



Pathways

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

May 22, 2016

Volume 7, Number 35

Upcoming Dates

- May 23 - (6:00 p.m.) SEPAC Meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Schettini Library @ RMHS
- May 23 - 26 - Senior Finals
- May 24 - (3:00 p.m.) Barrows Fun Run
- May 25 - Grade 6 - 12 Early Release; (afterschool) District PLC Meetings
- May 26 - (afterschool) Elementary Building Meetings; (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Choral Spring into Song
- May 30 - Memorial Day - Thank you to all that have served and continue to serve our country; No School
- May 31 - (3:00 p.m.) RTA General Meeting in the Endsow PAC; (5:00 p.m.) Senior Cruise and All-Night Party
- June 1 & 2 - RMHS MCAS Testing
- June 1 - (after school) Secondary Level District PLC Meetings; (7:00 p.m.) Reading Scholarship Foundation Awards Night in the Endsow PAC; (7:00 p.m.)

Elementary Science Curriculum Update

As you may know, this year we began reviewing and updating our Science curriculum by piloting the *KnowAtom* curriculum in all Grade 5 classrooms—as well as in several selected classrooms at other grade levels. This spring we have also been in the process of exploring next steps and reviewing feedback on the program—including student data from other districts who had previously adopted the program. If you have not had the opportunity to review *KnowAtom* materials, each elementary school is making sample resources available in the main office from May 24-May 31, and elementary school parents are welcome to stop in and look through the materials. Any feedback can of course be shared with the building principal and/or Craig Martin, Assistant Superintendent.

As you may also know, the 2016 MA Standards for Science and Technology/Engineering are now adopted by the DESE, and the state Framework (PreK-12) is complete. Information about STEM standards and the process for developing the state Framework can be found at this link:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/review.html>

... and the new Framework itself can be accessed as a PDF file here:

Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework, April 2016

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/scitech/2016-04.pdf>

Please feel free to review this information as well.

On Monday night (May 22), Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Teaching Craig Martin and staff will be presenting an update to the School Committee on the Science Curriculum. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Patrick A. Schettini Jr. Library at Reading Memorial High School.

Edline Information for Community Members

As written in a previous edition of *The Journey*, our school district will move to an enhanced database package from our current database provider Rediker (the AdminPlus people). **This move replaces Edline and** provides a more enhanced portal for teachers and parents. The RMHS High School Technology interest based group developed a quick and easy process for PTOs and other groups who have Edline pages to save your Edline content in the event that you have not made a copy of your files in another location.

Community Discussion on Override in the Coolidge Multipurpose Room

- June 2 – (8:30 a.m.) Coffee & Conversation @ Eaton; (10:00 a.m.) RMHS Seniors Marching Practice; (after school) Elementary Building Meetings; (6:30 p.m.) Parker Open House; (7:00 p.m.) Baccalaureate @ St. Agnes for Families of Seniors
- June 3 – (7:30 a.m.) RMHS Class Day in the Endslo PAC; (9:00 a.m.) RMHS Seniors Marching Practice; (12:00 p.m.) RMHS Senior BBQ; (6:00 p.m.) RMHS Choral Celebration in the Endslo PAC
- June 4 – (8:00 a.m.) SAT Testing – RMHS is NOT a test site.
- June 5 – (1:00 p.m.) RMHS Graduation in the Hawkes Field House
- June 6 – (8:00 a.m.) Coffee & Conversation @ Parker; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the RMHS Schettini Library – Staff Recognition

Below are instructions and recommendations for preserving Edline content.

Please note: **Access to Edline ends June 30, 2016.** Additional training will be provided after we migrate to the new portals. If you need help backing up your files or you have additional questions about the move, please contact your school's technology integration specialist. They are:

RMHS: Janet.Dee@reading.k12.ma.us

Coolidge: Marcia.Grant@reading.k12.ma.us

Parker: Meg.Powers@reading.k12.ma.us

Elementary Schools: Kathleen.Santilli@reading.k12.ma.us

How to Save Edline Files and Links

For All Edline Document Managers: Classroom Teachers and Edline Group Managers

Links:

For website links (not links within Edline): right click on the link and select the option to save the link to your browser bookmarks. You can create a folder(s) in your bookmarks to save all the Edline links in.

Here are the steps for the three browsers:

1. In Internet Explorer: Right click on the link and select "Add to Favorites," A dialog box will appear. Select New Folder and label it Edline Migration. Click the "Create" button. You may need to rename the link for clarity and then click the "Add" button.
Once created you can choose the folder for your subsequent favorites by clicking the drop-down menu in the Create in: box, and selecting the folder. You can create subfolders and save links by course, as well.
2. In Firefox: Right click on the link and select "Bookmark This Link." A dialog box will appear. On the top line, you may need to rename the link for clarity. Then select the drop-down button to the far right of the folder line to "show all the bookmarks folders." Select New Folder and label it Edline Migration. and then click the Save button.
Once created you can choose the folder for your subsequent favorites by clicking the drop-down menu in the Create in: box, and selecting the folder. You can create subfolders and save links by course, as well.
3. In Chrome: The right click menu does not give a direct save option. You will need to open the link in a new tab and save the page as a bookmark. Click the Chrome menu in the top-right corner of the browser, hover the mouse over Bookmarks, then select Bookmark manager from the drop-down menu. Click Organize, then select Add folder from the drop-down menu.

Files:

All files can be saved. Look for the icon to the left of the item on Edline. If it is a folder, open the folder(s) until you get to files.

For any files listed:

1. Right Click on the item
2. In Internet Explorer Select "Save target as..."
3. In Firefox and Chrome, Select "Save link as"
4. Navigate to the Edline Migration Folder you created in My Documents
5. Rename the File as Needed and Save the File

Other Items: The best option is to take screenshots of other items using the Snipping Tool (located in your Start Menu.)

Kudos and Accolades

- Congratulations to Boys & Girls Lacrosse, Boys & Girls Tennis, Baseball and Softball for posting wins last week.
- Congratulations to this week's RMHS High 5 - Malisa Gandevani and Paul Chong and RMHS Teacher Noreen Scarpitto who is retiring at the end of the year.
- Congratulations to the Boys Lacrosse, Boys & Girls Tennis, Baseball, Softball and Individual Track Athletes that have qualified for post season tournament action.
- Thanks to RMHS Director of Guidance Lynna Williams for preparing and coordinating the RMHS Senior Awards Ceremony last week.

Plymouth Teachers and Coaches Visit Reading Public Schools

On Thursday, kindergarten teachers and a literacy coach from Plymouth visited Reading to collaborate with kindergarten staff from Reading. The Plymouth teachers presented several Writing Workshop demo lessons with kindergarten students, and all the teachers were able to then discuss and debrief afterwards. Thanks so much to the Plymouth educators for coming to Reading for the day--and to Reading coach Tricia Stodden for coordinating this great opportunity for professional collaboration!



Rediscovering Your Fulfillment As a Teacher

By Dr. Allen Mendler for [Edutopia Magazine](#)

Some years ago, my wife, who was a special education coordinator, counseled a very bright young man out of the teaching profession. He was an adequate teacher, but he just didn't enjoy it. His lessons were uninspiring, he was often sarcastic with his students, and he couldn't leave fast enough at the end of the school day. When asked what he liked best about the job, there was nothing beyond job security that came to mind. In his spare time, this young man would spend hours blissfully tinkering in his garage. After some counseling and considerable reflection, he decided to quit teaching and ended up becoming an extraordinarily successful salesman of construction products, eventually opening his own business. To this day, he thanks my wife for encouraging him to find what he really wanted to do and go for it.

If you are continuously feeling unfulfilled as a teacher and have been for a while, perhaps you should pursue something different as well. There is no shame in finding what makes you truly happy and productive -- life, after all, is short. However, it may be that a few small attitudinal and behavioral changes can dramatically change the dynamic for you.

For most unhappy educators, some combination of inane policies, misbehaving or unmotivated students, and unsupportive administrators, colleagues, or parents is at the core of dissatisfaction. Nonetheless, if you are committed to remaining a teacher and want to add more joy to your work, the employee guidelines offered by Seattle's exuberant [Pike Place Fish Market](#) can be a very good starting point. An adapted version follows:

Be Playful

Like an elite athlete who is not only talented in what he does but also loves doing it, satisfied teachers find ways to enjoy what they are doing and will often create their own fun. Look for ways to inject fun into as many things as you can while you teach. Imagine being tickled or frolicking with your best friend. Poke fun at yourself. Sing when you discipline. Laugh with your kids. Enjoy their quirky ups and downs. Revel in their youth, dreams, and naivete. Don't take them or yourself too seriously.

Commit to Being a Positive Force

Strive to make everyone with whom you come into contact want to be around you, but don't burden yourself if it doesn't happen. It can help if you think about a place where you love to be. What happens that makes you want to be there? How do the people act? What do they say or do that makes you want to be around them? Challenge yourself to be like one or more of these people for at least two consecutive weeks, focusing your attitude and action on people whom you currently find frustrating -- and see what happens.

Be There

Practice being fully present in the moment -- physically, emotionally, and behaviorally. Yesterday is gone and tomorrow hasn't happened yet, so right now is all there is. Approach each day as a new beginning, especially with people that you

probably wouldn't choose in your regular life. Hard as it might be, try to remember that those who are driving you crazy are probably struggling even more than you are to feel good about what they're doing and about themselves. Most important is to be there for yourself by appreciating what you're doing -- even on days when nobody else seems to care. Keep a daily journal of things that you did to benefit a student, colleague, or parent, whether or not anyone else will ever notice.

Decide How You Want to Be

Do you smile or scold when a student walks in late? Do you laugh or yell when a student calls you a name? Do you thank or argue with an administrator who gives you feedback that you don't like? The lens we look through determines what we see and affects how we react. Choose lenses that get you to outcomes you prefer. To do so, consider the following experiment. For the next month, become an actor for at least one hour every day. Try to vary your schedule so that every block of classes gets to experience your act at least once each week. During this hour, act as though you worked in the greatest school that ever existed, with fabulous colleagues and administrators, policies you agree with, a rich and exciting curriculum, and kids who are motivated to learn and eager to behave. Move around with an extra bounce in your step and a welcoming demeanor, even if you aren't "feeling it." In fact, don't expect this to feel at all natural in the beginning. That's alright -- think of the first week as a rehearsal. Like actors who have to put on their game faces when in character, no matter how they really feel, make it your goal during this time to be the Brad Cooper/Reese Witherspoon of teaching!

Your feedback is always welcome. In particular, if you're an educator who has found your way back to joy in teaching despite all the obstacles, please share your thoughts.

Editor's note: This post is adapted from Allen Mendler's books [When Teaching Gets Tough](#) and [The Resilient Teacher](#).

DR. ALLEN MENDLER'S PROFILE

This Teacher's Unusual Homework Assignment Is Going Viral For the Right Reasons

By **AOL.Com** editors

Typically, weekend homework assignments elicit nothing more than groans and eye rolls from unenthused, overstressed students. But an unusual worksheet handed out by a **London teacher** this weekend had pupils reacting quite oppositely. A teacher by the name of Mrs. Thom at **Bucklebury Primary School** gave the stress-managing worksheet to her **year 6** class, as they are preparing for their **SATs**(Standard Attainment Tests) this month.

The items on the lengthy checklist include childhood favorites, such as going on a bike or scooter ride, eating ice cream or candy and watching a favorite TV program.

Quote of the Week....



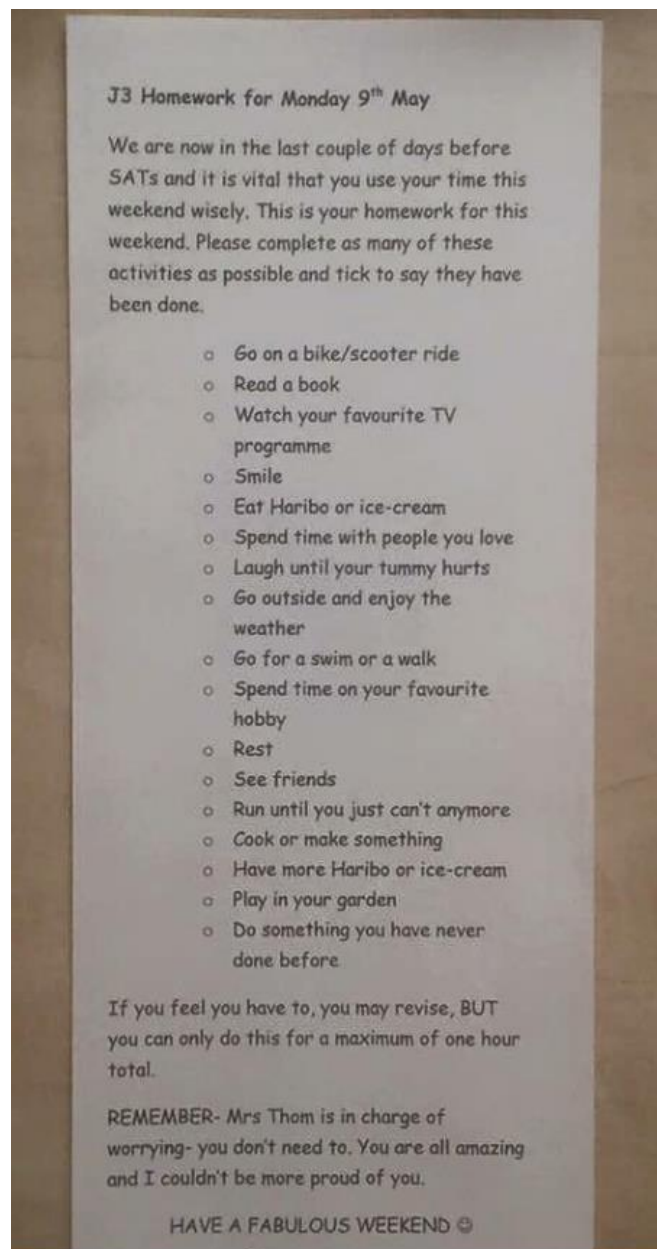
"Life is a journey, not a destination. Enjoy the trip!"

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

She ends the worksheet with a sweet note to her students, saying "Mrs Thom is in charge of worrying - you don't need to. You are all amazing and I couldn't be more proud of you." The "assignment," which was shared on a community Facebook page called **Eyfs Matters** on May 7, has garnered more than 64,000 shares and 72,000 likes in the 2 days since it was shared, many from enthusiastic parent.

"What a wonderful teacher, I started to well up reading this," said Facebook user **Kevin Finch**.

"I'm very fortunate - my daughter is a year 6 in Mrs Thom's class. We have spent a happy day ticking lots of those boxes. I'm passionate about Bucklebury School, a school that believes in growing the whole child," commented **Louise Harry**. One commenter even shared a similar 'assignment' their child had received: SAT preparation or not, Mrs. Thom's amazing weekend assignment sounds like something all of us could benefit from.



Disney Tweet of the Week



"Just try the best you can, and if it's not good enough for them, then that's their problem."

—Queen Miranda (Sofia the First)

—

Reading Public School Happenings

RMHS Jazz Band Performs at Hatch Shell

Last Sunday, the RMHS Jazz Band, under the direction of Joseph Mulligan, performed at the Hatch Shell in Boston as part of a group of outstanding High School Jazz Bands across the state who earned a gold medal in the State Competition. Congratulations to the Jazz Band on an outstanding season!



RMHS Instrumental Spring Concert

On Wednesday evening, the Reading Memorial High School Bands, under the direction of Joseph Mulligan and Eric Blackman, performed in their annual Instrumental Spring Concert. This year, the Stage Band, Jazz Band, and Symphonic Band performed 11 songs that showed their outstanding talent and skills. Congratulations to the students on a job well done!



RMHS Stage Band



RMHS Jazz Band



RMHS Symphonic Band

RMHS Senior Awards Night

Last Thursday evening, over 100 RMHS Seniors received recognition, awards, and scholarships at the annual RMHS Senior Awards Night. This year the night was restructured a little differently where special subject awards were given to exemplify the RMHS Core Values of Perseverance and Scholarship, as well as two awards were given for the Core Values of Responsibility and Respect. In addition, all of the awards and scholarships that have been traditionally presented at graduation were given at this event.



Seniors Caroline Hagan and Allison O'Brien welcome the audience



Senior Kevin King receives an ROTC Scholarship to attend Norwich Academy



Senior Shealagh Doherty receives the Killam PTO Field Seminar Award

AP Art Show

Last Wednesday, RMHS students in the Advanced Placement Art Classes participated in an AP Art Show on Main Street at RMHS. Below are several photos from the event. Congratulations to our talented artists and the support that they receive from our dedicated art teachers.





RMHS Envirothon Team Competes in Massachusetts Competition

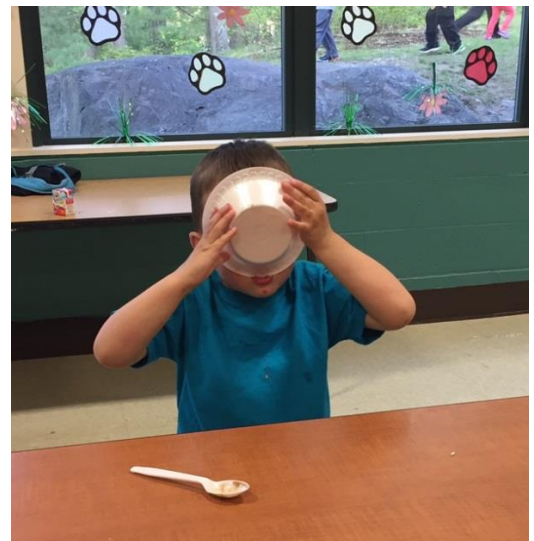
The RMHS Envirothon team tied for 5th place in the Soils Ecostation and came in 12th place overall in the Massachusetts State Envirothon Competition on May 12. The students presented their research about Invasive Species in Reading to a

panel of judges, and made an informational brochure about Invasive Species which they will give to the Reading Conservation Administrator to share with interested homeowners. Congratulations to the team and to Advisors Fiona Schutte and Martha Moore on their commitment to this worthy event.



Birch Meadow Ice Cream Social

Last week, families at Birch Meadow enjoyed an Ice Cream Social evening. Below are some photos from this popular event.



Last Day of Classes for Seniors

Friday was the last day of classes for Seniors before exams. In the photo below, Principal Adam Bakr addresses the senior class before dismissing them to prepare for the Prom.

Contact Us

The Pathways 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



Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts and prayers go out to former Police Chief **Jim Cormier** who lost a close family member recently.
- Our thoughts and prayers go out to Human resources administrator **Micheala Saunders** who lost a close family member recently.
- Our thoughts and prayers go out to District Administrator for Behavioral Health **Sara Burd**, who lost a close family member recently.
- **We welcome** the following new hires to our school district:
 - Michael Grassi, Daily Substitute, District
 - Mary Shanahan, Special Education Paraeducator, Birch Meadow
- **We have posted** a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job details.

Grade 2 Special Education Co-Teacher, Birch Meadow

<https://reading.tedk12.com/Hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=39>

JV Girls Field Hockey Coach

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=41>

.8 FTE Visual Arts Teacher, RMHS, 2016-2017

<https://reading.tedk12.com/Hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=45>

.6 FTE School Psychologist, RMHS, 2016-2017

<https://reading.tedk12.com/Hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=44>

1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher, RMHS, 2016-2017

<https://reading.tedk12.com/Hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=43>

Middle School Wellness/PE Long-Term Sub, Coolidge Middle School, 2015-2016

<https://reading.tedk12.com/Hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=46>

Blazing Trails....

Mindful Practices Improve Learning." It's long been known that meditation helps children feel calmer, but new research is helping quantify its benefits for elementary school-age children. A 2015 study published in the journal *Developmental Psychology* found that 4th- and 5th-grade students who participated in a four-month meditation program showed improvements in executive functions like cognitive control, working memory, cognitive flexibility-and better math grades. A study published recently in the journal *Mindfulness* found similar improvements in mathematics in 5th graders with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. And a study of elementary school children in Korea showed that eight weeks of meditation lowered aggression, social anxiety and stress levels. [Read More](#)

"Problem Not Solved by 'School Choice.'" A child's access to a decent education shouldn't be limited by his ZIP code. That mantra has helped drive the school choice movement during the past two decades, pushing a growing number of cities to embrace policies that allow children from poor families to escape troubled neighborhood schools and enroll elsewhere. But has it worked? Not yet, according to a new analysis of New York City high school graduation rates. [Read More](#)

"Giving a Name, and Dignity, to a Disability." Terms such as idiot and imbecile, which are now considered offensive, were once quite acceptable ways to refer to individuals who have what we now call "intellectual disability." In this article, author Dan Barry explores this shift in terminology, explaining that it "is part of society's long struggle to find the proper terminology for people with intellectual disability, and reflects the discomfort the subject creates among many in the so-called non-disabled world. It speaks to a continuing sense of otherness; to perceptions of what is normal, and not." [Read More](#)

"The Curious Incident of the Choice-Based Classroom." In this ASCD Express post, teacher Kristin Vanderlip Taylor talks about the power of choice. Learn why teaching students to behave like artists, including giving them greater control over their subject matter and media, unleashes student engagement and curiosity-driven learning. [Read More](#)

"I Have Seen the School of Tomorrow. It is Here Today, in Finland." Finland's approach to education can serve as inspiration to educators worldwide, William Doyle, a Fulbright Scholar who joined the faculty of the University of Eastern Finland last year, writes in this commentary. He suggests the system offers global best practices, such as an emphasis on the whole child and research-based practices. [Read More](#)

Have a Great Week!