

# The Buccaneer

Red Bank Regional High School / Student Newspaper / Sept. 29, 2023



COURTESY OF SELENA MARTINEZ-SANTIAGO

Earlier this month, Dreamers officers (from left) Madelyn Sanchez-Berra, Edith Lozano-Zane, Selena Martinez-Santiago and Bethzy Vera-Varela successfully lobbied the RBR Board of Education to reverse a summer decision that effectively eliminated their club.

## Community supports Dreamers' fight to keep club

BY EASY JACK PORTMAN

The RBR Dreamers club has existed for seven years, providing a voice and resource for local children of immigrants. Two years ago, five years after the founding of the club, the Red Bank Regional Board of Education voted to fund the faculty advisor's pay and make the Dreamers an official club. Since then, the club has done many impactful things, its members say.

The club's intended purpose at inception was to

SEE DREAMERS, PAGE 8

REFLECTION | Rowan Martin

## How is new phone policy hitting?

*Spurred by teachers, RBR administration this year enacted a new sets of rules governing student phone use during instructional time. Here, one senior parses her feelings about the new phone policy.*

The amount of time young people are spending on their phones is a topic of growing concern for many schools. RBR is no different. This year, in a movement started by English teacher Cass Dorn, the school has



SEE POLICY, PAGE 2

KATELYNN PARKER / THE BUCCANEER

POLICY, FROM PAGE 2

## Student: Maybe ‘no phones’ policy isn’t so bad after all?

implemented a new policy to deal with phone use. The new set of rules involves the infamous “cell hotels”: at the beginning of every class, students must put their phones away in these pockets at the front of the room, and they are not to be taken out until the end of the period. While discourse surrounding the recent policy has erupted in this first month of school amongst students and teachers alike, allow me to offer a single student’s perspective on the matter.

I began the year with the kind of apprehension I can imagine most students had: I was no fan of the new policy. Many concerns crossed my mind that I felt were being ignored by the administration that had put this plan into action.

There is a helpful convenience to using your phone as a tool in class, for a calculator, stopwatch, even in place of a Chromebook if yours is being too slow. There is a comforting presence of having your phone by your side for communication during the school day: texting your parents if you left a folder at home, reaching out to a friend about the test next block you are both dreading, checking your messages to make sure you are not missing anything. Even the simple luxury of music is one of the precious commodities I feared being taken away.

So, in the first few days of school,



I harbored some resentment, a feeling I expected to last. However, it diminished quicker than I had ever imagined.

While my previous statements may make me appear very attached to my phone, I am actually very conscious of the issue. Over the years, I have grown uncomfortable with my dependence on my phone to get through the day. For every minute of enjoyment, it felt as if there were twice as much wasted time.

So, as I grew accustomed to the new policy, I found myself pleasantly surprised by its effects. Challenging my preconceptions, classes have not been dragging by;

instead, they’ve felt productive and efficient. My classmates seem more engaged and participatory.

As much as I wanted to dislike this policy, I have found it to do more good than bad. While I’m aware not all of my peers are in consensus, some do share my position.

*Do you agree? Disagree? Do you have a different perspective on the new phone use policy that you want to share? To have your opinion featured in our next issue, when I interview students and staff on this topic, email [rmartin24@students.rbrhs.org](mailto:rmartin24@students.rbrhs.org).*

**BACKSTAGE | Emma Krzycki**

# Headless Horseman rides again at RBR

With school back in full swing, so is the RBR Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) Department, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

Red Bank Regional Theatre Company Director and VPA instructor Reuben Jackson has recruited a team of Creative Writing majors who have been working hard over the past few months to write a play for the fall production. The group consists of juniors Sydnee Bowden and Easy Jack Portman (the latter will also serve as stage manager), and seniors Rowan Martin, Trinity Pham, Isabela Rojo, Kai Sarcomo and Morgan Wright. Together, this group has adapted the 1820 short story “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” by Washington Irving.

Auditions for the RBR adaptation began last week. Mr. Jackson was pleased to have a cast list posted by Sept. 20 and a read-through of the script accomplished.

“The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” is an eerie story of a man named Ichabod Crane who comes to the small Dutch settlement called Tarrytown, part of which was later renamed Sleepy Hollow. Just north of New York City, the modern-day villages of Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow are haunted by ominous tales — whether you believe them or not is up to you! One of the many legends is the spooky tale of the Headless Horseman.

The character, sometimes known as the Galloping Hessian after the German soldiers who fought with the British colonizers during the American Revolution, is usually portrayed riding a black horse with a pumpkin (often a jack-o’-lantern). The story goes that the Headless Horseman is the ghost of a Hessian soldier who was decapitated during the war. He chooses his victims at night, and Ichabod Crane happens to become one. The question is, did Ichabod escape the Headless

Horseman or was he killed?

Cami Issenman, a senior VPA theatre major, was cast as Katrina Van Tassel, the love interest for both Ichabod Crane and rival Brom Bones throughout the enchanting story. Ichabod Crane will be portrayed by Jay Lazen, a junior VPA vocal major. It seems that there are more than just a handful of underclassmen in the fall play this year.

Mr. Jackson has high hopes and expectations for this play, but that doesn’t stop his worries. After a successful showing at last year’s Basie Awards, more Basie trophies — bestowed by the Red Bank-based Count Basie Center to recognize excellence in Monmouth County high school theatre — are surely in his sights.

Rehearsals will run through the first weekend of December.

Opening night will be Thursday, Nov. 30, and shows will carry on ‘til Sunday, Dec. 3. Tickets

should go on sale sometime in November, so make sure to see the spine-tingling play. In other

theatre news, it has not yet been widely publicized, but the 2024 spring musical will be “Mamma Mia!” a selection that seems to have been driven,

at least in part, by student requests. Mr. Jackson was pleased to announce the choice to his students on the first day of school, putting to bed a dreadful summer of not knowing what this year’s shows were going to be.

Rumor has it Mr. Jackson is even considering doing a third show after the spring musical!



*More arts news is on the way, so be sure to keep up with Backstage in future editions of The Buccaneer.*



EASILY EXPLAINED | Lili Appio

# Jewish holidays mean so much more than the occasional long weekend



Every September, within the first few weeks of school, we can have one or two days off. Ever wonder why? You may have heard that these days off are to celebrate the Jewish holidays Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, but do you know why these holidays are celebrated?

To start, Rosh Hashanah is regarded as the Jewish New Year. But why is the new year in September? Well, Jewish holidays are not determined by the classic Sun-based Gregorian calendar we use in our day-to-day, but rather by the Hebrew calendar that has 12 to 13 months as determined by cycles of the moon. The first month of the Hebrew calendar, *Tishrei*, falls in what we could call September, and Jews are currently celebrating the 5,784th new year.

More than a new year, though, Rosh Hashanah is a time for new beginnings and a fresh start. Apples and honey are commonly eaten during the two-day Rosh Hashanah celebration to signify a sweet year to come. This year, Rosh Hashanah fell on a weekend, beginning at sundown on Friday, Sept. 15 and lasting through

sundown on Sunday, Sept. 17.

Yom Kippur is Rosh Hashanah's more somber counterpart. If Rosh Hashanah is a time of new beginnings, Yom Kippur is about absolving the mistakes of the past year. Yom Kippur is the day of atonement for one's sins. To show dedication to the quest for repentance, Jews will fast throughout the one-day observance. This year, Yom Kippur began on Sunday, Sept. 24 and lasted 24 hours, through sundown on Monday, Sept. 25 — hence the day off from school earlier this week!

These are two of the most important holidays in the Jewish faith, and thus it is important to have a basic and respectful understanding of them, even if you aren't Jewish. We are very lucky that our district gives off these days, because many school districts and workplaces don't, making it more difficult for Jewish people to observe their most significant holidays.

Next year, make sure to wish all your Jewish friends a "Chag Sameach" (hog som-AY-uh) on these days — the Hebrew way of saying, "Happy Holidays!"

## BE A FRIEND | Keira Leverock

Be a friend.

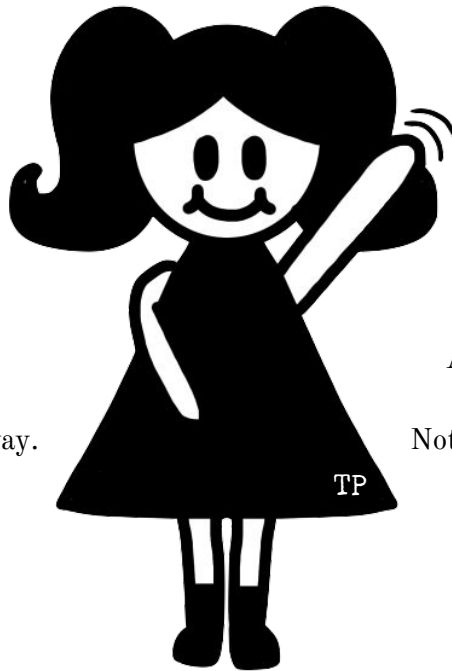
Be a friend to those who are different  
than you.

You don't always know their story.

Be the person who steps up,  
Who talks to others  
And includes them.

Say hello when you see them in the hallway.  
You don't have to voice it.  
Just wave.

Be nice.



Be nice to yourself,  
Be nice to your teachers,  
Be nice to others.

Be approachable.

Have a smile on your face,  
Be somebody anyone can walk up to  
And tell things to without judgement.

Not everybody is good at making friends  
Or talking to people around them.

Be a good influence.

Be a friend.

## I DON'T HAVE IT | Ash Pena-Martinez



**BUC BEAT |** Voices from the halls of RBR**Q: What's your best summer memory?****FRESHMEN**

"From this summer, my favorite thing has got to be sleeping!"

— *Conor Glynn*

**SOPHOMORES**

"When I went to the rescue center to adopt a new kitten!"

— *Amelia Horan*

**JUNIORS**

"Spending a month abroad in Barcelona with CIEE."

— *Nyla Morton*

**SENIORS**

"Playing a show in Victory Park, and then going swimming in the Navesink."

— *Aster Lenza*

**THE BUCCANEER  
STUDENT NEWSPAPER**

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*The Buccaneer* staff meets after school on Thursdays in Room 242. The paper is always looking for students interested in writing, editing, layout design, photography and illustration. If you want to receive notifications about newspaper meetings and deadlines, join our Google Classroom (3vtuxok) and/or Remind thread (text "@bucpaper" to the number 81010). Any questions, ask a *Buccaneer* staff member or stop by Room 242.

SEPTEMBER SCRAMBLE | Kira Ashton-O'Connor

1. ALMATCSES		5. MNTUAU	
2. NEAMGSTSISN		6. ELNBGMUITEC	
3. ORMOKWHE		7. AIDDSNEEL	
4. SOCHILGOHH		8. CDCUKBE	

1. classmates / 2. assignments / 3. homework / 4. high school / 5. autumn / 6. club meeting / 7. deadlines / 8. Buc Deck

BACK TO SCHOOL | Kira Ashton-O'Connor



WORD SEARCH

educate

freshman

projects

September

subject

faculty

junior

senior

sophomore

teacher

focus

notebook

sports

tutoring

applications

V	X	S	R	H	U	S	P	D	T	F	A	D	A	V
Z	W	D	O	Y	X	R	O	F	E	R	L	Y	P	B
J	R	X	Y	P	O	H	Z	A	A	E	D	G	P	T
E	G	R	D	J	H	T	F	Y	C	S	Y	N	L	M
F	X	V	E	E	W	O	D	B	H	H	T	I	I	D
J	V	C	G	X	D	T	M	V	E	M	L	R	C	W
D	T	L	S	S	N	U	C	O	R	A	U	O	A	K
S	W	B	R	T	G	P	C	E	R	N	C	T	T	S
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R	E	B	M	E	T	P	E	S	T	B	F	T	O	M
I	J	Y	X	T	F	I	Y	I	T	E	U	I	N	J
R	P	M	W	O	G	F	N	G	J	R	N	S	S	B
B	M	K	C	R	O	G	E	E	U	U	O	S	S	G
T	L	U	L	H	O	Y	V	Q	J	Q	J	P	M	P
M	S	H	R	S	E	N	I	O	R	P	E	P	S	N



DREAMERS, FROM PAGE 1

## BOE's Dreamers decision draws tons of public comment

provide access to college opportunities and application advice to members of the organization, explained Marisol Mondaca, the SOURCE clinician and Dreamers advisor. But from there, the club's mission branched off.

Now, Ms. Mondaca said, the four main pillars of the club are: community service, cultural events, engagement and college opportunities. Members do work in these areas to aid the community, like volunteering English-Spanish translation services at Red Bank Middle School or working with the Primary School's "Power Hour" extra-help program.

But on Aug. 16, the RBR school board voted to remove funding for the club's advisor — even though a majority of board members were in favor of keeping the club active.

Here's how this came to be: The board of education has nine members to vote on matters like district policy, personnel and finances. The board needs five votes to pass any motion — not a simple majority of the voting members, but five total votes. At the meeting on Aug. 16, four members of the board were absent and, therefore, it meant any motion needed a unanimous vote of all five present members in order to pass. When the motion to renew the Dreamers' advisor's funding was brought up, four members voted to keep it instated, but one did not. Since only five members were there, and only four voted yes, the funding for the RBR

Dreamers' advisor was effectively cut off — which is to say, no advisor, no club.

One of the Dreamers' council leaders, RBR senior Selena Martinez-Santiago, had this to say on the matter: "I think all of us were completely in shock. We weren't made aware until around the end of August, a week after the vote was held, and it came out of



nowhere, so we honestly had absolutely no idea what to do. We were extremely unprepared, as we never imagined ourselves put in a situation like that. ...

"While we were incredibly disappointed and upset towards this, it gave us a newfound perspective on how much our club truly mattered and what others were willing to do to support us," Martinez-Santiago added, a nod to the fact that this decision from the board sparked controversy among the RBR student body, as well as in the community surrounding RBR.

Many local residents appeared at a subsequent board of education meeting to express anger that,

although most of its members supported the decision, the school board was responsible for eliminating the Dreamers.

On Sept. 11, only the third day of the new school year, the RBR Board of Education held an emergency meeting to discuss the matter at hand. *The Buccaneer* was there to get eyewitness coverage of the shockingly large crowd gathered in support of Ms. Mondaca and the students representing their club to the school board. The crowd was so large, in fact, that the meeting had to be moved to the RBR cafeteria instead of the normal site of the board of education office, located behind the school.

RBR Superintendent Louis Moore, Ph.D., an outspoken advocate for the Dreamers, publicly advised the board of education to restore the funding for the club advisor's position. In a staff-wide email, Dr. Moore told RBR employees, "We are blessed at RBR to be a school with a large population of immigrant students, including those who are undocumented. In addition, we are thankful to the members of the RBR Dreamers club who have led efforts to improve understanding, promote inclusiveness, and advocate for needed reform. ... It is inspiring to see the way our students are standing up for themselves and others amidst the current dispute."

RBR Board of Education

SEE DREAMERS, PAGE 9



DREAMERS, FROM PAGE 8

## Win for the Dreamers: School board reverses decision to cut

President Patrick Noble opened the Sept. 11 emergency meeting with a statement endorsing the Dreamers and condemning the vote that led to its temporary disbanding.

Many people took to the podium when it came time for public comment, including four RBR seniors who serve as the leading council of the Dreamers club: Martinez-Santiago, plus classmates Madelyn Sanchez-Berra, Bethzy Vera-Varela and Edith Lozano-Zane — a group that has come to be known as the Dream4. Each gave an impassioned speech about the discrimination they have faced in their lifetime and the ways the club has provided for them. They were aided by Ms. Mondaca, RBR alumnae and former members of the club, the entire current Red Bank Borough Council, and nearly a dozen independent citizens of the school district, all of whom spoke highly of the Dreamers and their place at RBR. The high school teachers' union, the Red Bank Regional Education Association, also endorsed the Dreamers.

"Our speeches were shaped by our personal experiences as well as our frustrations at the individual who voted no against our club and initiated an elimination of everything our club and our leaders have worked for over the course of the last seven years," Santiago-Martinez said afterward of the Dreamer4's motivations for addressing the board of education. "Finding out we had an opportunity

to stand in front of the board, we knew it had to make a strong impact to ensure that this would never happen again. ...

"In terms of my own speech," she added, "I really wanted to depict what the board was taking from our group, who — at the end of the day — are still teenagers. We were proud to stand up there and represent our people, and we hope to continue making a bigger impact for our community."

After hearing from the community, the full board of education voted once again on the question of funding Ms. Mondaca's position as the Dreamers' advisor. The same member of the board who previously voted against the Dreamers did so once again, while the other eight members voted in favor of restoring funding.

The crowd was overjoyed at the reinstatement of the Dreamers' club, and Dr. Moore publicly pledged to begin a new committee he has deemed "a school-wide committee on equity and excellence."

"Given this outcome, our hope is that the Dreamers continue to be an active force in the school and in the community, even after we have to pass on our titles to the next officers," Dreamers council leader Sanchez-Berra said after the fact, noting that the club's first meeting of the new school year saw "an amazing turnout with tons of new faces and several returning members as well."

"As for RBR," she added. "I hope that the administration now sees that without a club like ours, there is no equity or representation at the school. The future of an equitable RBR depends on our club. I hope that when I return to RBR someday, that I see my community represented not just in the student body but in more clubs, sports, and even faculty."

A new time is dawning at RBR, where the community that holds the school up is willing to work as one and keep the school together.

With technical support from *The Buccaneer*, local news organization **redbankgreen** livestreamed the Sept. 11 board of education meeting where the RBR Dreamers were reinstated. The livestream racked up 1,190 views in real time, according to **redbankgreen** publisher Kenny Katzgrau. To view the archived footage, scan the QR code to access **redbankgreen's** Facebook page.



# RBR ROUNDUP

BY CATIE MARRIN



COURTESY OF CAITLIN TURNER

These Lady Bucs put the field in field day, launching into a competitive training session overseen by the original weight room warrior, Jack Provine.



## GIRLS' TENNIS

The Lady Bucs have struck fear into the hearts of their opponents this season and will carry an aggressive 4-2 record into this afternoon's matchup with River Road rival Rumson-Fair Haven. All four of the RBR squad's wins have been shutouts, 5-0. Top players include juniors Sophia Bald, Chelsea Langa and Isla Rubin; sophomore Sasha Perskie; and senior Nicole Kalorin. The Lady Bucs hope to continue this impressive streak on Oct. 4 as they take on St. John Vianney.



## VOLLEYBALL

The varsity girls' volleyball squad won its most recent matchup against Freehold Borough last week in decisive fashion, with a 2-0 shutout. One kill came from senior Kylie Fisher (who also had a neat half-block) and the other from classmate Aleena Feliciano. Although the Bucs entered this week with a 2-5 record, they aim to bounce back against Red Bank Catholic today (Friday, Sept. 29). The future is looking quite promising for these ladies!



## GIRLS' SOCCER

Headed into this week, RBR girls' soccer had posted an even 3-3 record. Their most recent victory was a blowout 7-0 shutout of Neptune, Seniors Leila Castell and Carolyn McCallion contributed two goals apiece in the effort, with classmates Samantha Henry, Aileen Monahan and Lauren Connelly each chipping in one. Buc Nation will next have a chance to cheer on the when they take on Shore Regional at home on Monday, Oct. 2. Kickoff is at 4 PM!



## FIELD HOCKEY

The girls' field hockey team notched a huge 6-1 win against Ranney on Tuesday, Sept. 19. Two of the goals came from senior Caroline Spencer, with senior Laura McGee, sophomore Anna Petersen, Avery Guild and Sophia Bracken all finding the net. The girls are coming off a rough stretch that includes a 5-0 shutout at the hands of Middletown North, but they are looking to rebound against Red Bank Catholic tomorrow morning (Saturday, Sept. 30).



# FALL SPORTS

## OCTOBER 2023

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<b>2</b>  <b>FIELD HOCKEY</b> 3:45 PM vs Raritan HOME  <b>GIRLS SOCCER</b> 4 PM vs Shore HOME	<b>3</b>  <b>BOYS SOCCER</b> 6:30 PM vs Shore @ Shore	<b>4</b>  <b>FIELD HOCKEY</b> 3:45 PM vs Brick Twp @ Brick  <b>GIRLS TENNIS</b> 3:45 PM vs SJV @ SJV	<b>5</b>  <b>GIRLS TENNIS</b> 3:45 PM vs 'Squan HOME  <b>VOLLEYBALL</b> 3:45 PM and 5:15 PM vs Holmdel HOME	<b>6</b>  <b>FIELD HOCKEY</b> 3:45 PM vs SJV @ SJV  <b>GIRLS SOCCER</b> 4 PM vs Colts Neck HOME	<b>7</b>  No games!
<b>9</b>  <b>FIELD HOCKEY</b> 3:45 PM vs TR South HOME  <b>VOLLEYBALL</b> 3:45 PM vs Raritan @ Raritan  <b>BOYS SOCCER</b> 4 PM vs St. Rose @ St. Rose  <b>GIRLS SOCCER</b> 6 PM vs St. Rose HOME	<b>10</b>  <b>GIRLS' TENNIS</b> 3:45 PM vs RBC HOME  <b>CROSS COUNTRY</b> Boys & Girls 4 PM vs Lng Branch  <b>FIELD HOCKEY</b> 6 PM vs St. Rose HOME	<b>11</b>  <b>VOLLEYBALL</b> 3:45 PM vs RFH HOME	<b>12</b>  <b>BOYS SOCCER</b> 3:45 PM vs RBC HOME	<b>13</b>  <b>VOLLEYBALL</b> 3:45 PM vs Wall HOME  <b>FOOTBALL</b> 6:30 PM vs Donovan Catholic HOME	<b>14</b>  No games!
<b>16</b>  <b>GIRLS SOCCER</b> 5 PM vs Barnegat @ Barnegat  <b>BOYS SOCCER</b> 7 PM vs Barnegat @ Barnegat	<b>17</b>  <b>FIELD HOCKEY</b> 3:45 PM vs Man Twp @ Manchester  <b>BOYS SOCCER</b> 4 PM vs Ocean Twp @ Ocean  <b>GIRLS SOCCER</b> 4 PM vs Ocean Twp HOME  <b>VOLLEYBALL</b> 5:15 PM vs Jack Mem @ Jackson Memorial	<b>18</b>  <b>VOLLEYBALL</b> 10 AM vs Pt Beach HOME  <b>FIELD HOCKEY</b> 3:45 PM vs Keyport HOME	<b>19</b>  <b>FIELD HOCKEY</b> 3:45 PM vs Holmdel HOME  <b>VOLLEYBALL</b> 4 PM vs JackLib @ Jackson Liberty	<b>20</b>  <b>FOOTBALL</b> 6:30 PM vs Manalapan HOME	<b>21</b>  <b>FIELD HOCKEY</b> 10 AM vs Koinonia HOME



