



PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

Chris Uhle, Principal - Fall Edition 2016-2017

Important Upcoming Dates

November

30 Festa Italiana

December

07 Winter Concert
12 School Board Meeting
14 Parent's Club Meeting
14 Principal Advisory Council
14 Final Exams
15 Final Exams
16 Final Exams
Quarter 2 Ends

Winter Break

Dec 17- Jan 03

January

04 Classes Resume
11 Parent's Club Meeting
16 MLK Day - No School
23 School Board Meeting
24 Rebel Transition Night
28 8th Grade Registration

February

09 Parent's Club Meeting
17 Institute Day - No School
20 President's Day - No School
24 Variety Show
25 Winter Formal Dance
27 School Board Meeting

Welcome to our Hidden Gem (hopefully not hidden much longer...)

"Wow, this place is incredible, it's a hidden gem," said an Apple representative last spring shortly before honoring Ridgewood High School with the Apple Distinguished School Award (see page 5 for full details). That statement could not ring more true and it's time for everyone to see the amazing work occurring in this district. We created this newsletter to help share the great news and events that occur on a daily basis in District 234. You will find in this newsletter celebrations of student work, updates on current academic initiatives, important upcoming dates, and other newsworthy stories. Ridgewood High School is a fantastic institution and it's time for the world to see that!



Please enjoy the first edition of this quarterly newsletter and consider joining the **Principal's Advisory Council** at our next meeting at 7:00 PM on **Wednesday, December 14, 2016** in the Community Room. Most importantly, the RHS family would like to wish you and your families safe and happy holidays.

In Partnership,

Chris Uhle

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Parents Corner/Miscellaneous Links/Important Information

★ Skyward Notifications

- Starting Friday, December 2, 2016 and effective every Friday, parents will receive a weekly progress report for their student with current academic and attendance information.

★ Illinois 5 Essentials Survey

- 5 Essentials is an evidence-based system designed to drive improvement in schools nationwide. The survey is administered to students, teachers, and parents. Parent link: <https://survey.5-essentials.org/illinois/>

Returning Staff - New Positions



Lisa Balata
Division Head of Curriculum &
Instruction



Erik Lasky
STEM Division Head/Math
Teacher



Michael Maiorano
Special Education Division Head



Pam Mundy
Humanities Division Head/English
Teacher

Meet the New Staff



Matthew Bennett
English Department



Derek Cappaert
Science Department/Aide



Kenzo Furukawa
Math Department



Don Gelsomino
Science Department



Brad Hohs
Special Education Teacher -
LIFE Program



Julie Johnson
ESL Teacher



Justyna Kapustka
Social Worker - Achiever's



Kristina Keyes
Math Teacher

Meet the New Staff



Chris Mroz
Achiever's Teacher



Jennifer Penzenik
Special Education Teacher -
LIFE Program



Katie Petty
Student Advocate - Ridgewood



Jack Reid
Social Studies Teacher/Aide



Dan Rosenberg
Special Education Teacher



Kelly Rounce
Special Education Teacher -
LIFE Program



Carl Schorsch
Director of Information Technology



Gretchen Selzer
School Counselor



Kasia Stasiek
Advocate - Achiever's



Katie Veronico
Special Education Teacher



Cristina Zajac
Special Education Teacher

New Programs: Algebra 2 in Business

A2iB Overview:

Contextualized learning has gained popularity in response to the changes in workplace and the need for students to experience authentic learning (Giddens, 1999). Research from the area of situated learning claims to be having influence in mathematics education by instructing in complex social environments where action is grounded in concrete situations in which it occurs, not in abstraction (Anderson, 1996). The objective of Algebra 2 in Business is not simply to improve assessment performance, but to enforce rigor, relevance and relationships around mathematics learning. Rigor is provided beyond textbook learning, to include 21st Century workplace skills through contextualization and cooperative learning.



Student Responses: Being in Intro to Business and Algebra 2 (iBA2) has helped us greatly. In order for our group to succeed we had to learn to work together, listen, and effectively communicate. Since the start of this class our collaborative skills have definitely increased. We all have different skills and abilities and through this process we have learned to identify what each team member brings to the group and allows us to be successful. Our first product was a “Rebels Fight” hooded sweatshirt. We are donating \$2 of every hoodie sold to a Breast Cancer Charity. To date, we sold over 100 hoodies bringing in over \$2000 of revenue and we are still selling! This is just one of at least four products that we are going to sell throughout the year.

- Daniela, Taylor, Amy, and Victor



Student Responses: We enjoy Intro to Business and Algebra 2 because this class is so unique from a regular math class. Since our class is divided into two class periods it doesn't feel long or boring. We are always working on math and how it relates to the real world or making shirts for our small, yet highly successful business. Combining these two classes together works perfectly because what's a successful business without math? Ever since starting this class, we had a goal to raise \$160 profit to pay for a team-building field trip. By applying math principles, we were able to figure out how many shirts we needed to sell in order to pay for our whole trip. We not only were able to sell enough shirts to pay for our field trip, but beat our goal of \$160 profit by 32%. In our class, we have applied a lot of soft skills. These involve communication, responsibility, and problem-solving skills. All these skills have helped create a successful classroom and business.

- Nicole, Ricky, Caroline, and Sebastian

New Programs: R-Gen

R-Gen Overview:

In short, R-Gen is a pilot experience designed around student needs, interests, strengths, and career focus. [This video](#) was created in collaboration with our Superintendent and members of R-Gen and presented to state and national audiences. To learn more about the R-Gen program please visit rhsrgen.weebly.com and follow their journey on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).

Apple Distinguished School

Ridgewood High School was recently recognized as an Apple Distinguished School. The honor recognizes outstanding schools and programs worldwide for innovation, leadership, and educational excellence. See below.



October 7, 2016

Dr. Jennifer Kelsall
Superintendent
Ridgewood High School
7500 West Montrose Avenue
Norridge, IL 60706

Dear Dr. Kelsall,

It's a pleasure to inform you that Ridgewood High School has been selected as an Apple Distinguished School for 2016–2018, a two-year designation. Congratulations on being recognized as an exemplary learning environment for innovation, leadership, and educational excellence.

The administration and faculty at Ridgewood High School have shown that they demonstrate the Five Best Practices of an Apple Distinguished School: visionary leadership, innovative learning and teaching, ongoing professional learning, compelling evidence of success, and a flexible learning environment.

Apple has engaged with educators for over 30 years to explore and enhance the experience of teaching and learning. Our education mission is to provide a learning environment that supports the way students live and how they want to learn. We applaud schools such as yours that advance this mission, ensuring that all students are prepared for future success in work and life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Emilio Umeoka", is located below the word "Sincerely,".

Emilio Umeoka
Vice President, Apple Education

cc: Mr. Kevin Konsler, Mr. Chris Uhle

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Students of the Quarter

Sky Aguilar, Dimitris Anastopoulos, Amber Applehans, Taylor Beninati, Paulina Buczynska, Daniela Campana, Angie Chrisanthou, James Clark, Sabrina D'Alessandro, Lizzie Delgado, Pasquale DiGiulio, Amanda Dynak, Aalia Galati, Riana Go, Daniela Gomez, Diana Hrushka, Salam Hussein, Aulona Hyseni, Marisa Iannotta, Alexandra Kidd, Karolina Kisiel, Angelica Limonciello, Arthur Lopez-Rodriquez, Alberto Lucero-Jaidar, Juan Luis, Aoife Lyons, Angela Magnelli, Audrey Majer, Vince Noe, Karen Perez, Miranda Randal, Anahi Robles, Sebastian Roman, Heba Rubi, Sela Scullo, Natalie Tomasik, Mia Triantafillou, Aneta Zalinska, Ariana Zamora



New Website Coming Soon!

Ridgewood High School has partnered with American Eagle Web Design to build an innovative and easy to navigate website. Currently, we are in the phase 2 or the design phase and expect a full launch in four to six months. More information to follow on this exciting and much needed project!

Principal Advisory Council

We had a very successful first meeting on November 16th and laid the foundation for many future successful meetings. The [notes](#) from last week's meeting are accessible here

<http://www.ridgenet.org/District/Department/106-Principal/4414-Principal-Advisory-Council.html>. Please join us at next month's meeting on Wednesday, December 14, 2016 at 7:00 PM in the library.

Department Highlights

Physical Education

The P.E. staff has sent out a survey to Freshmen, Sophomores, and Juniors to get feedback about physical education. We received roughly 40% of our surveys back and we were able to gather a lot of valuable information from the students. As we continue to adapt and change, we continue to seek out ways to get our students moving in the moderate to vigorous fitness zones in order to increase their heart strength. We are excited to continue to develop new programs with the insight of your students.

Italian

We are gearing up for Festa Italiana! The Italian IV kids just researched and wrote biographies for famous Italians. They are now researching Italian products and will create commercials for them. Italian III is researching Italian monuments. They will write papers and prepare 3-D versions of them. AP finished its fundraising video to get Batali to come. We just posted on Facebook and received over 5K views in less than 24 hours. We sent the video to the Ellen Show. The INHS kids wrote a project for the 5th grade students at Union Ridge. They will teach them next week and their work will be displayed at the Festa as well.

Spanish

In AP Spanish, students were using their Spanish to analyze different types of children's stories and literature. They are focusing on books involving Disney princesses vs. books based on real-life anti-princesses (think Frida Kahlo) and their effects on self-esteem and child formation. Using both written and podcast sources, they are synthesizing information and writing presentational persuasive essays and have become so engrossed in the project that they have asked for more time to revise and formulate their opinions.

Band and Art

The 108 members of the RHS band performed at all 3 partner schools on Tuesday, October 18, 2016 while promoting RHS sports and activities as well as the upcoming open house here at Ridgewood. 61 band members have confirmed that they will be representing RHS in a performance in March for an international audience at the Walt Disney World complex in Orlando, FL.

We hosted Dr. Thomas Bough, professor of music at Northern Illinois University, in to work with the Low Brass section of the band, and also to do a clinic session with the Symphonic Band, on Tuesday, November 22, 2016.

Most recently, Ridgewood hosted Fine Arts week and here are some highlights:

We had former student Mike Dicillo (professional composer) in to present to students on Friday, November 11, 2016. It was standing room only in the music lab with over 40 students attending each session. We took 57 students to the Chicago Symphony and Art Institute as part of Fine Arts Week. We also held an art competition for staff, administration, alumni, and parents. There were some great entries and they were all beautiful works of art.

Business

The Fashion Marketing classes were working on organizing their class projects and are working on fundraising projects to help pay for their photoshoot project. One class is designing t-shirts and the other class is organizing a coffee and hot chocolate sale for the Homecoming Football games. The students now are editing the pictures they took in hopes of soon having them displayed in the hallways around the school.

Business and Algebra 2 successfully fundraised for their field trip to the Outdoor Education Facility. The students worked together through different obstacles including a high ropes cross and engaged in a paintballing activity.

Department Highlights (Continued)

Humanities Update Highlights

This fall English 2 students wrapped up the "Problem You Want to Solve" unit by emailing someone with the authority and power to affect change related to their issue. From a list of their government representatives, students emailed First Lady Michelle Obama, President Barack Obama, Governor Bruce Rauner, Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Presidential Candidate Donald Trump, State Representative Robert Martwick, and many others. With the help of the librarian, Jennette Gonzalez, students in small groups then selected books to read that relate to their chosen issue. They are currently working in Reader's Workshop groups that focus on various reading skills, reading stamina, and collaborative analysis (Ms. Molnar and Ms. Perez).



Our Veterans Day poster contest was a success, with close to 100 entries! Thank you to our judges, Senator John Mulroe, Norridge Police Commissioner Frank Avino, and Principal Chris Uhle.

- 1st Place: The Life Program **AND** Viktoria Stefanic
- 2nd Place: Nicole Knapik
- 3rd Place: Alex Valentin

Our juniors also wrote thank you letters to Veterans that were sent off. (Ms. Timothy)
Students in ESL classes also learned about Veterans Day and participated in the poster contest.