



The River Vale E-Review

August 30, 2018



Welcome to the 2018-2019 School-Year!

Dear Parents and/or Guardians:

We are excited to welcome you and your children to the 2018-2019 school-year!

This year, one of our most important goals will be to build on the work we did last year around collaboration and communication, by also emphasizing what it means to think critically and creatively, thereby connecting to the "collaborative innovator" and "problem seeker and solution maker" parts to the [*Portrait of a Graduate*](#). Although there is certainly a place for strong traditional practices in our schools, 21st Century Skills represent a vitally important piece of learning that students will need to succeed in the future.

Additionally, we are very excited to implement the first year of a new K-8 mathematics curriculum that was developed with our regional partners in Hillsdale, Montvale, and Woodcliff Lake, along with the Pascack Valley Regional High School District, and which supports the idea that every child can be successful at math by making connections, engaging in meaningful conversations, persevering through complex problems, and interacting flexibly with numbers in a rigorous way. To learn more about this exciting new curriculum, please click [here!](#)

Summer was an exciting time in the district for facilities improvements, including finalizing the RVEF supported garden at Woodside, installing a new PTA supported playground at Roberge, repaving the front parking lot/sidewalk area at Holdrum, and working towards completing a new Media Center at Holdrum, and student collaboratory at Roberge, modeled off of the upgrades done to Woodside last summer!



We also look forward to continuing the important work we have been focusing on regarding student wellness. According to *Education Week*, in a national once-in-a-decade survey of elementary school principals, "student mental health" was the primary concern raised by school leaders in terms of supporting students. This is a telling reminder about the importance of educating the whole child by emphasizing student wellness in concert with our rigorous and innovative academic program.

Finally, please be sure to follow us through a variety of different ways that make the most sense for you, including Twitter ([@rvsupt](#), [@WoodsideES](#), [@RobergeES](#), [@HoldrumMS](#)), www.rivervaleschools.com, Facebook, Principal E-Blasts, Superintendent E-Newsletters, and more!

Of course, please always feel free to reach out to us with any questions or concerns you might have.

Welcome back to the River Vale School District and let's have a great start to the school-year!

Sincerely,
Rory McCourt
Superintendent of Schools



School Security Upgrades

There is no issue more important to the River Vale School District than the safety and security of students and staff. Although we cannot disclose certain confidential information about our school security protocols, we wanted to make you aware of a number of new security upgrades put in place this summer, including:

Security System: A new security system has been installed in each of our schools that will reduce the potential for human error in an emergency, have lock-down announcements projected through both internal and external speakers, thereby ensuring students and staff outside of the building are aware instantly of a lock-down, and have strobe-lights at the district's points of entry, alerting parents who may be visiting the school for some reason when the district is conducting a drill. **If you live in the general vicinity of a school and hear a lock-down called through outside speakers, please do not panic or come to the school - this represents an important component to the district's security protocols and you will hear the system announce that the drill is over.*

Additional Camera / Check-In: As you know, the district maintains a strict single point of entry protocol for our schools. You will see that each school now has an additional camera check/buzz-in at the main entrance after you are admitted through the first door, which will provide main office staff with an added opportunity to confirm who is entering the school at all times. Upgrades like this provide our schools with an extra layer of security, and we sincerely appreciate your cooperation and support in helping to keep our schools safe.

Electronic Surveillance: According to River Vale Board of Education Policy 7441: Electronic Surveillance in the School Buildings and on School Grounds, "The Board of Education authorizes the use of electronic surveillance in school buildings and on school grounds to enhance the safety and security for school district staff, students, community members, and other building occupants and to protect the school district's buildings and grounds. The content produced by the surveillance system under certain circumstances may be considered a student record and if so it will be subject to the Board of Education policy and regulations regarding confidential student records." **So you are aware, for privacy reasons electronic surveillance equipment is not placed in certain areas of the school such as bathrooms/locker rooms. If you have any questions about the district's use of electronic surveillance*

equipment, please feel free to reach out directly to your child/children's building principal.

Ultimately, these kinds of security protocols reinforce our ability to effectively prepare for, manage, and respond to school emergencies, meeting our philosophy of hardening our infrastructure without hardening our culture, which is vitally important to ensuring a safe, but also vibrant and inspiring educational environment for our students.