

David A. Stein

Riverdale Kingsbridge Academy MS/HS 141

Principal's Newsletter



A Message from the Principal

Dear RKA Community,

You may have noticed that we have increased efforts to bring parents into the RKA Community. In addition to updating Jupiter Grades, the teachers have been working hard to keep you current and give you greater opportunities to be involved in your teenager's education. We have been working very hard to deliver informative and interesting curricular updates to families in the form of a newsletter each marking period. Ms. Prince has been emailing them home, and they are also posted at www.rka141.org for easy viewing.

Each grade level or department has also designed a parent engagement event to build on the

success of last year's Student-Led Conferences. So many of you told us that it was wonderful to see your children present or demonstrate their academic growth. If you haven't been invited to one of the events yet; just wait, they are coming soon. We have things like a parent-student Book Club and our Social Studies Awards yet to come.

My thanks to the parents who graciously gave their time to take part in the seventh grade Career Exploration Exhibit on January 28th. Our students got to hear from people in professions as varied as music, aviation maintenance, law enforcement, and computation biology! Each participant shared his or her expertise, discussed how they

became interested in what they do, and what they've done to achieve their goals. And our eighth graders had a great time with parent visitors at the International Feast! Both were very successful events we look forward to repeating in the future.

Sincerely,
Lori O'Mara



Parents attend the 8th Grade International Feast and enjoy dishes from all over the world prepared by the students.

High School Trips

We have some fun trips coming up in the cold months ahead! Students in grades 10 and 11 will have the opportunity to take part in a fun day of snow tubing, while students in grades 8 and 9 will be going downtown to ice skate as we pilot a cross-age mentoring program! And, as we have done in the past thanks to a generous BOQST grant subsidy from our State Senator, Jeffrey Klein, we will be giving our high school students the chance to tour area college campuses. Past visits have included Wesleyan, Temple, Muhlenberg, SUNY Albany, and UConn. It is an eye-opening experience for everyone who takes part, from the ninth and tenth graders who may be visiting a college campus for the first time, to the eleventh graders who will soon be filling out those applications! Permission forms will be sent home with students and will also be found on the school website, RKA141.org.

New SAT

Our assistant principal, Ms. Lustig, recently hosted a well-attended meeting regarding the upcoming "new" SAT, which will be administered free-of-charge to our juniors on March 2nd as part of a citywide pilot program. And our busy high school guidance department, Ms. Kauschinger and Ms. Eisenberg, hosted an expert speaker last week on Financial Aid Night. We're proud of the work we do both in the school and in cooperation with the Riverdale Community Center, to guide our families through every step of the college process. We've already begun proudly displaying those acceptance letters in the hallway!

Upcoming Dates

2/3/2016
6th grade Trip to Statue of Liberty—Rescheduled.

2/3, 4, 10, 11/2016
2:40 PM
AP Tryouts

2/4/2016
Ice Skating/ Cross Age Mentoring Trip—Grades 8 and 9

2/5/2016
7:45 AM
Coffee with the Principal

2/8/2016
No School

2/9/2016
HS Snow Tubing Trip

2/12/2016
Valentines Spirit Day
12th grade Trip
2/15-19/2016
No School

2/23/2016
Distribution of Spring Honor Society Invitations

2/26/2016
Integrated Algebra Regents, regular school day for students NOT taking exam.

3/2/2016
School Day SAT and PSAT

***Save the Date—
Parent Teacher
Conferences
March 10, 2016

Parent Committees

I am pleased to be working closely again this year with our Parents' Association leaders. Please join their efforts by attending their general PA meetings throughout the year (the first Monday evening of most months--see your family calendar) and consider joining the PA Executive Board, an important parent voice at RKA. RKADonate@gmail.com.

Parents are involved in many committees at RKA. Please see below each committee's function, and general meeting times. Please feel free to reach out to me, or to the parents on the committee to offer input for the next regularly-scheduled meeting.

Safety Committee - Meets the first Wednesday morning of each month. This is a joint faculty-parent committee that addresses matters of safety in the school. Angela Rodriguez, Amy Carr, and Elaine Ellison serve on the committee. The committee asks you to please avoid double and triple parking around the school, especially at arrival and dismissal times

School Leadership Team - Meets the third Wednesday afternoon of each month. This joint committee of administration/parents/faculty/staff/students considers long-term planning for the school, which includes researching and authoring the Comprehensive Education Plan. Members on this committee are Aida Cintron, Tracy Shelton, Claire Johnson-Hurry, Kathy Fadda, and Joanne Jurcic.

Parents' Partnership - Parent leaders, selected through the PA, meet with me monthly to address day-to-day issues.



You Make A Difference

We had our first of two "You Make a Difference" events in January. A great big cross-section of students, parents, teachers, and staff were awarded with special certificates, honoring them for being an integral part of the fabric of RKA. Everyone makes a difference to somebody; if you missed nominating that special someone this time, don't worry, you will have another opportunity in the Spring!



Special Accolade

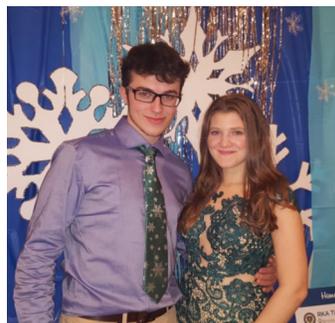
We are very proud of graduating senior, Samantha Rosette. Sam is an excellent student and all-around great kid, and this year she led the Varsity Girls' Soccer team to the city finals. She was named the recipient of the Wingate Medal, PSAL's highest honor for senior athletes in their respective sport. She has also become our first athlete to go on to play at a Division I college! She will soon take part in "National College Signing Day" which we will celebrate right here at the school, with Samantha's family, team, and close friends as she signs on to continue her education and athletic career at the University of Virginia!



Our victorious Faculty Basketball team!

Homecoming

Our High School Homecoming Week was a huge success! We always enjoy welcoming back our recent graduates, and giving our current seniors the opportunity to see old friends and learn a little bit about college life from the perspective of newly-minted college freshmen. The entire school also participated in themed dress-up days, and enjoyed watching the faculty/student basketball game. Sorry, kids...this year, the old timers won! And our Boys' Basketball team came out on top in the annual Homecoming game! Perhaps *the* highlight of a week full of highlights was the high school Winter Formal, where everyone came out in their



Seniors Alex Mayer and Michelle Teja at the Winter Homecoming Formal

Arts & Library

Tryouts were recently held for both the RCC Teen Theater musical, *Once Upon a Mattress*, and upcoming show, "We've Got Talent." Look for the musical in mid-May, and the always-popular talent show in March. And our librarian, Ms. Loving, has just announced the winner of the school-wide stage of the Ezra Jack Keats Bookmaking Competition. It is seventh grader Matilda Sieger, who wrote a story entitled, *A Mid-Autumn Moon*. Matilda moves on to the city-wide competition.



RKA Cheerleaders perform at the Pep Rally!

Tenth graders Samantha Haase and Rachel Ilardi also received recognition for their collaboration, *Make Lemonade*. This work will now be entered into the Diverse Minds Competition.