



Rocky Point Schools



Excellence, Tradition, and Pride

The Official Newsletter of the Rocky Point Union Free School District

A Message from the Superintendent Dr. Carla D'Ambrosio

"Education is simply the soul of society as it passes from one generation to another."

G. K. Chesterton

The second semester of the school year brought the first administration of the No Child Left Behind mandate of grades 3-8 testing in English language arts and mathematics. Approximately 1,500 students took the exams over a two-week period. The scheduling of these exams, providing testing accommodations for students, and scoring procedures translated into the overburdening of school resources such as substitutes, time, and funding. Student enrollment data and raw scores were sent to the State repository. Test score results for the new English language arts and math tests will be available in the fall. To date, approximately thirty-seven data and verification reports have been submitted to the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Regional Information Center. As the school year comes to a rapid end, please remember that balancing the educational calendar with co-curricular activities is critical for student success. Please be sure to check the website for up-to-date information regarding testing schedules and other school activities.

Communication of the budget development process was a focus during the months of January through March. The administrative staff presented their budgets for personnel, instruction, special education, and business operations. Increased mandates in all areas of school functionality were a resounding phrase. Detailed information on the budget will be forthcoming in the annual budget brochure mailing.

There are many exciting events scheduled during the next few months where our students will have the opportunity to showcase the culmination of their efforts in the academic music, athletic, and other extra-curricular programs. I look forward to seeing you at these events in celebration of student achievements.

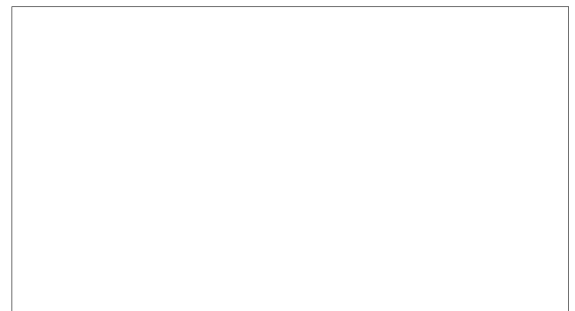
High School Regent's Physics Students Visit Stony Brook University

In March, four of Dr. Spahn's High School Regents Physics students went to Stony Brook University to get hands-on experience working on a cosmic ray experiment. (Cosmic rays are particles, produced in cosmological events.) Students assembled photomultiplier tubes, sealed everything in a light tight box, tested the detectors, and familiarized themselves with the electronics that will be used to record cosmic rays as they pass through the detectors. The detectors will be installed in our high school, where they will begin recording high-energy cosmic ray events.

This is all part of the MARIACHI (Mixed Apparatus for Radar Investigation of Cosmic-rays of High Ionization) experiment, a collaboration between Brookhaven National Lab, Stony Brook University, Suffolk County Community College, and ten Long Island high schools.

MARIACHI will be looking for cosmic rays with energies greater than a 100 mph fast ball. Just a few of these particles have been seen, and their origin may provide insight into the origins and evolution of the universe.

As one of the ten partner high schools, Rocky Point High School students will be able to share the data from all the MARIACHI sites for use for our own students' research projects.



Rocky Point & Brentwood Students
at Stony Brook University

APRIL 2006

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Soaring

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"Anything Goes" at Rocky Point HS

Weeks after the high school production of "Anything Goes," people are still raving about it! What an impact the actors and musicians had on their audience.

Congratulations and thanks to all who gave their time so graciously to help in so many ways.

Patriotic Concert

The Rocky Point Music Department hosted its annual Patriotic Concert on Thursday, February 4th.

The 19th annual show featured performances by the 5th Grade High Notes, 7th Grade Chorus, High School Orchestra, 9/10 Grade Band, 11/12 Grade Band, and High School Chorus.

During this performance, the Friends of Music accepted a check for \$2,000 from Councilman Kevin McCarrick as a donation to the Rocky Point Marching Band.

As always, the concert drew a great crowd and a night filled with American music was enjoyed by all.

Music Department Hosts All-County Festival Rehearsals

If you were walking through the high school or middle school during the first couple of weekends in March, you were sure to hear beautiful music. Rocky Point hosted the rehearsals for the Division II All County Band, Chorus, and Orchestra. Sponsored by the Suffolk County Music Educators' Association, Inc., over 400 of the best musicians from Eastern Suffolk County came together for 14 hours of rehearsal. The 7th and 8th graders enjoyed a positive experience at Rocky Point, while Division I (Grades 5/6) and Division III (Grades 9/10) rehearsals were taking place at Center Moriches and Connetquot, respectively.

Varsity Cheerleaders Named 2006 Long Island Champions

The Rocky Point Varsity Cheerleaders, coached by Anna Spallina, were named the 2006 Long Island Champions for the small varsity division. This was a first-time accomplishment for our varsity cheerleading team.

Their season started off with a first-place trophy at the Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA) Regional Competition. Our cheerleaders then went on to compete against hundreds of teams from all over America in Orlando, Florida. Congratulations on a job well done.

"Photo Hounds" Abound at RPHS!

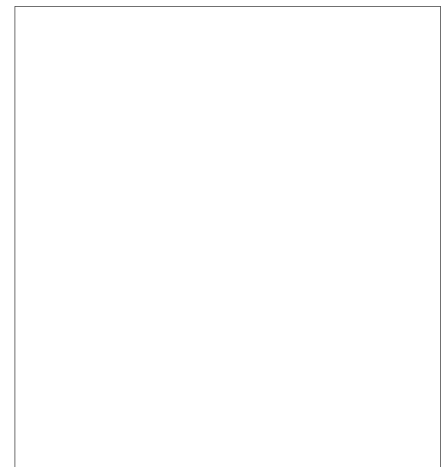
Family, friends and teachers at Rocky Point High School were thrilled to see a photograph taken by Kat Gibson, a digital photography student at the high school, on the cover of Section G in Sunday's edition of *Newsday* on March 5, 2006. *Newsday* had put out a request for student photos that would be used periodically in what is known as their "Student Gallery."

After receiving an "overwhelming" number of submissions, the editors of LI Life chose to display several of their favorites in what they termed their "upfront gallery." To be chosen at all among so many entries was certainly an honor and a testament to Kat's creative eye, but to be featured on the cover is an outstanding tribute for which we are all proud of our Ms. Gibson. Kat snapped this fetching photo last May after receiving a digital camera for her birthday. This shot, as Kat said, "just presented itself" at a friend's house and she couldn't resist.

Our pride in Ms. Gibson had not even begun to fade when the very next week another Rocky Point junior, Jackie Mingoia, had her photo featured as the first solo in *Newsday*'s "Student Gallery." Jackie's beautiful photo makes use of a few stunning flower petals, artfully contrasted against a piano keyboard.

According to their art teacher Joyce Connolly, both Kat and Jackie have an abiding love of photography and a very refined sense of composition. We all look forward to seeing more of the world through their creative eyes.

Any student 18 or younger may submit a photo for consideration. Visit newsday.com (see Student Gallery) or see Mrs. Connolly at the high school for information.



Jackie Mingoia and Kat Gibson displaying their photos.

Career Advisory Partnership (CAP) Advisory Board Members Win Awards

The Long Island Works Third Annual Workforce Builders Awards Luncheon was held in November 2005 at the Melville Marriott. The Workforce Builders Awards honor efforts to promote a strong Long Island economy and workforce. The winners were chosen from among more than 375 members of the Workforce Builders Honor Roll. Rocky Point High School's Career Advisory Partnership (CAP) member organizations won awards for their outstanding commitment to students, education, career, and community. The Bank of Smithtown (Louise Timms, Branch Manager) received the 2005 Workforce Builders School-Site Initiatives Award and the Council of Dedicated Merchants (CDM) Chamber of Commerce (Mike Poveromo, Executive Director; Maureen Schneider, President) were the recipient of the 2005 Workforce Builders Advisory Board Award. The CAP Program was established in the fall of 2004 and has taken giant steps throughout the past year, bringing valuable career education and opportunities to the students at RPHS.



Bank of Smithtown's Louise Timms, BOE Vice-President Joe Sanseverino, Teacher Susan Wilson, Superintendent D'Ambrosio, CDM's Mike Poveromo



Business Students Visit New York City's Financial District

On Tuesday, March 7, 2006, high school students in Mrs. Basileo's *College Accounting* and Mrs. Wilson's *Entrepreneurship* classes toured the Federal Reserve Bank and the Museum of American Finance in New York City. The museum tour focused on a current exhibit "Survival of the Fittest: *The Evolution of the Dow Jones Industrial Average*." The Dow exhibit detailed the corporate histories of the twelve companies that made up the original Dow Jones Industrial Average in 1896 and how eleven of the original twelve are still in business in some way today. The exhibit also looked at the Dow today and the important role the DJIA has played throughout history.

The students had a chance to explore "Making Money: Banknote Engraving and the Fight Against Counterfeiting" which looked at U.S. paper currency dating back to 1776 and anti-counterfeiting measures the government has used throughout history right up through the new \$50 bill issued in 2004. At the Federal Reserve Bank, students traveled five floors below ground level to view the walls of gold bars stored there. As a last stop on their trip, students visited Ground Zero and took a moment to scan the wall of names and remember the four Rocky Point graduates that lost their lives on 9/11.



Business Department's FBLA Brings Home the Gold, Silver, & Bronze!

Rocky Point High School's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter attended the FBLA Suffolk County District Competition held on February 9, 2006, at Paul J. Gelinus Junior High School in Setauket. The FBLA Competitive Events Program is designed to correlate with nationally recognized business curriculum standards.

Members participating in competitive events demonstrate their mastery of the foundation skills and competencies outlined by the SCANS Workplace Skills Standards. Our members proudly took home the following awards:

- 1st Place** Entrepreneurship, Michael Perez-Lalota
- 1st Place** Ms. FBL, Brittany Groth
- 1st Place** International Business, Craig Horn
- 1st Place** Marketing, Carrie-Lynn Flammer
- 1st Place** Business Ownership & Marketing, Craig Horn
- 2nd Place** Public Speaking, John Prentice
- 2nd Place** Entrepreneurship, Nicholas Koridis
- 3rd Place** Business Ownership & Marketing, Nicholas Kenyon
- 3rd Place** Job Interview, Nicholas Palun
- 3rd Place** Business Calculations, Nicholas Palun

The Rocky Point FBLA chapter has qualified for the New York State Competition to be held in April 2006 at the Nevele Grande Resort in Ellenville, and hopes to achieve even greater success and qualify for the FBLA National Competition this July in Nashville, TN.

High School Senior Class Honors Our Veterans

In November 2005, seniors at Rocky Point High School were treated to a special assembly honoring veterans. This 4th Annual Veteran's Day Assembly was organized by social studies teacher Rich Acritelli with the help of the senior class. The assembly included a performance of "Amazing Grace" by the 32-piece Suffolk County Police Bagpipe Band. The Rocky Point Veterans of Foreign Wars marched proudly into the auditorium with their chapter flag, while the United States Marine Corps Color Guard stood at attention.

During the assembly, two guest speakers took the stage, recounting their experiences. First to the stage was Captain Martin Andrews, who served as a B-17 pilot in WWII. He showed students photographs of the planes used during the war and explained how he was shot down and was fortunate to crash land in neutral Switzerland. He vividly described the damage inflicted by a German Messerschmitt 109 and how he and his crew avoided having the plane fall into Nazi hands. After landing in Switzerland, Mr. Martin described how the Swiss government detained him and his crew indefinitely.

The next speaker, Lieutenant John Fernandez, an alumni and an all-county lacrosse player during his tenure at Rocky Point High School, won acceptance to West Point and became captain of the lacrosse team at the famed military school. Fernandez spoke of his obligation to the military, his duties and fighting responsibilities in Iraq, and the wounds that he sustained while overseas defending our country.

A big thank you goes to art teacher Seth Meyer, District Communications Coordinator Joe Spina, and social studies teacher Carl Scalfani who helped to make the assembly a great success.



Rocky Point German Students Compete in Long Island Competition

Twenty-three German students from the Rocky Point Middle and High Schools participated in the 17th Annual Sprachfest, held at Commack Middle School on March 18th. Sprachfest, a German Language Competition sponsored by the L.I. Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German, enables Long Island German students to use their language skills in day-long competitions. The competitions include such activities as vocabulary, geography, culture, folk dancing, poster design, German skits, musical presentations, baking, gingerbread designs, sports, and arts and crafts. This year, over 500 students participated from 16 Long Island schools. Students won awards in the following categories:

First Place in Senior Scrabble

Mike Baptista, Greg Hanson, Matt Heller, and Dylan Schaefer

Honorable Mention in Spelling Level 4

Sean Riordan

Honorable Mention in Spelling Level 3

Meagan Bie

Everyone agreed that Sprachfest 2006 was a successful learning adventure.

DEUTSCH MACHT SPASS IN ROCKY POINT!

(German is fun in Rocky Point!)

Criminal Justice Class Honors Officer Michael Dunn

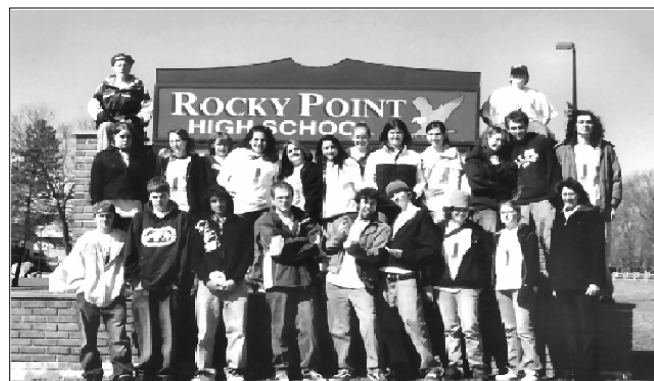
High School students who participated in the fall semester Criminal Justice class recently honored Officer Michael Dunn, who serves in the COPE Division, which operates out of the 7th Precinct. The group awarded Officer Dunn a plaque commemorating the effort and enthusiasm that he regularly puts into creating an exciting educational experience for all students.



Social Studies Coordinator and teacher of the course, Steve Shultz, commented, "Officer Dunn has been a terrific teaching partner. He has an excellent 'feel' for the students and responds well to their needs and interests. Additionally, Mike is a great resource for dispensing information to our young people about possible careers in the criminal justice system. He conscientiously works to offer interesting presentations on modern criminal justice concerns, and most importantly has developed a mutual rapport with each and every student in this class."

Students in the class were equally enthusiastic in praising Officer Dunn's efforts. Hayrim Pil spoke of how Officer Dunn's interaction with the students helped them to understand how police officers make decisions in difficult situations while Jack Eso emphasized the positive message that was transmitted to the students about police work. Tom Sciotto could not stop praising the many skits that Officer Dunn cooperatively performed with many of the students in the class.

Officer Dunn has now moved on to work with the new Criminal Justice class for the spring semester. Mr. Shultz commented, "We hope that his relationship with Rocky Point Criminal Justice students will continue for many years to come."



Rocky Point German Students

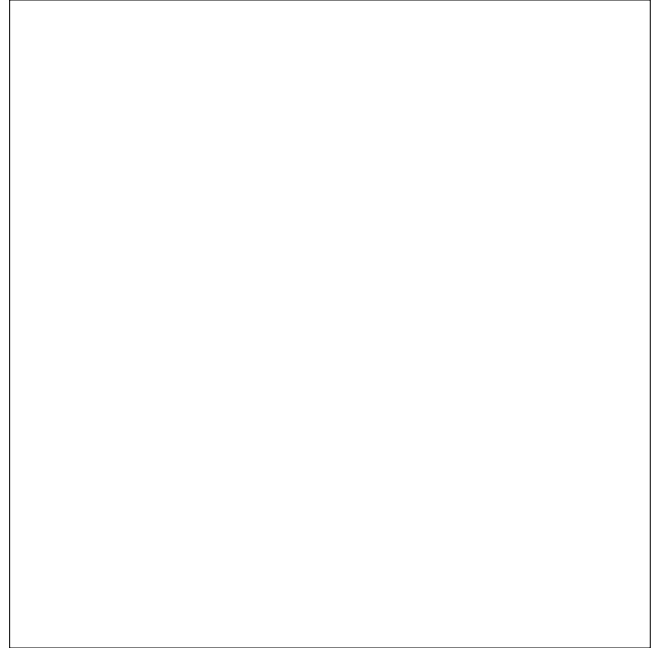
Middle School Flag Contest

The week before winter break, Rocky Point Middle School had its annual "Spirit Week" filled with inspiring themed days including "School Colors Day" and "Teacher/Student Swap Day." A "School Flag Contest" was part of the festivities.

Working in conjunction with the Social Studies Department, the Student Government invited the entire student body to submit entries to the flag contest. Hundreds of students entered the contest. The entries were narrowed down to approximately twenty submissions, which represented entries from the different grade levels. To determine a winner, administrators and teachers throughout the school voted for the flag they felt best symbolized all of the great assets of the Rocky Point Middle School.

The winner of the contest was seventh grader, Joanna McDonnell, who created a beautiful flag that truly captured the spirit of Rocky Point Middle School. Her flag design is currently being transferred to an electronic format which will be made into an actual flag that will be flown with pride at the Rocky Point Middle School. Below is the summary that Joanna submitted with her flag.

"My middle school flag has a couple of different symbols for the school. The three stripes symbolize the three grades within the school and also the respect, pride, and commitment our school is built on. Our mission statement is to promote a middle school environment where the academic, social, emotional and physical needs of all the students are addressed through respect, pride and a commitment to quality and excellence. Our school excels in education, athletics and music. The eagle is the symbol of the strong, majestic, powerful school we are."



Flag Contest Winner Joanna McDonnell



Mural Designer Devon Barstrom

Middle School Artists Showcase Their Talents

A talented team of art students will leave their mark on the walls at the Rocky Point Middle School. They are painting a large mural on the wall in one of the four stairwells at the school building.

The subject of the mural is a splendid landscape filled with a variety of large and small animals. The animals each have a unique personality and each one is spectacular.

A thought-provoking quote will be incorporated into the mural. The quote will encourage the viewers to appreciate the individuality of others, just as they appreciate the individuality of each animal in the mural.

Pictured left is seventh grader, Devon Barstrom. Devon is an excellent artist whose dynamic design was chosen to be painted on the mural.

Drama Club Production

The Middle School Drama Club is proud to announce its first school play, "*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*." The drama club offers an opportunity for all students in grades 6-8 to get involved in a theatrical production.

The Middle School Drama Club's moderators are 6th grade teachers, Mrs. Cox and Mrs. Jackson. Both Mrs. Cox and Mrs. Jackson are extremely excited to be working with a cast of 42 talented and dedicated students.

The performance dates for "*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*" are May 5th and 6th in the HS auditorium. Tickets go on sale during the last week in April.

Pi Day

On Tuesday, March 12th, the GATES students at the Joseph A. Edgar School celebrated the 300th birthday of the number π (3.14). Mrs. Tiranno-Cimisi, a parent of a 5th grade GATES student, came in and did a wonderful demonstration involving circumference and the number pi.

The students created their own compasses using a baking board, piece of string, and a thumb tack. After discussing the significance of the number pi, the students baked their own apple pies! They mixed ingredients to create a pie crust, peeled and cored apples, and then got to taste their delicious apple pies.

Students Amanda McDonald, Erin McQuade, Rachel DiCandia, and Annie Kennedy

Top o' the Morning to Local Senior Citizens

On Friday, March 17th, the Joseph A. Edgar School hosted their annual senior citizen breakfast. The Joseph A. Edgar School Student Council members dressed to impress and worked to serve the elders in their community. Breakfast was provided for 125 seniors. Entertainment featured the lovely sounds of the JAE High Notes under the musical direction of Mr. Craig Knapp.

The morning also featured Irish step dancing by some of the students from the building. Seniors enjoyed coffee, a French toast breakfast, and other tasty morsels served by the school's student council and staff members.



The JAE High Notes, teacher Maria Amoscato and her parents, Irish step dancers Gabriela Hnizdo, Lauren McBrearty, and Georgiana O'Neil

Second Step is the First Step

The students in the Joseph A. Edgar building are currently participating in Second Step, a violence prevention curriculum that focuses on building social and emotional skills. It is a 12-15 week program that has students strengthening their empathy, problem solving, impulse control, and anger management skills.

The lessons, taught by the building's BOCES Student Assistance Counselor, Mrs. Jacquelyn Schwicke, features lively discussions, role-playing, and the use of real life situations so that students may gain important social and emotional skills that they will need throughout their lives. The program complements the Second Step Program currently taught in the Rocky Point Middle School.



JAE Salutes Our Veterans

The Joseph A. Edgar School celebrated Veteran's Day with an assembly program that honored the veterans in our community.

Through the combined efforts of students and staff, over 100 veterans were presented with American flag pins for their lapels. Members of the Student Council made individual presentations to each one of the veterans.

The High Notes, led by music teacher Craig Knapp, sang Patriotic songs. The nurses and staff also put on a fabulous show for the veterans. This assembly illustrated how important the veterans are to our community and the students in Rocky Point.

The veterans and their invited guests were treated to a reception in the JAE cafeteria with a delectable array of refreshments provided by the JAE staff.

JAE High Notes and Music Teacher Craig Knapp

MESTRACT Grant Recipients

Rocky Point School District's innovative and hardworking teachers and administrators have outdone themselves this year as they pulled in 16 mini-grant awards from the Mid-East Suffolk Teacher's Center (MESTRACT). The teachers and administrators (listed below) competed for grants ranging from \$500 to \$1,000 under the Terri Peters Mini-Grant, the Technology Grant, School-Parent Organization Projects, and the Design your Own Grant Programs. In total, the recipients received **\$15,400** to fund various educational projects.

The Terri Peters Mini-Grant Program is designed to provide funding up to \$1,000 to teachers/administrators for the implementation of educational projects for which funding is not available through normal district channels. The purpose of the Technology Mini-Grants is to provide professionals with the opportunity to develop innovative, curriculum-based, technology integrated projects suitable for their classrooms. The Design Your Own Staff Development Grant Program provides a unique opportunity to bring workshops and in-service courses into our school, based on the needs of our district. The School Parent Organization Program is designed to provide funding up to \$1,000 for parent organizations. These grants support parent groups in creating activities and projects to enhance the education of students. Recipients will display their projects at the Mini-Grant Showcase in May 2006.

TERRI PETERS MINI GRANTS

Maria Liantonio, 2nd grade, FJC
Cecilia Doolittle, 1st grade, FJC
Maria Dorr, Reading Teacher, FJC
Barbara Kjaerbye, District Mentor & **Scott O'Brien**, Asst. Principal, FJC
Bettina Tripp, Librarian, FJC
Joyce Connolly, Art, High School
Susan Wilson, Business Education, High School

TECHNOLOGY GRANTS

Joyce Connolly, Art, High School
Nancy Hunter, Science, High School

DESIGN YOUR OWN STAFF DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Barbara Kjaerbye, District Mentor, FJC
Barbara Kjaerbye, District Mentor & **Paul Read**, Principal, FJC

SCHOOL-PARENT ORGANIZATION PROJECTS

Susan Collesidis, PTA Co-President & **David Falcone**, PTA
Susan Collesidis, PTA Co-President
Barbara Kjaerbye, District Mentor & **Paul Read**, Principal, FJC

Celebration of Technology at FJC

FJC Teachers recently celebrated Technology Day by inviting parents into their classes to see first hand how they integrate technology into the everyday curricula. Over 50 parents attended a workshop taught by our technology specialist, Jennifer Meschi.

This workshop provided a school overview of computer programs and technology resources at FJC. Parents rotated through 10 stations to see children using a wide variety of programs and activities.



Celebrating the World Around Us

The assembly program continues at the Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School with the celebration of a different country each month. During the month of March, students visited Ireland. A highlight of the March celebration was the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. Over 350 parents attended this assembly to view over 40 floats. The children and teachers were so excited and proud of their Irish creations, and parent responses were overwhelming.

The assembly program is a series of monthly themes designed to integrate instruction, curriculum, student appreciation, and school spirit. For the month of April, children will learn about and "visit" France. Teachers will work collaboratively across grade levels to create learning activities related to French geography and culture. The next school assembly is scheduled for April 28th, and parents are welcome to attend.

FJC Classroom Update

Miss Cerabono and Mrs. Gallino's kindergarten classes discussed the importance of eating fruits and vegetables, the color foods. For Fun Friday, the children were asked to bring in fresh fruits and vegetables, and a juicer was used to create special treats. In addition, both classes started a "We Love Healthy Snacks" reward chart. Each time a student brings in a healthy snack, a sticker is placed on a chart. Children who earn 10 stickers receive a prize from the Prize Box. Children who earned 20 stickers receive a Golden Eagle Slip. Officer Val, a member of the Suffolk County Police Department will visit all classes at FJC before the end of the school year. Officer Val, our District DARE instructor, will speak to the students about the importance of safety.



BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Joseph Sanseverino, *Vice Pres.*

Jane Bonner, *Trustee*

Howard Gimple, *Trustee*

Michael Matera, *Trustee*

Irene Pedota, *District Clerk*

Kim Lake, *District Treasurer*

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Carla D'Ambrosio

Superintendent of Schools

Sherry Alessandro

*Assistant Superintendent for
Human Resources and Administration*

Anja Groth

Director of Instruction

Michael Ivanoff

Director of Finance and Operations

Eileen Manitta

Director of Special Education

Annette Sclafani

Director of Student Services

Leonard Kies

Director of Athletics

Audit Committee Formed

An audit committee, pursuant to Education Law section 2116-c and the requirements of this subdivision, has been formed and is currently working on reviewing the District's policies and procedures concerning the internal auditing functions.

Upcoming Dates and Events

MAY 2006

- Monday, May 1 through Friday, May 12 High School Advanced Placement Exams
- Monday, May 1 through Friday, May 5 NYS Science Testing Grade 4 Performance Exam
- Tuesday, May 2 NYS Science Testing Grade 4 Written Exam
- Monday, May 8 through Friday, May 12 FJC Standardized Testing Grades 1 and 2
- Monday, May 8 through Friday, May 19 NYSESLAT Testing
- Saturday, May 6 SAT I & SAT II Exams
- Tuesday, May 9 Public Hearing on School Budget HS Auditorium at 7:30 pm
NYS Science Grade 8 Written Exam
- Wednesday, May 10 JAE Spring Concert I at 7 pm
- Thursday, May 11 JAE Arts and Technology Show from 7 pm to 8:30 pm
- Tuesday, May 16 School Budget Vote/Elections HS Gym 7 am to 9 pm
Board of Education Meeting HS Auditorium 7:30 pm
- Wednesday, May 17 MS Spring Concert I HS Auditorium at 7 pm
- Thursday, May 18 MS Art Show HS 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
MS Spring Concert II HS Auditorium at 7 pm
- Wednesday, May 24 High School Art Show 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
High School Spring Concert HS Auditorium at 7:30 pm
- Monday, May 29 Memorial Day Holiday—Schools Closed

District Mission Statement

The mission of the Rocky Point Union Free School District is to develop each child's full potential in a nurturing and supportive student-centered environment that will promote a foundation for lifelong learning.

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