

# RIDER REPORT

## SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

While this has been a challenging year for school families, students and educators alike, it still seems like it flew by.

We were all nervous about the opening of the 20-21 school year. Guidance from New York State on reopening was extensive, and our



Ms. Guntlow

planning efforts were intense. Now that we are in June, I have been reflecting on what made it all work. There is not one single answer, but I do feel that the foundation for reopening our schools and keeping them open was a collaboration between the District and our families unlike any I have ever seen. By necessity, we relied heavily on each other this year to ensure instruction continued while also making sure students and staff stayed healthy. We faced obstacles along the way but together we have reached the finish line for now.

I say "for now" because even though this year is ending, the district has been hard at work planning for the 2021-2022 school year. We sent an initial fall reopening survey to all families last month - [the results of which can be seen here](#) - and your feedback was encouraging. The majority of those who took it wish for students to return for full in-person instruction next year, feel safe about them doing so and have been pleased with district communications. Circumstances are improving and I am optimistic about returning to some form of a more traditional school year in the fall, but NYS schools will continue to be subject to state guidelines. To have the most successful 21-22 year possible, schools will need updated state guidance that gives them more freedom to fully reopen. You have a chance to join us in expressing that need for updated guidance at a [Virtual Regional School Community Advocacy Forum](#) on June 2. I strongly encourage families who can make it to attend.

While this is the last Rider Report of the school year, it is not the last you will hear from me until next year. I will reach out over the summer with more opportunities to give your Fall 2021 planning feedback and to let you know what any additional state guidance means for Ichabod.

Thank you for all you have done during another memorable, if somewhat untraditional, school year.

## Education Without Walls

*School community worked together in new and innovative ways to make remote, hybrid learning a success*

As we close out a year like no other, Ichabod Crane wishes to spotlight the monumental effort put forth by our technology committees for guiding us through a pivotal year where we essentially had to build a network of classrooms without walls.

Our districtwide technology committee has helped steer us through these difficult times, deciding what hardware we needed and what network adjustments would be required to implement our goals.

Our instructional tech committee, headed by Gregory Miller and Kara Abatto, who are also teacher leaders, were instrumental in providing ongoing support to their colleagues and bringing forward new ideas and the know-how. They often run professional development sessions for their colleagues during the academic year, and especially over the summer through our Tech Tuesday offerings for faculty.

Our Network Systems Engineers Len Bates and Dwight Granthave been instrumental in making sure all of our students and staff had the devices they needed and the critical internet access necessary to meet the needs of hybrid learning. They have kept the school network up and running as well as help ensure the technology committees had what they needed to provide a wide network of ongoing tech support throughout the school community.



Ms. Abatto works with a student on a school device.

"We had never used fully digital platforms but we were able to learn as we went, and we used that information within See-Saw and Google Classroom to build a kind of one-stop place for teachers, students and parents to work and communicate," said Ms. Abatto.

"When this first happened in the spring of last year we all came together to see where our needs were, what we could do to make the school experience as seamless and as close to normal as possible. We really had to think out of the box."

"We opened school with grades 6-12 fully remote," explained Mr. Miller. "This allowed teachers to practice the remote teaching training received. This made all the difference. Both teachers and students felt more comfortable with what remote learning would look like. Removing this uncertainty helped to ease a lot of minds and afforded us the opportunity to start building connections with students on the other side of a computer screen."

## Summer Enrichment offered to ICCS students

We are excited to announce the first season of a free summer enrichment program for current ICC students in grades 2-11 to encourage them to explore their love of learning after the school-year ends.

The week-long programs for elementary and middle school-aged students will be arts and humanities focused and will combine content areas to explore literature, social studies, visual arts, and natural sciences.

The program for students in grades 8-11 (next year's high school students) will be based on the works of William Shakespeare.



Tom Lee is the artistic director of artsVOYAGE at Spencertown Academy, works with a student in Mrs. Vecellio's class..

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Lucas Christensen explains the program, developed by storyteller Tom Lee, uses a multi-modal approach to exploring disciplines.

"In the botany program, students will forage for plants and learn not only about the science and how artwork depicts plant life, but also how that plant life inspired artists."

A program for high schoolers on the works of William Shakespeare will engage them in both the art and history of the Bard. For more information, [visit our website](#).