



# Pathways

*A Weekly Collection of Information, Thoughts, Reflections and Accolades for the Reading Public School Community*

February 28, 2016

Volume 7, Number 24

## Upcoming Dates

- February 29 – Happy Leap Day; (3:00 p.m.) District PD Committee Meeting
- March 1 – Election Day – Local and Presidential Primary in the Hawkes Field House
- March 2 – (3:00 p.m.) District MTSS meeting; (5:00 p.m.) Taste of Metro North at North Reading High School; (6:00 p.m.) Joshua Eaton Math & Literacy Night
- March 3 – (8:30 a.m.) Coffee & Conversation @ Birch Meadow
- March 4 – (7:30 p.m.) RMHS Drama Presents The Nerd in the Endslo PAC
- March 5 – (8:00 a.m.) SAT Testing – RMHS is a Test Site; (7:30 p.m.) RMHS Drama Presents The Nerd in the Endslo PAC
- March 6 – RMHS Color Guard Competition in Dover, NH; (2:00 p.m.) RMHS Drama Presents The Nerd in the Endslo PAC
- March 7 – (8:00 a.m.) Coffee & Conversation @ Parker; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in

## Late Start Working Group To Begin

### *Recommendation to be made for 2017-18 school year*

As you may know, there is growing and relevant research supporting a later school start time for middle and high school students. Having a later start time for this age span has shown to improve attendance, reduce tardiness, and improve both the academic achievement and the social/emotional well-being of students. In addition, all the Superintendents in the Middlesex League have recently agreed collectively to move the start time of high schools to later times within the next few years.

To that end, the Reading Public Schools will be forming a Later School Start Working Group (consisting of representatives from all areas) that will explore the details and logistics involved in potentially changing the start and end times for our schools. The group will be co-chaired by Assistant Superintendent Craig Martin and RMHS Director of Guidance Lynna Williams. This working group would review the research and look at what specific issues would need to be addressed if school times were changed. The group would begin in March and complete its work in October with a recommendation to the Reading School Committee. The School Committee will review the recommendation and take a vote in November. If a change in start times would be implemented, it would begin in the 2017-18 school year.

The Working Group will consist of the following members:

- A member of the School Committee
- RMHS Assistant Principal for Athletics and Extracurricular Activities
- Three Administrators (One from each level)
- Director of Community Education
- An Administrator from the Recreation Department
- Three teachers (one from each level)
- Reading Teachers Association President or designee
- A member of the Board of Public Health
- Two students (1 middle school and 1 high school)
- Director of METCO
- Three parents (one from each level)
- A representative from the business community.
- A representative from the Reading Police Department
- A representative from the Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse (RCASA)

Some of the areas that should be discussed and researched include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Research behind the changes in start times
2. Impact on the start times for all three levels

## Superintendent's Conference Room

- March 8 – (2:00 p.m.) MAJE Jazz Festival @ RMHS; (7:00 p.m.) Killam PTO Meeting
- March 9 – Grade 6 – 8 Early Release; (after school) Secondary PLC Meetings
- March 10 – (after school) Elementary PLC Meetings; (6:30 p.m.) Parker Play – Lion King Jr.
- March 11 – (7:00 p.m.) Parker Play – Lion King Jr.
- March 12 – (7:00 a.m.) RMHS Robotics Competition in the Hawkes Field House; (2:00 & 7:00 p.m.) Parker Play – Lion King Jr.

3. Impact on after and before school activities, including athletics, extra-curricular, extended day, student jobs and community activities.
4. Impact on staff after school staff meetings and extra help for students.
5. Impact on bus transportation (In district, Special Education, and METCO)
6. Early Release Day schedules
7. Impact on staff (graduate courses, child care)
8. Impact on building rentals
9. Fiscal implications for district

The proposed timeline for the Working Group is as follows:

- February 28-Advertising for Membership to Working Group for parents and teachers
- March 7-Deadline to apply to be on Working Group
- Late-March-Working Group begins meeting
- June-Working Group reports to School Committee progress
- June-October: Working group meets and finalizes proposal
- October/November: Presentation to Reading School Committee
- November: Public Hearing(s) on Proposal
- December: School Committee Votes on Proposal

We are looking for three teachers and three parents, one from each level, to participate in this group. Meetings for the working group will occur during evening hours.

### What does this mean for our school district

The Reading Public Schools is joining the other Middlesex League communities in examining this area to support the social and emotional well-being of students. The changes that are proposed and approved will begin for the 2017-18 school year and could affect all three levels.

**If you are interested in serving on this working group, please send an email to Linda Engelson, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, at [linda.engelson@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:linda.engelson@reading.k12.ma.us). The deadline to submit is Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions, feel free also to contact Assistant Superintendent Craig Martin at [craig.martin@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:craig.martin@reading.k12.ma.us).**

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## Parker Finalists Announced

The Reading Public Schools is pleased to announce the four finalists for the position of Parker Middle School Principal. Forty-seven candidates applied for the position and from that group, nine were interviewed by the Screening Committee. These four finalists will be visiting Parker Middle School on Monday, February 29<sup>th</sup> to tour the school, observe a class, and be interviewed by students and the District Leadership Team. In addition, each candidate will have an open microphone session with staff after school and an open microphone session with the community during the evening.

The four finalists, with their Community Open Microphone Session Interview time are listed below. All community open microphone sessions will be held in the Parker Middle School Auditorium.

- 6:30 p.m.-Jennifer Turner, Assistant Principal, Jonas Clarke Middle School, Lexington, Massachusetts

## Kudos and Accolades

- To Girls Basketball and Boys Hockey who had wins this week.
- Congratulations to the Swim Team who 10<sup>th</sup> in the State Championship competing with only 8 athletes
- Congratulations to Boys Track members Paul Chong, Chris Doncaster, Jack Geiger, Kelvin Hoyt, Kevin Shannon and Eric Webb for a strong showing at the All-State Meet
- Kudos to RMHS basketball player Carl Gillies for being named a Middlesex League All-Star
- Kudos to RMHS gymnasts Emily Eagleston and Maddie Doyle for outstanding performances at the Individual State meet and good luck as they compete in the New England Championships
- Good luck to boys basketball and boys & girls hockey as the MIAA State Tournaments begin this week
- Congratulations to RMHS Seniors Emily Lamphier and Alex Talbot for being chosen for this week's High Five Awards
- Congratulations to the following RMHS students of the month for January. They are in Grade 9: Thomas Walsh (Respect), Hannah Jung (Responsibility), Julia Hagan (Perseverance), Andrew Devlin (Scholarship); Grade 10: Roberto Jarrin (Respect), Matthew Anzalone

- 7:00 p.m.-Jack Flood, Assistant Principal, Ottoson Middle School, Arlington, Massachusetts
- 7:30 p.m.-Tim Ruggere, Principal, Ottoson Middle School, Arlington, Massachusetts
- 8:00 p.m.-Richele Shankland, Assistant Principal, Lynnfield Middle School, Lynnfield, Massachusetts

At the open microphone sessions, the community will have an opportunity to ask questions of each candidate about topics related to middle level education and leadership. All are welcome to attend these sessions. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Reading Public Schools Administration Offices at 781-944-5800.

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## Youth Art Month 2016

### *Reading Students Recognized*

Students, grades Pre-K through 12, from across Massachusetts have been selected to have their artwork displayed at the State Transportation Building in Boston. This exhibit is sponsored by the Massachusetts Art Education Association (MAEA) as a part of Youth Art Month, a national celebration that emphasizes the value of art education for all children and encourages support for the quality art programs in Massachusetts' schools.

The Youth Art Month Exhibit will be on display and open to the public weekdays 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. from February 8 through March 31. (closed weekends and Presidents Day, Monday, Feb. 15). Admission is free. Parking is available in the building for a fee.

The Reading Public Schools is pleased to announce that the following young Reading artists have work in this year's Youth Art month exhibit at the State Transportation Building.

- **From Reading Memorial High School under the direction of Veronique Latimer:** Ariana Weatherbee, Matteo Coelho, Samantha Kramer, Alexindra Wheeler, Laura Richards
- **Also from the High School under the direction of Susan Gilbert:** Julia Nardone, Madeline Liberman and Celia Peterson.
- **From Collidge Middle School under the direction of Sarah Doane:** Daniel Chin, Abby Frechette, Jessica Busick, Eva D'Entremont, Caitlin McKenna, Tara Parsons
- **From J.W. Killam Elementary School under the direction of Amy Hussey:** Audrey Taylor, Nevaeh Galindo, William Small, Amelia Bombardier, Matthew Fichera, Meng Li Qiu

Congratulations to the students and staff for an outstanding job.

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## Does Your Classroom Cultivate Student Resilience?

By: **Marilyn Price-Mitchell PhD**, Developmental Psychologist, Researcher, Writer for **Edutopia Magazine**

Over 100 years ago, the great African American educator Booker T. Washington spoke about resilience:

*I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles overcome while trying to succeed.*

Research has since established resilience as essential for human thriving, and an ability necessary for the development of healthy, adaptable young people. It's what enables

(Responsibility), Drew Buckley (Perseverance), Logan Thorton (Scholarship); Grade 11: Kevin Mahoney (Respect), Anthony Wright (Responsibility), Craig Kelly (Perseverance), Leszek Maziarz (Scholarship); Grade 12: David DiMare (Respect), Emily Fusco (Responsibility), Kendall Robinson (Perseverance), Andrew DeRusha (Scholarship)

children to *emerge* from challenging experiences with a positive sense of themselves and their futures. Children who develop resilience are better able to face disappointment, learn from failure, cope with loss, and adapt to change. We recognize resilience in children when we observe their determination, grit, and perseverance to tackle problems and cope with the emotional challenges of school and life.

### **The Capacity to Rebuild and Grow From Adversity**

Resilience is not a genetic trait. It is derived from the ways that children learn to think and act when faced with obstacles large and small. The road to resilience comes first and foremost from children's supportive relationships with parents, teachers, and other caring adults. These relationships become sources of strength when children work through stressful situations and painful emotions. When we help young people cultivate an approach to life that views obstacles as a critical part of success, we help them develop resilience.

Many teachers are familiar with Stanford professor Carol Dweck's important work with **growth mindsets**, a way of thinking that helps children connect growth with hard work and perseverance. Educator David Hochheiser wisely reminds us that developing growth mindsets is a **paradigm for children's life success rather than a pedagogical tool to improve grades or short-term goals**. Simply put, it's a way of helping children believe in themselves -- often the greatest gift teachers give to their students.

Resilience is part of *The Compass Advantage*™ (a model designed for engaging families, schools, and communities in the principles of positive youth development) because the capacity to rebuild and grow from adversity is a key factor in achieving optimal mental and physical health. Linked by research to happiness and the other abilities on the compass, resilience is one of the **8 Pathways to Every Student's Success**.



Image Credit: Marilyn Price-Mitchell, PhD

The ability to meet and overcome challenges in ways that maintain or promote well-being plays an essential role in how students learn to achieve academic and personal goals. Resilient young people feel a sense of control over their own destinies. They know that they

can reach out to others for support when needed, and they readily take initiative to solve problems. Teachers facilitate resilience by helping children think about and consider various paths through adversity. They also help by **being resources, encouraging student decision-making, and modeling resilient competencies.**

## **Five Ways to Cultivate Resilience**

### **1. Promote self-reflection through literary essays or small-group discussions.**

Short written essays or small-group discussion exercises that focus on heroic literary characters are an excellent way, particularly for younger students, to reflect on resilience and the role it plays in life success. After children have read a book or heard a story that features a heroic character, encourage them to reflect by answering the following questions. (See the **Heroic Imagination Project** for additional resources and videos.)

- Who was the hero in this story? Why?
- What challenge or dilemma did the hero overcome?
- What personal strengths did the hero possess? What choices did he or she have to make?
- How did other people support the hero?
- What did the hero learn?
- How do we use the same personal strengths when we overcome obstacles in our own lives? Can you share some examples?

### **2. Encourage reflection through personal essays.**

Written exercises that focus on sources of personal strength can help middle and high school students learn resilience-building strategies that work best for them. For example, by exploring answers to the following questions, students can become more aware of their strengths and what they look for in supportive relationships with others.

- Write about a person who supported you during a particularly stressful or traumatic time. How did they help you overcome this challenge? What did you learn about yourself?
- Write about a friend that you supported as he or she went through a stressful event. What did you do that most helped your friend? What did you learn about yourself?
- Write about a time in your life when you had to cope with a difficult situation. What helped and hindered you as you overcame this challenge? What learning did you take away that will help you in the future?

### **3. Help children (and their parents) learn from student failures.**

In her insightful article **Why Parents Need to Let Their Children Fail**, published in *The Atlantic*, middle school teacher Jessica Lahey touched on a topic near and dear to every teacher's heart: How do I teach students to learn and grow through failure and setbacks when their parents are so intent on making them a shining star? The truth is that learning from failure is paramount to becoming a resilient young person. Teachers help when they:

- Create a classroom culture where failure, setbacks, and disappointment are an expected and honored part of learning.
- Establish and reinforce an atmosphere where students are praised for their hard work, perseverance, and grit, not just for grades and easy successes.
- Hold students accountable for producing their own work, efforts from which they feel ownership and internal reward.



### Quote of the Week....



“How could you reach the pearl by only looking at the sea? If you seek the pearl, be a diver.”

– Rumi

- Educate and assure parents that supporting kids through failure builds resilience -- one of the best developmental outcomes that they can give their children.

#### 4. Bring discussions about human resilience into the classroom.

Opportunities abound to connect resilience with personal success, achievement, and positive social change. Expand discussions about political leaders, scientists, literary figures, innovators, and inventors beyond what they accomplished to the personal strengths they possessed and the hardships they endured and overcame to reach their goals. Help students learn to see themselves and their own strengths through these success stories.

#### 5. Build supportive relationships with students.

Good student-teacher relationships are those where students feel seen, felt, and understood by teachers. This happens when teachers are attuned to students, when they notice children's needs for academic and emotional support. These kinds of relationships strengthen resilience. When adults reflect back on teachers who changed their lives, they remember and cherish the teachers who encouraged and supported them through difficult times.

Do you have a teacher who played this role in your own life? What do you remember about him or her?

[MARILYN PRICE-MITCHELL PHD'S PROFILE](#)

## Reading Public School Happenings

### Wood End Grade 3-Understanding Disabilities

Last week, Grade 3 students at Wood End were given a lesson from an Understanding Disabilities volunteer.



### Barrows Grade 4 Trip

Recently, Grade 4 students at Barrows attended a Field Trip to study the Lowell Mills. A photo of several students in front of one of the mill buildings is below.

Disney Tweet of the Week



“There's plenty of trouble, but you can handle it. You can't back out. It gets you down once in a while, but it's exciting.”

—Walt Disney



**Barrows Book Talk**

Several students in Pam Boston's Grade 4 Class at Barrows participated in a book talk last week in the library reading the book *Soup* by Robert Newton Peck.



**Killam Makerspace**

In an effort to integrate the MakerSpace philosophy into the school curriculum, Killam Librarian Kim Adamo challenged Killam's fifth grade students to create a working pair of snowshoes by only using recycled materials they found around their houses. Below are pictures of twelve of Killam's fifth grade students who answered this challenge by creating working snowshoes out of items such as old tennis rackets, hula hoops, broken sleds, ripped t-shirts, planting trays, chicken wire, PVC pipes, and wood. The students tested each snowshoe design on a snow track behind the school to determine a first, second, and third place design winner.

Special thanks to Kim Adamo and the students for this great project!





## Stepping Stones...

- Congratulations to **Birch Meadow and Wood End Team Chair Kelley Bostwick**, who recently broke a record in the Guinness Book of World Records for the longest recorded song. The link to the post is [here](#) and the link to the song is [here](#).
- **We have posted** new positions on School Spring. If interested, please visit [www.schoolspring.com](http://www.schoolspring.com) to view the job details.

.4 FTE Guidance Counselor (One-Year Assignment), RMHS	JOB ID # 2377014
Kindergarten Paraeducator, Birch Meadow Elementary School	JOB ID # 2380314
.5 FTE Reading Specialist, Parker	JOB ID # 2394904
School Psychologist (One-Year Assignment), Parker	JOB ID # 2396964



- **Taste of Metro North coming to North Reading High on March 2**-The Rotary Clubs of North Reading and Reading are excited to announce they are bringing the *Taste of Metro North* to North Reading High School's Main Street (189 Park Street) on Wednesday, March 2, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. Joining forces for the fifth year, the Rotary Clubs have held the previous four events at Reading High School. This year's presenting sponsor is The Savings Bank in North Reading. Gold sponsors are Eastern Bank, Law Office of Douglas Mercurio PC, Linnane Insurance, Northern Bank, SalemFive, Sanborn Place, Home Care and Day Services and Winter Hill Bank.

Some restaurants that will make a presence are Chartwells Dining Service (NRPS), China Cuisine, Dunkin' Donuts, Heav'nly Donuts, Horseshoe Grille, Joe Fish, Kitty's, Ryer's Store, Teresa's Prime and the Wishing Well in North Reading; Bertucci's, Biltmore & Main, Chili's, Christopher's Restaurant, Fuddrucker's, Harrows, The Olde Redding Butcher Shoppe, Oye's, Reading and Wakefield Public Schools and Sanborn Place, Home Care & Day Services in Reading; Laurie's 9:09 and Sakura in Wakefield; Burton's in Burlington; Davio's and Temazal in Lynnfield.

Discount tickets for the Taste of Metro North are \$25 online (\$30 at the door) or \$50 online for a family of two adults and children under 18 (\$60 at the door). They can be purchased on the Taste's website [www.tasteofmetronorth.com](http://www.tasteofmetronorth.com) or from committee members and at Reading Municipal Light Department. Those who purchase tickets online can save \$5-\$10 from the at-the-door cost.

- **Rockets Help Desk Update**-The RMHS Rockets Help Desk students have completed some great new tutorials which are available on their blog: <http://rmhshelpdesk.blogspot.com/>. A summary of this posts are listed below.
  - ***Dolnk Green Screen Tutorial***: In this post, read about how RHD added a green screen (chroma key) to our library space and watch a tutorial of the extremely versatile Dolnk Green Screen iPad app. The chroma key (green screen) allows the creator to place a photo or video in the back to transform their project. The chroma key eliminates the green wall behind it putting in the background that you choose. As long as you do not wear green you should be all set to come down and try out this new tool.
  - ***On Using TeamUp***: TeamUp is a free and easy to use calendar scheduling system that our students have found to be a terrific tool for themselves and would love teachers, advisors and coaches to try it out.
  - ***PowerPoint Photo Editing Tools***: With the new photo editing tools of PowerPoint 2010 and 2013, you can add fun new filters to photos and make mosaic collages. Watch the tutorial and learn many ways to impress your audiences.
- **RCASA Offering Courses** -The Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse and the Reading Public Schools are offering free courses in March on Mental Health First Aid for Youth and Adults. The links to register are below. For more information, please contact RCASA Director Erica McNamara at [emcnamara@ci.reading.ma.us](mailto:emcnamara@ci.reading.ma.us).
  - **FREE Youth Mental Health First Aid** Courses for adults that live, work or go to school in Reading, MA  
Wed. March 9, 16, and 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6-8 pm  
[http://www.edline.net/files/\\_MHJ0d\\_/8833ba45264f8a483745a49013852ec4/March\\_Course.Youth\\_Mental\\_Health\\_First\\_Aid.Free\\_.pdf](http://www.edline.net/files/_MHJ0d_/8833ba45264f8a483745a49013852ec4/March_Course.Youth_Mental_Health_First_Aid.Free_.pdf)
  - **FREE Mental Health First Aid** Course for adults that live, work or go to school in Reading, MA

Saturday March 26<sup>th</sup>, 9-4 pm

[http://www.edline.net/pages/ReadingPublicSchools/Community/RCASA/News/Mental\\_Health\\_First\\_Aid](http://www.edline.net/pages/ReadingPublicSchools/Community/RCASA/News/Mental_Health_First_Aid)

- **SEEM to Offer SEI Courses**-SEEM Collaborative has added two new SEI courses to our spring schedule. One will be held on Wednesday evenings and the other will be held on Saturday mornings beginning the first week of March.

**For more information or to register please click on the link below:**

<https://seemcollaborative.gosignmeup.com/>

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## Blazing Trails....

**In this ASCD Inservice post**, assistant principal David J. Kimball writes about "tough empathy," an education principle that requires teachers to give students what they need, not necessarily what they want. When implementing a tough empathy pedagogy, teachers must hold students to high expectations; listen to students with a desire to understand, not ridicule; and never give up on the students if they struggle. Kimball writes that the best teachers he works with use this method and the benefits prime students for future success. [Read More](#)

**"Podcast: Co-Teaching in the Real World."** In the latest episode of Teaching Exceptionally, we're talking to co-teaching expert Dr. Marilyn Friend about the biggest challenges facing new co-teachers - and how you can solve them. Listen now and subscribe! P.S. Dr. Friend's presenting a Convention Workshop at CEC 2016 on co-teaching. [Don't Miss It!](#)

**"How Can Schools Stop Giving Students Bad Tests?"** Students are going to doodle. Teacher Deidra Gammill suggests that instead of treating doodling as a distraction, teachers should integrate sketching into their instruction. In her Education Week Teacher blog, Gammill draws inspiration from other visual note-takers-including Wendi Pillars-and outlines why doodling and sketchnoting are powerful learning tools that belong in the classroom. [Read More](#)

**"4 Things Innovative Schools Have In Common."** A recent list of 13 innovative schools is interesting because it is so diverse. Clearly innovation and creativity is not one dimensional. Some of the schools on the list are considered innovative because of the way they use their learning spaces, whilst others are vaunted because of their progressive pedagogical approaches. There is a common issue with many lists however, and it is that the inclusions are there because of the opinions of an individual or small group. What makes an innovative school? [Read More](#)

**"Would Less Screen Time Raise Students' Literacy Levels?"** As Australia seeks to boost students' reading skills, some suggest that limiting screen time would improve teen literacy levels. Christopher Bantick, a writer and senior literature teacher at a Melbourne boys' Anglican grammar school, writes in this commentary about a recent study in which parents had more trouble getting children to limit screen time than do their homework. [Read More](#)

**Have a Great Week!**

### Contact Us

The Journey newsletter is published weekly for the Reading Public School Community. If you have anything that you would like to share, please email your information to John Doherty at

[john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us)