the other students in grade 8
- how we will measure success along the way
- Scheduling considerations

The team will also create a communication plan to outline the class, the selection process, and how students will receive 8th grade math before Algebra I.

- All students were administered the winter Star to update our data on student progress. Based on the data, 85% of students receiving math intervention demonstrated growth, and 100% of students receiving reading intervention demonstrated growth. We have entered another six week session of intervention for math, reading, EF skills, and SEL support. At the end of the six weeks, we will have a Data Day to review student progress, and hear from the team about other students that may need support.

Goal 3: *Prepare our students to be engaged citizens, understanding the impact they can make locally, nationally and globally.*

Rye Elementary School

-Sheryl Faye, an actress who portrays the life of famous historical female figures will visit on February 15. She will highlight the life of Queen Elizabeth II. This presentation is sponsored by the PTA and enriches our teaching of informational literacy, specifically biographies.

-Renowned penguin expert, TED speaker, and award-winning author Dyan deNapoli (AKA The Penguin Lady) visited RES! She is on a lifelong mission to help save the world's Threatened and Endangered penguins. She taught students the incredible impact they can make on the world around them by following their interests and passions.

-The students attended a safety assembly created by the principal and the School Resource Officer, J9. She asked students to memorize important information, such as their address and one family member's phone number. In addition, students learned about physical safety as well as emotional safety and why these are so important within our RES community.

Rye Junior High School

- The RJH Underwater Robotics classes all traveled to the Portsmouth YMCA to put their robots into the pool to solve some challenges. Students had to build the robots, connect the robots to the controller, and ensure their robots could perform certain tasks. We were fortunate to have several parent volunteers attend the field trip, as well!

- The Explore Genius Hour projects have surpassed expectations. In this class, students identify a goal they would like to achieve, and make a plan to bring it to fruition. We have had:

- Students create historical Rye basketball jerseys
- Students connecting with Rye Fire Department to help families in need over the holidays
- Students organizing a 3 v. 3 basketball tournament
- Students fundraising to save wild donkeys
- Students fundraising to help bring NH kids to the ocean who have never seen it before

In this class, students are looking beyond their school to find something in our community, state, or even the world that they want to support. Using research and communication skills, they are able to be those engaged citizens we hope they become.