



# RIDGEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Ridgewood School Community,

This weekend, all school districts in New Jersey were notified by the Department of Education, with a follow-up letter from the State Director of Emergency Management, that as per Executive Order No. 107, all high school graduations and other ceremonies, promotions, and events must be conducted virtually until the restrictions outlined in the order have been lifted. According to the directives we received on the evening of Friday, May 8, in-person activities are not permitted. The State Director of Emergency Management, Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, stated, "In light of the components of Executive Order No. 107, and in the best interest of the health and safety of the public, in-person ceremonies, including graduations, all parades, including "wave parades," that invite people to gather at a certain location, proms, and other similar celebrations violate the enumerated conditions of the order, and should, therefore, be canceled or postponed until such time as these restrictions are lifted. Until such time, virtual celebrations and other remote forms of recognition should take the place of any in-person or public ceremonies." Consequently, our plan for the Ridgewood High School graduation video, which involved individual students walking in front of RHS to be filmed for our virtual graduation video, is canceled. This is extremely disappointing, and I know how difficult this news will be for our seniors and their families. Our school administrators will do whatever they can within these rules to make our graduation and promotion ceremonies as special as possible under these unfortunate circumstances.

While we are diligently planning for alternatives to our end-of-year activities and proceeding with meaningful remote instruction, it is important that you know we are also actively planning for the 2020-2021 school year. Five working groups have been established to develop plans for a regular opening, a remote learning opening, or a hybrid instructional program; implementation will be dependent on public health directives provided at that time. The underlying premise of each plan will be the health and safety of our students and staff.

The working groups are as follows:

**Instruction and Operations:** This group has a two-fold focus. The first focus is on academics and the social and emotional wellbeing of our students when they return to school in the fall, regardless of what type of instruction we will be permitted to implement. Second, this group will also plan for the operations side, determining the best way to manage the safe and organized transition back to school in the fall.

**Facilities:** This group will ensure that district and school assets are and will remain safe for students and staff.

**Technology:** This group will ensure that our technology infrastructure and assets support academics and administration.

**Wellness:** This group will focus on what needs to be done to keep staff and students safe and healthy, both physically and mentally.

**Governance:** This group will identify which group will work on issues that touch multiple areas, fostering an understanding of responsibilities and accountability. Additionally, this group will be responsible for the messaging that goes out from the district to our parents and students in preparation for the transition back to school in the fall.



An extensive amount of work and planning needs to be done to prepare for a successful transition in the fall, and I will be sharing our progress over the next several months.

## **ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION**

**Tomorrow is the Annual School Election and Municipal Election. Vote-by-mail ballots must be postmarked by 8 PM tomorrow (May 12) and received by the Board of Elections within 48 hours. To see the PowerPoint that describes the Ridgewood Public School Budget, visit the District News on the RPS website at [https://www.ridgewood.k12.nj.us/news/district\\_news/2020-2021\\_school\\_budget\\_presentation\\_](https://www.ridgewood.k12.nj.us/news/district_news/2020-2021_school_budget_presentation_).**

## **MESSAGE FROM THE BERGEN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

The New Jersey Department of Health and the New Jersey Hospital Association (NJHA) have produced a joint Public Service Announcement (PSA) targeting residents who may suffer a potential heart attack or stroke and might be reluctant to go to hospital Emergency Departments due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The PSA, which features Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli and NJHA President and CEO Cathy Bennett, was made following reports that residents may be delaying needed health care that they require because of concerns of hospital safety and capacity amid coronavirus. The message reassures residents that hospitals and their healthcare teams are continuing to care for all patients in a safe environment.

We hope you can help us get this critical information out to your communities and New Jersey residents.

The press release is available at <https://www.nj.gov/health/news/2020/approved/20200505a.shtml>

The PSA can be viewed on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/aUDfZnI1WG4>

## **VIDEO MESSAGES FROM OUR SCHOOLS**

Our schools have been creating video messages for the students and community to remind everyone that we are still together. Enjoy this video created by Jeannie O'Neill, Supervisor of Elementary Education, to thank our Technology Innovation Specialists - <https://youtu.be/jaoHLTjYxJM>

## **RIDGEWOOD NEEDS YOUR HELP**

While we can't get out and host a traditional fundraiser, we can still support our community. Below are links to help during this time of crisis. Please note these are community-based people or organizations who are working to help.

**Blood Donations:** The **Red Cross** is alerting everyone to blood and platelet shortage. Please donate if you can. <https://www.redcrossblood.org/>. If you are having difficulty finding a Red Cross site to donate, look at <http://vitalant.org/>. They have a local office for donations.

**Ridgewood Social Services Association:** The Social Services Association of Ridgewood (SSA) continues to serve our community amid the COVID-19 pandemic. While their physical pantry is closed due to the shelter-in-place, SSA is still providing food security via grocery store vouchers and door-step deliveries. They serve over 400 individuals who are already financially devastated prior to COVID-19. See the link below for donations. <https://ssaridgewood.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=532accffb616cd716abce83de&id=4421d27480&e=fd87ce9123>

## A message from SSA:

Even though the SSA Pantry is closed for donation drop-offs and client visits, we are still very active in creatively collecting donations in other ways, packing up bags of food, and delivering them to our clients.

We are asking our friends and neighbors to help out in a small way that is meaningful.

Whenever you go to the grocery store, pick up an item (or more) from the list in the red box below, and drop it at:

Barb Crowe – 738 Hillcrest Rd. (bin on side porch)  
 Ann Levitan – 256 Ivy Place (bin on front porch)  
 Martha Fickinger – 385 Beechwood Rd. (bin on front porch)  
 Mary Barnes – 413 Meadowbrook Rd. (bin outside front door)

Items requested: Canned Tomatoes/Tomato Puree, Pasta Sauce, Canned Meats, Tuna, Rice, Peanut Butter, Cereal, Snacks, Canned Fruit, Boxed Milk, Coffee, Juice

### Stringing Together Ridgewood

- Some RHS students have come up with an idea for a fundraiser that can be done entirely remotely. They are selling friendship bracelets to raise money to be donated to Valley Hospital to help with COVID-19 relief. Please see the link below.
- <https://sites.google.com/view/stringingtogetherridgewood>

### Ridgewood Helps - Senior Citizen Help

- Right now, our senior citizens need our help. Below is a link to opportunities to help our senior citizens in Ridgewood. Please take a look at it and help in any way you can. If you have a neighbor who is a senior citizen, please check in with them. We must continue to look out for each other. Thank you in advance for all of your assistance.
- [http://mods.ridgewoodnj.net/pdf/covidinfo/RidgewoodHelpsV3.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2xLK5-VLkT7qz68jgdu8AcnQ50lNnTWuY9-Efoe\\_2v83AGtshg2p8m8sc](http://mods.ridgewoodnj.net/pdf/covidinfo/RidgewoodHelpsV3.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2xLK5-VLkT7qz68jgdu8AcnQ50lNnTWuY9-Efoe_2v83AGtshg2p8m8sc)

### Feed the Frontlines Initiative

- *Feed the Frontlines Initiative* is a call-to-action to provide meals prepared by local Ridgewood restaurants to first responders and community groups during the Coronavirus pandemic. It is an organized way for people to help feed local healthcare workers and first responders while supporting local restaurants who have been hit hard economically. *Feeding the Frontlines* is made up of The Ridgewood Chamber of Commerce, HealthBarn Foundation 501(c)(3), and many resident volunteers under the leadership of Mayor Hache. It is a creative solution to help where help is needed.
- To donate: <http://www.healthbarnfoundation.org/donations/feed-the-frontlines/>
- To help deliver: [feedthefrontlinesvolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:feedthefrontlinesvolunteer@gmail.com)

### T-Shirts for Valley UNITED

- A Ridgewood community member has created t-shirts that honor and memorializes this common experience we are all going through together. 100% of the proceeds go to Valley. <http://unitee.biz/>

## Phone Chargers Needed

- The Junior League of Bergen County is collecting used/extra phone chargers and baby monitors on behalf of area hospitals, such as Holy Name Medical Center and Valley Hospital. Because most people who wind up in the hospital with the coronavirus are brought under emergency circumstances, they come into the ER with only what is on their person. For most people, their cell phone is their only way to communicate with family, but people are not coming in with phone chargers. Due to overcrowding in area hospitals, the reality is that patients are often parked in hallways for hours on end before a dedicated room is able to be found for them. In many cases, their cell phone batteries are dying, and they have no way to recharge them. In the case of baby monitors, nurses are in need of these as a way to keep a closer eye on critical patients. If you have an extra phone charger or baby monitors that you no longer need, please consider donating them. The JLBC will wipe these items down with disinfectant and individually bag them to be donated. Items will be collected through May 31 and can be dropped off at 281 Spring Ave. in Ridgewood. There will be a box put out daily on the front stoop where you can drop off items. We appreciate your support!

## MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE

This is important information from Bergen County Mental Health Division: <https://mhanational.org/covid19>

## GET INFORMATION FROM THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD AND THE RIDGEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Use the links below for important information from the Village and the district.

Sign up for Village E-Notice System - <http://www.ridgewoodnj.net/village-info/enotices-and-alerts-registration>.

Twitter Accounts - [@RwdPub Schools](#) and [@RWDSupt](#)

District Facebook Page - [@RidgewoodPublicSchools](#).

## CENSUS 2020

**These are the final tallies for the 2020 Census RPS schools.**

Contest results as of 5.11.2020 (The contest is open until the Census 2020 closes.) Ridge took the lead from the middle of the pack.

- **1st - Ridge**
- 2nd - Somerville
- 3rd - Hawes
- 4th - BF
- 5th - Willard
- 6th - RHS
- 7th - GW
- 8th - Travell
- 9th - Orchard

## THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

- **Go for a walk:** If you haven't already had the opportunity to walk around town and see the banners honoring the Class of 2020, try to do so this week. Thanks to the generosity of the Ridgewood Alumni Association, each senior has a banner installed on the fences at Graydon Park, RHS, BF, GW, and Citizen's Park.
- Board Games: From The Record: Cinco Linko, Take Five, Splendor and Can't Stop
- Remember, the Ridgewood Public Library has online resources. <https://www.ridgewoodlibrary.org>

- The Ridgewood Public Library is conducting its 13th Annual Teen Photography Contest. <https://www.ridgewoodlibrary.org/teen-photo-contest>
- Movie/TV Fix For the Week - Academy Award Winning: *Dunkirk* - Great historic movie and should be seen after *Darkest Hour*
- Book Club Book 8 - *The Kitchen House* by Kathleen Grissom book talk questions <https://www.readinggroupguides.com/reviews/the-kitchen-house/guide>
- Bake/Cook: Not a fan, but my kids still make them. Rice Crispy Treats. [https://www.ricekrispies.com/en\\_US/recipes/the-original-treats-recipe.html](https://www.ricekrispies.com/en_US/recipes/the-original-treats-recipe.html)
- Home Project: Paint a room, stain a deck, paint a shed, etc.
- Call someone. I challenge you to call someone you have not spoken in years. College roommate, high school friends, etc.
- **REMINDER: Fathers turn away. I know...none of the fathers are reading these lengthy updates. I can tell by some of the questions I get from dads. Father's Day is June 21st. 42 days away.**

**Keep supporting our local businesses. Restaurants have the process down. It is very easy.** Many restaurants are offering curbside pickup and delivery. Here are some helpful tips ([www.today.com](http://www.today.com)) if you want something besides a home-cooked meal:

- Order from a restaurant you trust
- Order directly from the restaurant when possible
- Opt for contactless delivery or pick up
- Discard all packaging
- Don't share, and wash your hands before and after

I wish you good health, both physically and mentally!

Sincerely,



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