

RIDER REPORT

SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

This month we are very excited to take another step forward in returning our students back to in-person learning.

After a close review of the new interim guidance released by the Department of Health on April 9th, we determined our current spacing and scheduling allow us to welcome back our Grade 7 students for four days of in-person instruction beginning May 3rd.

Throughout this year and as we look ahead to the fall, we remain committed to returning as many of our students back to in-person learning as possible. The data around positive cases in schools support that the classroom is a safe place for our children. This is positive news for schools as is the additional one-time funding being allocated to Ichabod Crane under the federal stimulus relief acts.

These funds will help us with reopening plans as we reconvene our Task Force and our four sub-committees (Health & Safety, Academics, Mental Health & Social-Emotional Well-Being and Athletics & Operations) to begin developing our plan for the 2021-2022 school year. Similar to last summer, parent input will be key to this process and we will be sharing information and providing opportunities for all stakeholders to have their voices heard.

The new federal stimulus funds present substantial opportunities for our students and staff. These funds include a robust summer school program, summer enrichment opportunities, advancing our technology plan, professional development for faculty around literacy and new student-centered curriculum materials. Our goal is to use this injection of funding to enhance opportunities for students and teachers while we plan for a return to in-person learning.

Although there are hurdles still ahead, I am comforted in the knowledge that as a District we are now stronger, smarter and more resilient. As we plan for the future, holding on to new ideas and innovations is essential if we are to realize the silver lining from the experiences and lessons of the last 14 months.



Ms. Guntlow



Ichabod Crane has always been forward thinking in terms of conservation, whether of the natural areas that surround the campus or the smart use of energy. Several years ago the district tested solar panels on its maintenance building with much success.

Climate Smart Schools

Ichabod Crane has begun implementation stages of a new \$4.5M Energy Performance Contract (EPC) to reduce energy costs and expand sustainability.

The plan, which is Zero Cost to taxpayers, will be covered by NYS building aid and realized energy savings. The District expects to save \$268,000 per year once the project is completed.

Elements of the project include a ground-mounted solar panel system, new LED lighting, condensing hot water boilers at the Middle and High schools, window replacement and the replacement of classroom UV systems with more efficient units.

Ichabod Crane has been a community leader in adopting energy conserving technologies district wide for more than a generation, according to Steven Marotta, director of Facilities and Operationst.

"Back when the Middle School was built in 1972, prior to the oil embargo in 1974, we heated electrically. And when I arrived in 1995 as electric prices escalated, we were using load shedding as a way to save energy and reduce demand charges."

Back then, the energy conversion meant going from electric to fossil fuels for savings, now schools are looking toward the sun.

"We did a test run of PV solar on the maintenance building, and with our new solar array we may be able to offset our entire electric needs. It's a desirable thing to be more green while reducing the cost of non-educational operations," he said.

And when it comes to energy savings, the district continues to be a leader in the community with respect to the efficiency of its transportation fleet.

We also continue to reduce our carbon footprint by converting more of our diesel vehicles in our transportation fleet to gasoline as they age out of usefulness. This provides cost benefits as well as the flexibility to convert vehicles to propane to further lower emissions. This year we're asking for voter approval for four new buses that will be converted from diesel to gas. There are approximately 7-9 routes covered by diesel buses that are potentially a fit for replacement under the current e-bus technology, if a viable funding source becomes available, as the technology further evolves.

Virtual Tours

Last month, District Superintendent Suzanne Guntlow and Sarah Plitnick from Turner Construction took viewers on a brief walkthrough of the current construction areas at the High School and Middle school.

Highlights of the virtual tour include the High School science corridor, exterior prep work for the new technology addition and the final touches on the 300-Pod at the Middle School. [Click here for Capital Project highlights.](#)



Photographs from the top: Ms. Guntlow tours the 300-pod at the Middle School and exterior work begins on the HS technology addition.

