



The David A. Stein Riverdale/Kingsbridge Academy MS/HS 141

Department of
Education
City of New York

Principal
Lori O'Mara

Assistant Principals
Sheilagh Lustig
Stacy Miller
Thomas Sullivan
Eric Scholz

June 2023

Dear RKA Families,

Congratulations to us all on completing another successful school year! June is always a whirlwind, and I find it helpful at this time of the year to stop and reflect on our accomplishments and next steps. I hope to provide an overall update on all things RKA from 22-23 and a sneak peek to 23-24.

Academics

- Regents- Our students did very well this year! It is exciting to see that our adoption of heterogeneous grouping and Algebra for All in the Middle School is paying off. Some overall highlights for passing rates include:
 - Living Environment 85%, Chemistry Earth 92%, and Physics 73%
 - ELA 95%
 - Global History 89%, US History 98%
 - Algebra 91%, Geometry 89%, Algebra II 81%
 - LOTE 99%, SLP 95%
- ELA/Math scores will be available for all students in late August/early September. Parents should check their NYCSA account over the summer. We greatly improved upon our intervention services for struggling readers in grades 6-10.
- Advanced Placement- We will receive scores in late July. We are pleased that we will now be offering the African American Studies course in SY 23-24!
- MS Class Placements- The Office of Student Enrollment managed all 6th grade Honors Enrichment decisions this year, and we are ready to work through the waiting list although we must have confirmation that an invited student is not coming before we can make offers from the waiting list. We have extended offers to eligible 7th graders for our Honors Enrichment courses for next year. The remainder of the day students in grades 6,7 and 8 will be grouped heterogeneously.
- 198 middle school and 184 high school students earned a year-long average of 90% or greater placing them on the year-long Principal's List. 274 students earned induction or are returning members of the National Honor Society.
- Congratulations to HS Valedictorian North Ediale and Salutatorian Hannah Chen and MS Valedictorian Maya Sidlo and Salutatorian Brooke Schwartz.
- College acceptances- The Class of 2023 group has earned acceptances in the following colleges and universities: Cornell, Binghamton, Brandeis, Northeastern, West Point, Rensselaer, Syracuse, Stonybrook, Manhattan College, Drexel, Bushnell, Buffalo State, Baruch, Pace, NYU, John Jay, Ithaca, Hunter, New Paltz, Howard, BMCC, Penn State, Lehman, and John Jay. We also have students entering the Air Force, the Navy, trade schools, and the world of work.
 - **Save the Date for the RKA College Fair: October 18, 2023.**



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Athletics

- MS Intramurals were up and running throughout the year which marks significant growth over previous years. With activities 2-3 times per week for the entire year offering a variety of activities, MS students had access to far more fun and fitness.
- 8th Grade Track- For the first time ever, RKA was able to bring competitive track to our MS students.
- PSAL-
 - Our 14 Varsity athletics teams competed year round and represented the good name of RKA throughout the city. The connection between athletics and academics is well established. Student athletes are more focused, more driven, more committed and tend to manage their time better vs. non-athletes. Over 40% of our students in Grades 9-12 play a varsity sport at RKA.
 - In addition, our Varsity teams were very successful:
 - Girls Soccer City undefeated, then city semifinalists
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 - Girls Basketball- qualified for city playoffs
 - Boys Baseball City semifinalists in the elite AA Division
 - Volleyball City “Sweet 16” in the A Division
 - Wrestling- 2 athletes traveled to compete to the NYS Championship, Alexis Elson and Destiny Gibson-Brown won the girls city championship; Alexis also won the Mayor’s Cup.
 - Cross Country- Our Boys placed 7th and Senior Esther Luo placed 5th in the City Championship
 - Track and Field- At the City championships- both the boys and girls teams placed 3rd, Enalyse P took 2nd in 400 M, Ellianne F took 2nd in Javelin, and Adam G took 5th in 1600 M.
 - Girls softball- 7th seed in the A Division, 3 players made it to the Battle of the Boroughs, Miller G is the top ranked pitcher in the A Division.
 - 6 students signed with colleges to play at the collegiate level.



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Activities

- Trips- Our students went on a variety of educational and social/team building trips this year including NY Power Authority, college fairs, Circle Line, Philadelphia, amusement parks, museums and gardens, Music Man and the Lion King on Broadway, and Area 53,
- Dances-It's always fun to socialize and interact with your peers at one of our school dances.
- Homecoming Pep Rally- This all-encompassing event is one of RKA's most treasured HS traditions, and this year we improved upon it by hosting our own formal dance right at RKA!
- Library programs celebrated the diversity in our school and our city!
- RKA Clubs grew exponentially this year. Offering a variety of social, artistic, athletic and interest-based clubs, Tuesday to Thursday, MS and HS students have lots of opportunities to get involved and make friends.

Attitudes

- PBIS- Students' positive behaviors were acknowledged with the use of our PBIS Rewards App. Students used their Tiger Tokens to purchase items and events -even a trip to a Yankee game. Tiger Token parties celebrated the Super Bowl and the World Cup. We are always looking for more incentives so if you or your business have anything you would like to contribute, please reach out to MPrado-romero2@schools.nyc.gov
- Safety has been a major focus throughout the year. Whether it has been trying to keep the traveling corridors safe for students and staff to travel to and from RKA, or mediating situations between students, or helping students understand the consequences of their actions, or helping to reduce students' outside stressors, or meeting with families, or helping our students behave and post appropriately on-line, RKA counselors, administrators, teachers and deans have been working hard throughout the year. That work is not done. Staff is already meeting to further refine and develop some of our practices to better meet the needs of our students in the coming year.
- Restorative Circles have been operating for our middle school students all year. MS students have a circle every 4 days. The Circles are led by trained counseling and teaching staff and focus on social and emotional concerns.
- Student support groups have been meeting with counselors throughout the year.
- Our Triple C Days help build a college-going culture among our HS students.

Attendance

- 94%!! This is by far the highest in District 10. Daily attendance goes hand in hand with academic success. Kudos to the students, parents and teachers for making this happen.



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Advocacy

- The RKA Parents Association has been fundraising for special programs and opportunities for our students such as sewing machines for the Sewing Club, reinforcements for the Tiger Token Trading post, special events and performers, first aid kits for coaches, and Teacher Appreciation.
- Parents are encouraged to attend PA meetings (first Monday evening of each month) and Coffee with the Principal (usually first Friday morning of the month).
- Family volunteers are also needed to help chaperone events and trips throughout the year. Please feel free to answer the call next year!

Building

- The scaffolding has finally been removed!
- We added furniture to 14 classrooms and labs.
- We added door wraps to make the entryways to the gym and Auditorium pop.
- The library was upgraded with furniture and a new accent wall last year. **Both library projects were possible based on a generous contribution from Councilmember Eric Dinowitz' office.** We were also able to paint the HS student entrance in a more vibrant hue.
- Our new stage curtains are being installed as I write this!
- The entire building is receiving an energy efficient lighting upgrade which should be completed in time for September.
- Up next- beautification of the outside areas by student entrances and gymnasium.
- **A HUGE thank you is in order for Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz who presented RKA with a \$250,000 check at graduation on Friday.** What a surprise! I'm looking forward to seeing where we can best use this grant to support our students.

General Updates

- Supply List is attached.
- Immunization info for next year is attached.
- ***New* Bell Schedule is attached (pending DOE approval). The school day for 2023-24 will be 8:20 AM to 2:40 PM** with 45 minute class periods. We expect that things will run much like this year with programs available on the first day of school for all students using our traditional entrances (HS on Independence Ave by 236; 7th and 8th grades under the Arcade on Independence Avenue; and 6th grade through the Auditorium entrance. Breakfast will be available from 7:50-8:10 AM in the cafeteria.



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- **6th Grade orientation is 8/30/23 from 9:00-11:00 AM in the RKA Auditorium**
- **Programs for rising 11th and 12th graders will be available by appointment only on 8/29, 30, and 31.** Students should continue to check their grade Level GC over the summer for updates on getting an appointment.
- **We are already looking into improving our on-line gradebook for parents and students.** We are making our final decision this week and will be in touch as soon as there is any info to share. Until then communication will continue to come from GAMA or direct email to families.
- **First Day of school is September 7, 2023.**

Finally, I want to offer my sincerest congratulations to our Class of 2023 High School Graduates and to our 8th Graders Moving Up to high school! Friday was filled with many wonderful interactions, celebrations, and SMILES! Both ceremonies were heartfelt, emotional and beautiful. It was a wonderful farewell, and we offer our grads and their families our warmest congratulations!

Please be sure to check emails and www.RKA141.org for updates over the summer. You can also use the SORA resource for digital books- under the library tab- to keep on reading throughout the summer. I hope you have a restful and restorative summer!

With Tiger Pride,

Lori O'Mara

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Principal