

# Superintendent's Update

May 2024

Dear Rye Neck Families,

## What is the Capital Proposal in Proposition II?


Later this month, on Tuesday, May 21st, in the MS/HS Community Room, our community has the opportunity to vote on *three* different items rather than the usual two. In addition to the 2024-25 district operating budget (Proposition I) and Board of Education trustee vote, the community will have the opportunity to vote on

“Proposition II” to determine whether we can use our Capital Reserve Fund to address building and campus improvements.



*What is Proposition II?* At our September Board of Education meeting LAN Associates, our district architects, presented their findings after our 2022 Building Condition Survey, an assessment required of all districts by NY State. LAN pointed out certain elements of the building condition survey and identified them in order of priority. To address maintenance, safety, and present and future improvements to our campus facilities we are presenting our community with an opportunity for input. Proposition II makes use of \$2.7 million in the Capital Reserve Fund voters approved in 2022. These are items included in Proposition II:

- Maintenance and repair of masonry, new pavement, and fencing replacement at both Daniel Warren and F.E. Bellows. These buildings are a century old and require this maintenance work. The envelope work will ensure protection of the elementary schools against weather elements such as rain, wind, snow, and extreme temperatures, while new pavement and fencing will enhance the safety of both of these sites.
- Replace the lower roof and skylights at the high school gymnasium, specifically the section over the Fitness Center. This was the only section not included in the previous roof project and will complete the improvements of roofs across the district.
- An assessment of the infrastructure of Daniel Warren and F.E. Bellows for HVAC improvements. Neither has the electrical capacity, for example, for us to air condition classrooms. Proposition II would determine the scope of work necessary to make changes to both elementary schools.

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- A study to evaluate the potential redesign of our MS/HS athletic fields. Although many think first about turf vs. grass, this study would encompass the entire outdoor facilities design and field positions as a whole to make the most effective use of our acreage.
  - An exploration of a possible district-wide energy performance contract. The US Department of Energy has a succinct definition of what this means: “Energy Savings Performance Contracting is a budget-neutral approach to make building improvements that reduce energy and water use and increase operational efficiency. By partnering with an energy service company, a facility owner can use an ESPC to pay for today's facility upgrades with tomorrow's energy savings—without tapping into capital budgets.”

*Why is the Proposition II vote separate from the budget vote?* We are not asking our community for any money and this does not affect our proposed 2024-25 operating budget. Proposition II makes use of the Capital Reserve Fund approved by our voters in 2022 specifically for these types of projects. Although use of the Capital Reserve Fund does not require any further levying of taxes, voter authorization is required to use the fund for project work.

Our next final budget presentation is on May 8th at 9:00 AM at Daniel Warren. In addition, all budget information is available by clicking [Budget 2024-2025](#) under the [“Our District”](#) tab on our website.

## **Rye Neck Strategic Plan**


Last month I mentioned the trilogy written by Kobi Yamada and illustrated by Mae Besom, starting with *What Do You Do With An Idea?* Our Strategic Planner, Judy Wilson had recommended the books based on our goals. Although they are “children's books”, I enjoy reading anything from Beatrix Potter to Harry Potter. The significance, of course, is the author's ability to boil a point down to an easily understandable language. *What Do You Do With A Problem?* is the second book.

The inspirational messages in this book can be encapsulated in a few quotes: “The more I worried, the bigger my problem became” until I “tackled my problem” and found that “my problem wasn't what I thought it was”. Ultimately, “my problem held an opportunity”. Fear of the unknown, or fear of things we don't understand lead us to perseveration on the small and an inability to think big. As Rye Neck prepares for the July 1 enactment of our [Strategic Plan Goals](#) throughout the spring, particularly in a season where graduate speeches often mention challenges, we will be encouraging our students, staff, and community to look toward the opportunity hidden within each challenge.

## **NY State 3-8 Math Assessments**

Our grades 3 through 8 New York State English Mathematics assessments are occurring this week. All testing is done during the first two or three periods of the day in both buildings and the tests are untimed: as long as students are productively working, they may keep working. Beginning this spring, grades 5-8 assessments will be computer-based while we are still using traditional paper and pencil tests for grade 3 and 4.

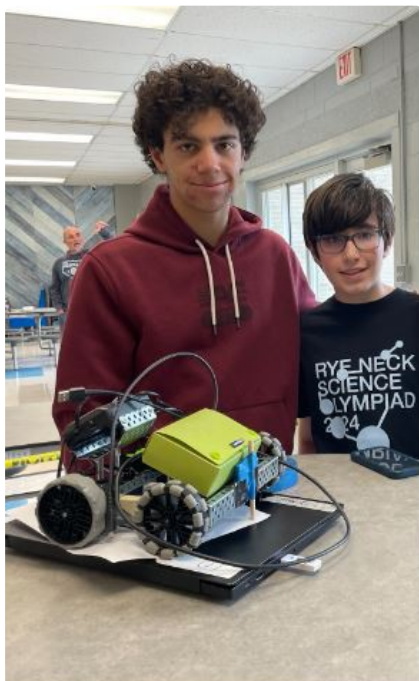
These assessments gauge how well districts do as a whole regarding instruction on NY State standards and assist in directing measures to improve students' mastery of the standards. The data received from the state assessments is analyzed to meet students' needs and inform instruction to improve their skills. *While students are not penalized for not taking the tests, Rye Neck is.* Any district that does not meet the minimum 95% participation rate for each grade level



and test will have a negative rating on the New York State accountability reports in the *participation* category. Additionally, non-tested students negatively affect Rye Neck's *proficiency* category on the New York State accountability reports.

## Student Spotlight

In each monthly message, we spotlight high school students who are doing interesting things in or out of school. Based on the relationships our staff members forge with their students and their knowledge of what's going on in their lives, our teachers suggest students for consideration. Mary Lanza, our Director of Technology and Communications, then interviews the students to "get their story." Here are the students for May. **To read about the students, click on the name below their picture.**



[ALEX HULL and NOAH SIEGEL](#)



[BRAM RAFTERY](#)

## Staff Spotlight

We also like to highlight teachers and other staff members each month. Each shares personal reflections on how they got into education, memories from their time as students, and their favorite activities outside of school. Here are our May spotlights: **To read about a staff member, click on the name below their picture.**



**GRETCHEN GORSKY**

Daniel Warren



**SARA McELROY**

F.E. Bellows



**PETER WILSON**

Middle School

**THANK  
YOU  
FOR  
MAKING  
A  
DIFFERENCE  
EVERY  
DAY.**



**SUE HANNON**

High School


*upcoming*

# EVENTS

**Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week**

May 6th - May 10th

**Pye Neck School Foundation Kickoff Event**



Monday, May 6th  
6:30 - 8:30 PM  
25 North Restaurant

**HS AP Exams**

Monday, May 6th - Friday, May 17th

**Grades 3-8 NYS Math Exam**

Tuesday, May 7th and Wednesday, May 8th

**Board of Education Planning Session/Final Budget Presentation**

Wednesday, May 8

9:00 AM

Daniel Warren Auditorium

**PTSA/DW Book Fair**

Wednesday, May 8th

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Daniel Warren Gym

**Book Fair & Activity Night**

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**PTSA/DW Book Fair**

Thursday, May 9th

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Daniel Warren Gym

**PTSA General Membership Meeting**

Thursday, May 9th

7:00 PM

MS/HS Community Room

**5th Grade - NYS Science Exam**

Tuesday, May 14th

**K-5 Art Show**

Tuesday, May 14th

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM & 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Wednesday, May 15th

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM & 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Thursday, May 16th

8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

F.E. Bellows

**RNIC Meeting**

Thursday, May 16th

9:15 AM

F.E. Bellows Annex





**Board of Education Candidates' Forum**

Thursday, May 16th

6:00 PM

MS/HS Performing Arts Center

**2nd Grade Concert**

Friday, May 17th

9:15 AM

Daniel Warren

**DEI Community Event**

Friday, May 17th

7:30 PM

F.E. Bellows Courtyard

**RNIC Family Picnic**

Saturday, May 18th

Harbor Island

**ESS Professional Development for 6th - 12th Gr. Parents (Spanish-Speaking Presentation)**

Monday, May 20th

10:00 AM - *(Topic and location will be posted on website closer to the event)*

**ESS Professional Development for K-5 Parents**

Monday, May 20th

6:00 PM - *(Topic and location will be posted on website closer to the event)*

**BUDGET VOTE & TRUSTEE ELECTION**

Tuesday, May 21st

7:00 AM - 9:00 PM

MS/HS Community Room

**4th & 5th Grade Strings Concert**

Tuesday, May 21st

5:30 PM

MS/HS Performing Arts Center

**4th & 5th Grade Band Concert**

Tuesday, May 21st

6:30 PM

MS/HS Performing Arts Center

**Board of Education Meeting**

Wednesday, May 22nd

9:00 AM

MS/HS Community Room

**PTSA/FEB Book Fair**



9:00 AM - 3:00 PM & 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

F.E. Bellows Auditorium

**MS Concert**

Wednesday, May 22nd

6:00 PM

MS/HS Performing Arts Center

**HS Awards Ceremony**

Thursday, May 23rd

8:30 AM

MS/HS Performing Arts Center

**PTSA/FEB Book Fair**

Thursday, May 23rd

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

F.E. Bellows Auditorium

**JR/SR Prom**

Thursday, May 23rd

5:00 PM

Greentree Country Club

**DEI Community Event - RAIN DATE**

Thursday, May 23rd

7:30 PM

F.E. BELLows Courtyard

**NO SCHOOL - GIVE BACK DAY**

Friday, May 24th

**NO SCHOOL - MEMORIAL DAY**

Monday, May 27th

**PTSA/MS Book Fair**

Wednesday, May 29th & Thursday, May 30th

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

MS/HS Dining Hall

**8th Grade Dance**

Friday, May 31st

6:00 PM

MS/HS Dining Hall

**Rye Neck Schools**

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Rye Neck Schools

