



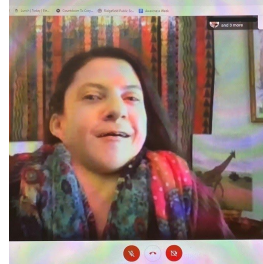
RPS News

Ridgefield Public Schools Newsletter | Ridgefield, CT | February 26, 2021

Learning Tolerance, Empathy, and Awareness at BMES

This month, Barlow Mountain Elementary School held “Awareness Week,” which was a full week of activities designed to engage students with ideas of diversity, culture, tolerance, and empathy. BMES Elementary Supervisor Sarah Weirsman worked with teachers and staff to organize the week. Students and staff read books to start conversations about the differences amongst us. The Ridgefield Library participated by featuring resources from the BMES book list.

The Prospector Theater joined all grade levels virtually. Grade 5 students enjoyed hearing about guest speaker Lauren Bonistalli’s many travels (photo top left). The photos top right (Eloise G.) and middle (Nathan G.) show students “rapping with Munchie” during a “Raptivity Program.” The younger grades loved the Prospector’s Pencil Presentation (photo bottom).



Additional opportunities throughout the week had students in conversations to grow their social-emotional learning and awareness, such as School Psychologist Kiera Russo’s CLUE Presentation and Colleen McGuirk’s Music Presentation. Jennifer Hilderbrand led fifth graders in sharing special morning announcements, and the full community of students and staff will continue to contribute toward an ongoing school community art project under Alison Anderson’s direction called “Growing Awareness.” Ms. Weirsman wants to thank BMES Principal Becky Laus, the BMES PTA, staff, students, and our community partners for their enthusiastic participation and generous support!

CT Teachers and School Personnel to Get Vaccine in March

RPS COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaison Aaron Crook announced that staff will be eligible to be vaccinated starting March 1. He reports many staff already have their appointments!

Calendar

February 26

Early Dismissal/Asynchronous
Professional Development
[Other Asynchronous Days](#)

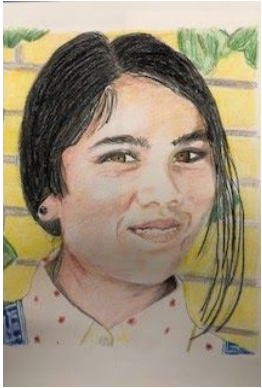
March 8 and 22

BOE Meetings
[Live Stream and Archive](#)

March 15

BOF Public Hearing
[Full RPS Calendar](#)

VPES Memory Project



RPS Art Teacher Alison Anderson reports that the [Memory Project](#) portraits from 2020 finally arrived in Venezuela, Syria, and Russia! The Veterans Park Elementary community created portraits last spring with the Memory Project as a way to show care for children around the world.

Because of COVID, the delivery was very difficult. Please watch [this moving video](#) to see how these portraits spread joy around the world. Members of the VPES community who participated include Susan Alhstrom, Alison Anderson, Margaret Anderson, Kelli Banet, Danielle Bender, Bridget Besgen, Ann Callahan, Joy Craig, Michael Faloon, Kelly Feeny, Kristen Funk, and Kelly Turberfield.

SRMS Student Fights Hunger

Scotts Ridge sixth grader Ruby W. noticed that the Little Pantry at St. Stephens Church was getting cleared out quickly. With the larger food pantries closed for COVID, the Little Pantry was busier than ever. Ruby decided to do something about it and received a Sodexo grant to help create a second Little Pantry in town. Read all about the grant and Ruby's plan to help fight hunger in [this press release](#).



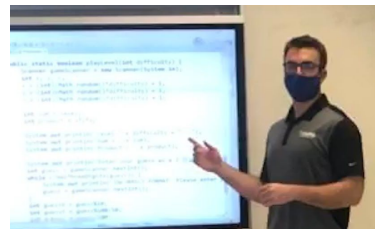
Nature Hero

Ridgefield High School sophomore Jeremy H. won the Connecticut 4th District's [Congressional App Challenge](#) for his app, [Nature Hero](#). Nature Hero helps find public trails and outdoor spaces in Connecticut's 4th District. Within the app, users can find and get directions to local trails, learn about local outdoor history, and use a QR code scanner to unlock and collect 58 digital badges. Jeremy wrote, "I love the outdoors and am passionate about increasing outdoor access for everyone, especially during the pandemic. My goal for Nature Hero is to help people find peace and fun in the outdoors during this turbulent time. By exploring nature, I believe we can become our own heroes. I'm honored to have won the 4th District's Congressional App Challenge and excited that they believe in my project as much as I do."



Tigers Talk Comp Sci + Sports

Host Wes Desantis turns his attention to Ridgefield High School in the last two Tiger Talk Podcasts. Computer Science teacher Steven Anton



(photo right) shares RHS's robust computer science program and how younger students can get started in coding. In Episode 29, Athletic Director Dane Street gives listeners a lively update on RHS sports news and plans.

Keep up with Ridgefield Public Schools News on our website [news page](#) and [calendar](#). We would love to hear from you, [contact us](#) with questions and feedback.

