



Rye City School District

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Superintendent of Schools

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September 3, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians:

It has been a busy summer in the Rye City School District. In the past two months, administrators, faculty and other school personnel have worked diligently to prepare for the opening of the 2015-2016 school year. We are happy to be back and are looking forward to welcoming your children as we all prepare for a successful year.

Curriculum Update

Our work in the school year ahead will continue to focus on creating productive work environments for all students. The Literacy Initiative is taking root at the elementary schools and launches at the Middle School. Kindergarten moves to a full-day program and adds art and music classes to its curriculum. The Middle School expands its world language offerings in Spanish and American Sign Language. The High School's continued support for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) is evident in several ways, including an additional section of the Project Lead the Way engineering curriculum and a new course in 3D Design and Architecture.

School Facilities Upgrade

The facilities team has been busy throughout the District, painting, waxing, repairing, and freshening up our buildings both inside and out in preparation for the school year. The Band Room at the Middle and High School received a complete facelift and all new furniture, cabinetry, lighting and blinds over the summer, thanks to the generosity of the Rye Fund for Education and the RHS and RMS Parent Organizations. Look for the "before" and "after" photos in this month's *Superintendent's Bulletin*. Work on the courtyard adjacent to the new science wing – done in conjunction with the Rye Fund for Education - is well underway and the space will be complete by the end of September. We hope you will join us the evening of Thursday, October 8th for the official opening of the courtyard. More information will be forthcoming shortly.

Technology

I hope you will notice an improvement in both reliability and connectivity of the District's Internet this year. The District's technology consultants have been hard at work over the summer installing a new security firewall, updating our facilities' cabling and strengthening Wi-Fi signals in all of our buildings. The PowerSchool Parent Portal is up and operational. In addition, the Middle School received brand new desktop computers over the summer, as did the High School and elementary school lab rooms. Finally, the District has migrated to the Google email system, and all faculty and staff may now be reached by the email convention lastname.firstname@ryeschools.org

Personnel Matters

Two administrative staff changes are in effect as we begin the new school year. This year we welcome Mr. Rod Mergardt as Interim Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics. Ms. Julia Chung, who is already familiar to many of you in the District, assumes the role of Interim Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services. Additionally, we take great pride in welcoming approximately 40 new faculty and staff members to the Rye school community. I continue to be proud of our efforts to recruit talented faculty and staff who will continue to strengthen the work of our schools for years to come.

Enrollment Information

For the first time after many years of steady increases, our enrollment this year is virtually the same as last year. This year we welcome 217 kindergarten students, bringing our total student population to 3,341 students.

There is always a great sense of excitement and opportunity as we embark on a new school year. Please continue to visit our website, www.ryeschools.org, for school news and events. I also encourage you to follow me on Twitter @DrFrankAlvarez. I hope you and your family have a terrific fall, and I look forward to seeing you at school events as the year unfolds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Alvarez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "z".

Frank Alvarez
Superintendent