

Senior Class Defines Legacy with AlertNow

The 180 members of the 2008-2009 graduating class of Rocky Hill High School, located in Rocky Hill, CT, wanted to provide their alma mater with a gift which would leave a lasting legacy. Senior class officers met with Mr. Edward Malizia, assistant principal of Rocky Hill High, to determine how they could create a long-term benefit.

"I met with the class officers, and we discussed a number of the school's needs upon which the class gift could have an impact," said Mr. Malizia. "One area that we wanted to improve was our ability to communicate with parents. Our district was exploring ways to help us communicate better, so the senior class offered to provide funding to pay for the use of AlertNow at Rocky Hill High for a three-year period."

District officials knew they needed a better way to communicate. "We did not have a means to contact parents quickly, and we knew that improving communication with parents across the district was a necessity," said Mr. Frank Connelly, Director of Finance for Rocky Hill City Schools. "In particular, we needed a way to reach families quickly on days when school had to be dismissed early, due to weather conditions or other factors." After Rocky Hill High shared details of the senior class gift with district administrators, they decided to approach the Board of Education with a proposal to provide AlertNow for the entire district.

"Our district serves approximately 2600 students, with about 30% of that number attending Rocky Hill High," said Mr. Connelly. "With funds in place from the senior class to provide AlertNow service for three years at their school, we submitted a proposal to our Board of Education to make AlertNow available for our three elementary schools and our middle school, as well as the high school. The Board agreed that AlertNow was a service that Rocky Hill Public Schools needed, and with partial funding already accounted for, they approved funding for the entire district."

Although no two funding solutions are alike, using funds raised by students is quite uncommon. "Many school districts have developed innovative ways to fund their purchase of AlertNow, but this is the first time I can recall seeing students partnering with the district to provide our service," said Suzanne Hendy Newman, AlertNow Regional Sales Director. "I thought that it was a very forward-thinking gesture on the part of the senior class at Rocky Hill High."

Rocky Hill Public Schools has begun preparations to launch AlertNow at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year. "We will be working with AlertNow over the summer to train staff members and gather the data needed to begin using the system in late August when our school year begins," said Mr. Connelly.

Schools in the district are excited about the ways AlertNow can help them. "AlertNow will serve our school and our district well," said Mr. Malizia. "We are looking forward to improving communications with our families, and we appreciate the support from our newest graduates which helped make it possible."