FROM THE DESK OF
Phyllis Alpaugh

SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

Rockaway Borough Schools
January 2020

And the Bidding Begins...

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RAMS CORNER
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Happy New Year and Welcome to 2020

A very Happy New Year to you all and welcome back to school. I hope that you all enjoyed the holidays and are looking forward to the year ahead.

So far the 2019-20 school year has been quite eventful in the Borough. After an initial defeat, our proposed district referendum was passed in September providing us the funding to address much needed updates and additions to our facilities and of course, to continue upgrading security measures throughout our entire campus. Please continue to follow our progress not only with my monthly updates in this newsletter, but also on our district website, and do not hesitate to reach out to myself or our business administrator, Mr. Bill Stepka if you have any relevant questions or concerns.

Academically, we continue to move forward with updates to our curriculum especially in regards to the integration of technology through our continued 1:1 initiative, the introduction of new course work as well as the creation of relevant instructional spaces such as the configuration of our new Media Lab at Thomas Jefferson. We also have focused on supporting both students and staff through the infusion of Social Emotional Learning in all phases of academics and increased interventions and assistance for all students.

In the next few months, members of the administrative team will also be looking at our current student information

system as well as our current district assessments and benchmarks to see if any changes are needed to best support our students and their academic progress.

Phyllis Alpaugh
Superintendent of Schools

This issue's FEATURED ARTICLE...
Coding and Its Importance in Today's Curriculum

When we talk about computer science in schools today, the word "coding" is one that comes up frequently in the conversation, probably because it is an important skill for today's youth. Essentially, coding is the language used to instruct computers and the basic literacy in today's digital age. It is a way for students to work with and understand the technology around them as well as prepare them for the future. Coding helps equip pupils with skills they need for the world of work as well as helps foster communication, problem solving skills, creativity, math, language and even, confidence. And like any new language, it is important to learn its basics at a young age.

But why is coding so important in today's curriculum? Here are a few reasons why.

Coding skills are in high demand. The tech industry is always in need of new workers, and not just coders and computer science majors. There are a plethora of jobs for graphic designers, software developers, computer engineers, linguists, mathematicians and more. Besides being plentiful, tech jobs are also lucrative. Working in any of these fields and being able to code, gives students a blueprint for a stable and secure career path and future.

Coding at the elementary level also better prepares students for success in high school, college and or the workplace. Once students are fluent in the type of thinking required to break down and solve coding problems, the transition to other more advanced coding languages is easier laying the foundation for other future course work and skill sets. Exposure in the early years is also probably one of the most important ways to shrink the gender gap in STEAM/technical areas and encourage girls to become interested in technology.

What is coding?
Click here for a simple explanation

Most importantly, however, coding is a lifelong skill. Even if someone wants to pursue a career outside of the computer science field, their acquired coding skills will prove useful in almost any other chosen profession as it essential in promoting problem solving, but also individual creativity.

In Rockaway Borough, we recognize the importance of coding and the problem solving skills it fosters for all students. As a result, our curriculum in both schools reflect our commitment to integrating coding skills and practice into instruction both through designated computer and technology classes as well as in other relevant areas starting in the lower elementary grades. To support students and to encourage their acquisition of coding skills, the district will be sponsoring a "Night of Coding" for middle school students in fourth through sixth grades along with their parents on Thursday evening January 30th at Thomas Jefferson in the gymnasium. For more information, access the relevant flyer posted under the above "Mark Your Calendar" button.

Read more about the importance of coding for today's students

ROCKAWAY BOROUGH SCHOOLS www.rockboro.org

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