

# David A. Stein Riverdale Kingsbridge Academy MS/HS 141 Principal's Newsletter



## Important Dates:

**3/26**  
Parent Teacher  
Conferences;  
1-3 & 5:30-8

**3/29**  
Zumba-Spin-O-Rama  
9A-3P,  
Whitehall Club

**3/31**  
SAT Pilot;  
11th Grade

**4/3-4/10**  
Spring Recess-  
No School

**4/14, 15, 16**  
NYS ELA Exam  
Grades 6-8

**4/22, 23, 24**  
NYS Math Exam  
Grades 6-8

## A Message from the Principal

Dear RKA Community,

This week is a very busy one here at RKA! Students will bring home report cards and Learning Environment Surveys on Wednesday, and on Thursday 3/26 we have Parent Teacher Conferences.

This is the survey that parents, staff and students complete which informs

the Department of Education report about our school. I encourage all families to complete this, as a good return rate is always favorably viewed and makes the data more reliable. We really do encourage your thoughtful completion of the survey as we use it here at the school to drive future developments.

The survey itself and some other information is included in the green envelope

that will be attached to the report card. You may do the survey on paper and mail it in or complete it on-line using the code and link included in the envelope. Both versions are confidential.

Please help us by completing the survey when you receive it. If you have questions regarding the survey, please contact Julie Prince parent (and Survey!) Coordinator, JPrince4@schools.nyc.gov.

We look forward to seeing you at the conferences on Thursday. If you cannot make it or were unable to arrange an appointment with a particular teacher, please email that teacher directly to make an appointment during our Tuesday afternoon Parent Engagement time.

Sincerely,  
*Lori O'Mara*



## Middle School Superhero Dance

Last Thursday, 150 middle school students attended the Superhero Dance. Lots of high school students volunteered to help out hosting and painting faces. Many students dressed up in outfits related to the theme as evidenced by the large number of "batpeople" pictured



above. The winners of the student costume contest were 6th graders Brendan Ortiz (as the Joker) and Denise Lim (as Poison Ivy). Special thanks to the Laura Roberts, our coordinator of student activities, for organizing and the Parents' Association for providing the snacks and refreshments.

## College Trips

11th and 9th graders recently went on two separate day trips to select colleges and universities. Ms. Concepcion and the high school guidance counselors organized the events and chaperoned the students along with some of our teachers.

Fifty 11th graders visited Temple University and Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania. "Wow, this is a little world all to itself right in the middle of this big city," commented one student about Temple. The students were also surprised by how different the campuses are from one another.

The 9th graders visited Hunter College, Mercy College, and Iona College. Students really enjoyed Hunter and Iona. Our 9th graders were very impressive to the schools that rarely receive visits from that age-group, and all of the tour guides commented about their behavior and thoughtful questions.

Thank you, parents, for attending the information sessions and supporting the visits with at-home conversations.



# Parent Committees

I am pleased to be working closely again this year with our returning Parents' Association co-presidents, Amy Carr and Taffy Dabby. Taffy, the mother of a 9th grader and Amy, the mother of an 8th grader, are tireless workers, and great supporters and representatives of our school community. 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](mailto: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. Glenda Stricks, Amy Carr, Musa Jafar, and Denise Serebitsky serve on the committee.

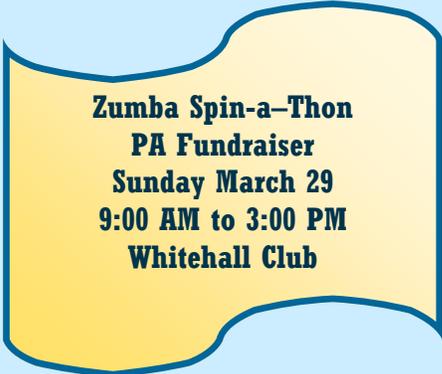
**School Leadership Team** - Meets the third Wednesday afternoon of each month. This joint committee of administration/parents/faculty/staff/students considers long-term planning for the school, which includes researching and authoring the Comprehensive Education Plan. Members on this committee are Aida Cintron, Elaine Ellison, JoAnne Jurcic, Nelson Uwagwe, and Taffy Dabby.

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



## Coffee with the Principal

Come on out for an informal chat (along with coffee and a muffin) at our next Coffee with the Principal on May 8 at 7:45 AM.



## Student Led Conferences

In addition to the November and March conferences, the Department of Education has added an additional evening of Parent/Teacher conferences beginning this year. I am pleased to let you know that our school has decided to use the time to allow our students to present a significant piece of work from one of their classes. We call this endeavor "Student-Led Conferences."

The idea behind "Student-Led Conferences" is that students will present a piece of work from one of their classes to you with other students, parents, and guests in the audience. The audience will participate in the presentation by asking questions and providing feedback to the students presenting. The presentations will take place in individual classrooms at specific times. We will be sending out student-specific invitations to inform you of the particular time and location of your child's presentation a few weeks prior to the event.

For now, we simply ask you to reserve the following evening dates:

- ◆ Middle School - May 6
- ◆ High School - May 7

You should expect to be here for about an hour per child at some point between 5:30 and 8:00 PM.

We cherish this opportunity to see our students working and presenting their work to you. It is imperative that you or a representative from the family be there that night so that students will have an authentic presentation experience. This is one of the ways that working together we can help our students become better prepared for colleges and careers ahead.



Our 2015 RKA Boys Lacrosse Team at their first outing.

## SAT Pilot

The College Board is redesigning their SAT and PSAT/NMSQT exams, and are giving high schools a unique opportunity to "help." RKA is taking part in this program, and giving our 11th graders the opportunity to take a new version of the test on March 31st. While it won't render an "official" score, it will offer valuable feedback to the College Board about their new versions of the tests, and offer our students the chance to practice and become familiar with the test at no cost. In addition, the College board is making an on-line test prep program available to all RKA students in grades 9-12 just because we are participating in the study. More information on that is forthcoming later this spring. Please remember that most students applying for college take the SAT at least two times before December of their senior year. This does not count as one of those times. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your child's HS Guidance Counselor.



Two Bat-tastic 8th graders!