

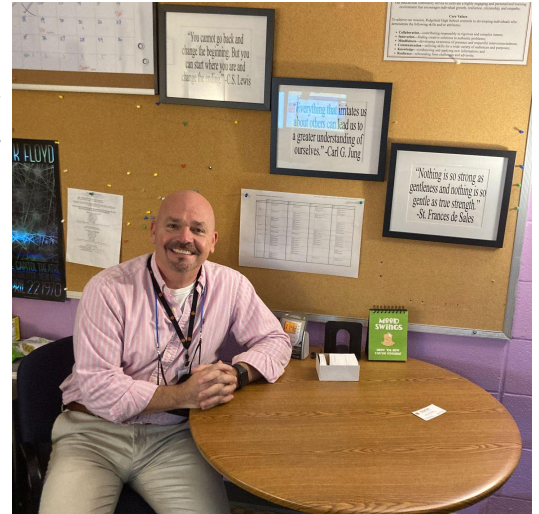


RPS News

Ridgefield Public Schools Newsletter | Ridgefield, CT | October 22, 2021

Meet Terence Houlihan, RHS Head of Counseling... But, Please Don't Use the "G-Word"

Terence (Terry) Houlihan, the new head of the Ridgefield High School Counseling Department, knows that communication is one of the most important parts of his job. Houlihan's observation over his decades of working with adolescents is: "Teens, when you *get* them, you've got them." He wants students to feel understood, supported, challenged academically *and* socially emotionally. "That's how we build resilience," he says. He also wants to partner with parents to help them to "get" their teens and to move from thinking about what they can do "for" students to what they can do "with" their students. Watch Terry's introductory video [here](#). Families can look forward to more videos, workshops, and communication from the Counseling Office. Houlihan thinks the "G-word," "Guidance," which was coined in 1904, should be retired and replaced by "school counselor." "They aren't therapists," says Houlihan. "We have school psychologists and social workers. I see them more as educators who are able to share information with students in a larger but still intimate atmosphere." This year for the first time, counselors will teach small classes to each grade on a quarterly rotation—seniors currently have seminars during this first quarter; freshman, second quarter; juniors, third; sophomores, fourth. The senior seminars are focussed primarily on the post-secondary experience, which for over 90% of RHS seniors is applying to and paying for college but can also be about finding trade school or a first job. Freshman seminars will be about organizational skills, problem-solving, how to read transcripts, and choose classes. Juniors and sophomores will learn about the school's Naviance system, post-secondary choices, and other grade-appropriate topics. Houlihan acknowledges that the pandemic has had a profound effect on students and staff. "Many of us are having a normal reaction to an abnormal situation," he says. "We have never been through this before. The pandemic is this generation's war or Woodstock or nuclear threat." He has great faith in students because of the hardship they have endured in the past 18 months. "We don't know what this generation will be but maybe they will tackle healthcare and wellness—be agents of change because of their experiences during the pandemic."



Calendar

Oct 25, Nov 8 and 22
BOE Meetings
[Link to Live/Recorded](#)

November 2
No School Students
[Professional Development](#)

November 11
No School
Veterans Day

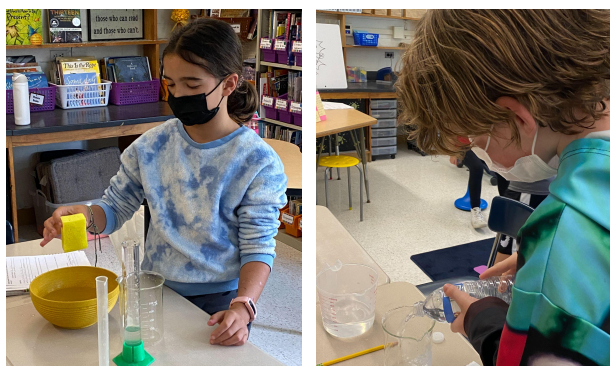
RHS Boys and Girls X-Country Win FCIAC! Read More [Here](#)

Music Student Shines



National Public Radio selected RHS student flutist Lauren Kim for its prestigious [From the Top](#) program. Her wonderful [recording](#) in their Boston studio starts at the 20.30-minute mark. Lauren performs tomorrow at Julliard. (Details for the free recital [here](#). Please check NYC Covid requirements.)

Good Questions at SES



Scotland Elementary fifth graders are busy learning the ins and outs of setting up reliable, controlled science experiments to answer questions. Students completed a variety of experiments where they practiced using standard measuring tools to gather data. Afterward, they analyzed and discussed the data to answer the following questions: If you shake water will the temperature change? Is there a difference in strength between your dominant and non-dominant hand? Does adding fins to a straw rocket affect the distance it will fly? They will be taking the lessons learned from this experience with the scientific method to help them design their own experiment to prove that air is matter.

Volleyball Digs Deep for Cancer



This week, Ridgefield High School JV and Varsity Girls Volleyball team hosted Norwalk for its annual Dig Pink event, a fundraiser held every October to raise money for Breast Cancer. Representatives of [Ann's Place](#) and the Students Against Cancer Club at RHS supported the event and all proceeds went to Ann's Place. The teams raffled over 30 donated baskets and held a pink-themed bake sale raising an unprecedented \$4,600! RHS Volleyball parent Laura Kiefaber was the guest speaker. She spoke of her own journey battling breast cancer and honored a close friend who lost her courageous battle against the disease. Her message raised awareness regarding the importance of screening and staying healthy and positive.

Get Funky!

Get your tickets for the annual Funkraiser on October 29! What exactly is a Funkraiser? All the information that you need to know about getting funky can be found [here](#).



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.

