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Press Release from: Filomena Laforgia, RIH BOE President

On behalf of: The Ramapo Indian Hills Board of Education

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Dr. Rui Dionisio Named New Superintendent for the Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District

Franklin Lakes, Wyckoff, Oakland (FLOW), N.J. - August 9, 2021: There will be a new face walking our high school hallways this year. The Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District Board of Education is pleased to announce the selection of Dr. Rui Dionisio as our next Superintendent of Schools. The resolution was approved unanimously by the RIH Board of Education at a special BOE meeting on August 9, 2021. Dr. Dionisio will be the District's first permanent leader since Beverly MacKay announced her retirement effective August 1, 2020.



Filomena Laforgia, RIH School Board President, said, "One of the most vital and significant roles of a school board is the selection of a superintendent." Ms.

Laforgia continues, "Our Board spent a considerable amount of time looking for the right person who will lead this District through some critical changes, and we needed a strong, dynamic, thoughtful leader – Dr. Dionisio fits the bill."

Dr. Dionisio is a proven leader and respected member of the educational community, demonstrating thoughtful, compassionate, and innovative leadership as Superintendent of the Verona Public Schools since 2014. Before his contributions to the Verona community, Dr. Dionisio served as a school administrator in the Ridgewood Public Schools and as Principal of Cranford High School. His professional experience includes teaching at the elementary, middle, high school, and university levels. Dr. Dionisio has presented at state and national conferences on effective communication strategies and the importance of mental health education in public schools. In 2019, Dr. Dionisio was recognized as AASA Essex County Superintendent of the Year.

Dr. Dionisio is a strategic, forward thinker who prides himself on a collaborative and caring approach with a student-centered focus. Garnering support from engaged stakeholders has enabled him to help bring about improvements and notable district achievements with a clear, consistent, and unified direction for his learning community. He has a passion for developing a common sense of purpose, increasing academic opportunities for all students, and focusing on the social-emotional learning foundation necessary to develop productive, healthy students.



During his tenure, Dr. Dionisio has been praised as a highly effective, collaborative leader who guided the community to raise the bar and continuously redefine success. He is an advocate dedicating himself as a champion for student and staff social, emotional, and physical well-being. Dr. Dionisio spearheaded Verona community action committees on mental health and suicide prevention, resulting in financial support and public adoption of an innovative, therapeutic mental health program. He led the effort to expand full-day kindergarten through a community vote and established the regionally recognized Verona Public Schools Magazine.

Dr. Dionisio supports continuous progress through quality teaching and leadership practices. He believes that an actively vibrant, student-centered educational community must be focused on empowering our children to achieve their unique, individual potential. His approach encourages the sharing of feedback to establish the District's vision and direction. Under his leadership, Dr. Dionisio has helped bring to fruition a multitude of academic improvements that resulted in students' opportunities and numerous recognitions and honors. He has effectively managed two referendum capital improvement projects and an energy savings improvement project totaling \$50 million. In partnership with the Board of Education, school administration, and the local education foundation, Dr. Dionisio directed the upgrade of district-wide technology infrastructure, leveraged a Chromebook initiative, and expanded teacher leadership to create a shared vision of best instructional practices.

In his time with the Ridgewood Public Schools, Dr. Dionisio was the recipient of the Bristol Myers Squibb *Grants for Teaching Excellence*. He directed inquiry-based science instruction and professional development for staff, a program ultimately adopted by the District. His professional background experience includes success as a teacher, club advisor, athletic coach, science supervisor, assistant principal, high school principal, and superintendent of schools.

In 2019, Dr. Dionisio completed a Public Leadership course at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, where he continues to engage in academic study. He completed his doctorate in Educational Leadership, Management, and Policy at Seton Hall University. His dissertation examined the impact of inquiry-based science on non-cognitive outcomes and academic achievement. Dr. Dionisio holds a B.A. in Biology with a minor in Chemistry and M.A. in Administration and Supervision from Montclair State University.

Dr. Dionisio shared that, "There is no greater role more important than that of an educator as we continue to pave the way forward to fortify a culture of teaching and learning that addresses the needs of all students. With a highly committed school district and community, we can ensure that all students achieve their individual potential. When we do all of this well constructively and productively, the results speak for themselves."

Dr. Dionisio resides in Essex County and is grateful for the love and support of his family. He is a devoted husband and the proud father to two adult daughters and a son who is currently in his second year in college. Dr. Dionisio enjoys reading, traveling, physical activity, the outdoors, and spending time with his family.

Dr. Dionisio is expected to join our community as RIH Superintendent in November 2021.



RAMAPO INDIAN HILLS
Regional High School District

Maximizing opportunities to meet the needs of all students for a meaningful life

The Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District is a comprehensive regional public school district consisting of two four-year public high schools: Indian Hills High School, located in Oakland, and Ramapo High School, located in Franklin Lakes, which serve students in ninth through twelfth grades from Franklin Lakes, Oakland, and Wyckoff (FLOW), three suburban communities in Bergen County, New Jersey. Students entering the District as freshmen have the option to attend either of the District's high schools, regardless of their residence, subject to a choice made during eighth grade. As of the 2020-2021 school year, the District, comprising two schools, had 2,226 students.