



Pathways

A weekly collection of information, thoughts, reflections, and accolades for the Reading Public Schools Community

January 8, 2017

Volume 3, Number 18

Upcoming Dates

- January 9 – (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room
- January 11 – Grade 6 – 12 Early Release; (afterschool) District PLC Meetings
- January 12 – (after school) RISE/Elementary Building Meetings (grade level common time); (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room; (7:00 p.m.) Middlesex Partnership for Youth Internet Safety & Social Media Presentation @ the Parker Middle School
- January 13 (7:30 p.m.) Coolidge Drama Production Beauty & the Beast, Jr. in the Endslo PAC
- January 14 – (7:30 p.m.) Coolidge Drama Production Beauty & the Beast, Jr. in the Endslo PAC
- January 15 – (2:00 p.m.) Coolidge Drama Production Beauty & the Beast, Jr. in the Endslo PAC
- January 16 – Martin Luther King Day – Schools and Offices Closed; (10:00 p.m.) Martin Luther King Celebration @ RMHS
- January 17 – 20 – RMHS Midterms & Real World Problem Solving
- January 18 – (after school) Secondary Building Meetings

School Committee FY18 Budget Presentations Begin Monday

On Monday, January 9th, the Reading School Committee will begin to hear presentations from Superintendent John Doherty on the FY18 Superintendent's Recommended Budget. The meeting schedule for January is as follows:

- Monday, January 9 (Overview, Administration, and Regular Day Cost Centers)
- Thursday, January 12 (Special Education and District Wide Services Cost Centers)
- Thursday, January 19 (Public Hearing, Town and School Facilities, Questions)
- Monday, January 23 (Questions and Discussion)
- Thursday, January 26 (Scheduled School Committee Vote)

All meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the School Committee Conference Room at the Reading Public Schools Administration Offices. When the School Committee votes in late January on the budget, it will become the School Committee budget, which is then presented to the Town Manager. The Town Manager then presents a full Town budget to the Finance Committee which is within the available revenues for the Town. The School Committee budget will be presented in March to the Finance Committee of the Town who votes whether to refer the budget as is to Town Meeting or refer with changes. Town Meeting then has final approval authority. By statute, Town Meeting can only vote the "bottom line" of the School Committee budget. It may vote to increase or reduce the total dollar value, but it cannot specify the line item to which the increase or decrease is to be made.

Once the School Committee votes on the budget, the timeline for the next steps in the budget development process is summarized below.

FY'17 School Committee Budget Presentation to Finance Committee-March 15, 2017

Annual Town Meeting-April 24, April 27, May 1

On Tuesday, we will post copies of the Superintendent's FY18 Recommended Budget on our Reading Public School media sites. Copies of the budget document will be available at the Office of the Superintendent, the Reading Town Library, the main office of each school, and on the Reading Public School's website at www.reading.k12.ma.us. For additional information or clarification, please feel free to contact the Central Office Administration for assistance at 781-944-5800 or by email at john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us.

- January 19 – (after school)
RISE/Elementary Building
Meetings; (7:00 p.m.)
School Committee
Meeting in the
Superintendent's
Conference Room; (7:00
p.m.) RMHS Music
Department 8th Grade
Family Orientation in the
Endslow PAC
- January 21 – (8:00 a.m.)
SAT Testing – RMHS is a
Test Center

Martin Luther King Celebration on January 16th

**THE READING HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
& READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRESENT
THE ANNUAL MULTI-COMMUNITY**



MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY CELEBRATION

**MONDAY, JANUARY 16TH, 2017
READING MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

**9:30AM BREAKFAST
10:00AM PROGRAM
FREE ADMISSION
OPEN TO ALL COMMUNITIES**

The Human Relations Advisory Committee would like to invite the Community to the Annual Multi-Community Martin Luther King Day Celebration at the RMHS Performing Arts Center from 9:30 - 11:30 on Monday, January 16th. This year's theme is: "Liberty and Justice for All!"

This family event is free on Martin Luther King Day and starts at 9:30 with a small breakfast and tables presenting what local organizations are doing for our community. Some tables have activities to engage in. Then we move into the Performing Arts Center where there will be video presentations, music by the Reading Civic Concert Band, The Friends of METCO Elementary School Chorus, The Chorus of the Korean Church of the Nazarene, two choruses from Reading Memorial High School, and Jamele, a rap-artist and Dean at Brandeis University. Senator Jason Lewis will also be amongst the speakers at the event.

Kudos and Accolades

- Congratulations to the boys and girls hockey teams, swimming, boys and girls hockey, gymnastics and the girls and boys basketball teams for recent victories.
- Special thanks goes to Joshua Eaton Principal Eric Sprung, Joshua Eaton Teacher Jaime Quinn, and Joshua Eaton School Council Co-Chair Christine Lusk for presenting at the School Committee Meeting on Thursday night.
- Special Thanks goes to Assistant Superintendent Craig Martin, Birch Meadow Teachers Danielle Tucker, and Kelly Strob, Birch Meadow Principal Julia Hendrix, and Instructional Coach Caren Brown for presenting at the School Committee Meeting on Thursday night.

Building Critical Thinking Skills for the Internet

In this Hechinger Report article, Chris Bernik describes how AP U.S. history students in California were initially impressed with the professionally designed pages of the website www.minimumwage.com. It had a menu of research reports, well-produced graphics and videos, and an “About” page describing the site as a “nonprofit research organization” named the Employment Policies Institute. Then the teacher, with a few exploratory clicks beyond the website, revealed that this was actually a front group created by lobbyists for the restaurant and hotel industries. “Fudge nuggets!” exclaimed one chagrined student.

This exercise was part of the “Civic Online Reasoning” curriculum created by Stanford University researchers led by education professor Sam Wineburg, all designed to help students become more critical consumers of online news, opinion, and misinformation. The goal is to help secondary students spot “native advertising” (ads masquerading as articles), the authenticity of an alarming image posted on Facebook, the claims of a controversial article. “Overall,” concluded a report on several pilot tests of the curriculum, “young people’s ability to reason about the information on the Internet can be summed up in one word: *bleak*.” The Common Core’s push for evidence-based reasoning is for naught if students trust everything that pops up when they do a Google search. “This isn’t just a problem with kids,” says Wineburg. “Reliable information is to democratic functioning what clean air and water are to public health.”

“What These Teens Learned About the Internet May Shock You!” by Chris Bernik in *The Hechinger Report*, December 21, 2016, <http://hechingerreport.org/teens-learned-internet-may-shock/>. Reprinted from Marshall Memo 667.

A Major Study on Later High-School Start Times

“The body of evidence concerning the academic benefits of a later start time for high-school students is compelling,” says Kyla Wahlstrom (University of Minnesota/Minneapolis) in this *Kappan* article. “Also, the medical research into the functioning of the brain in memory, learning, and cognition is robust, while the link between sleep and mental health is unequivocal.” Wahlstrom, who was skeptical when she got a call in 1996 from a Minnesota school about the possible benefits of later start times, is now a true believer, and major medical groups are also on board: the American Academy of Pediatrics (<http://bit.ly/APsleep>) and the American Medical Association (<http://bit.ly/AMAsleep>) now support moving high-school opening times to 8:30 or later, based on what’s really happening to teens – the two-hour shift in biological sleep-wake cycles that occurs at the start of puberty.

But how has this idea worked out in the real world? Wahlstrom reports on a major study on the impact of later high-school opening times in eight high schools in Minnesota, Colorado, and Wyoming. Researchers surveyed more than 9,000

Superintendent's Office

Hours this Week

All are welcome

1/10 (2:00 -3:00 p.m.)-
Coolidge

1/12 (7:15 – 8:15 a.m.) -
Parker

1/14 (9:00-10:00 a.m.)-
Reading Public Schools
Administration Offices

students on their sleep habits, mood, study habits, substance abuse, and co-curricular activities and analyzed grades, attendance, tardiness, and standardized test results. The high schools had a range of students of color, free-and-reduced-price meal percentages, and graduation rates. Here are the major findings:

- *Academics* – There were significant decreases in student absences and tardiness in all grades that shifted to the latest opening times (8:35 – 8:55 a.m.). There were statistically significant increases in student grade point averages in one or more English, math, social studies, and science classes that met first period in schools that started from 8:00 to 8:35 a.m. In a Wyoming school that opened at 8:55, there were significant grade increases in all first-period core courses for all semesters in all grades.

- *Health* – “The closer a school’s start time comes to enabling eight or more hours of sleep each school night, the greater the reduction in risky teen behaviors,” says Wahlstrom. Here are the findings on the percent of students getting eight hours of sleep:

- 8:00 a.m. start time – 49.7 percent
- 8:35 a.m. start time – 60 percent
- 8:55 a.m. start time – 66.2 percent

Eight or more hours of sleep appears to be the tipping point for reducing cigarette, alcohol, and marijuana use, which declined by 8-14 percent when teens slept that much; depression and sexual activity declined 9-11 percent for those students.

- *Car accidents* – After the high schools changed to later start times, car crashes in the districts involving teens decreased by 13 percent. The greatest reduction in the first year was in the Wyoming school that shifted its opening time to 8:55 a.m.: accidents dropped by 70 percent.

- *Complicating factors* – Wahlstrom says that “a later start time isn’t in itself a panacea for reducing sleep deprivation in teenagers.” Students who participate in after-school activities or jobs are significantly more likely to get insufficient sleep, and students who wake up often during the night to get on social media (87.6 percent of students had their cell phone in their bedroom) are also significantly less likely to get enough sleep.

Based on the study’s findings, Wahlstrom has the following recommendations for schools and districts considering a change in opening times:

- *Go for the latest start time.* Benefits are proportional to the amount of sleep added. Modest changes – for example, from 7:25 to 7:55 – will have only modest benefits while causing almost the same amount of disruption.
- *Address the real concerns.* Issues that need to be addressed include athletic schedules, bus schedules, child care, parents’ work schedules, and rush-hour traffic.
- *Some issues aren’t really a problem.* The experience of these districts is that moving to a later start time didn’t affect sports teams’ win/loss record, teens staying up even later at night, student participation in after-school activities, students’ punctuality for after-school jobs, or transportation costs.

Quote of the Week . . .



Success is a journey, not a destination. The process is often more important than the outcome.

-Unknown

- *Deal creatively with transportation shifts.* One solution is flipping high-school and elementary school bus schedules.
- *Educate parents* – Many need information on what constitutes good sleep hygiene for their teenagers, including the importance of removing electronics from their bedrooms at bedtime.
- *Involve stakeholders.* Districts that have successfully shifted to later start times have reached out to pediatricians, parks and recreation leaders, and public safety officials as well as family members.

“It’s taken 20 years for schools across the United States to fully engage in the movement to change high-school start times,” concludes Wahlstrom. “Education decision-makers have begun to realize that teens aren’t lazy and that they are, instead, in a unique time in their development where they need substantial amounts of sleep... Teens face an incredibly challenging world. Together, school leaders and parents have the responsibility to create the best possible conditions for them in which to grow and thrive. Implementing later high-school start times is a significant change that positively affects their health, safety and learning. If we have that will, we can find the way.”

From the National Sleep Foundation, here are suggested bedtimes for teens age 14-17 based on 9 hours of sleep:

- Wake-up time 4:30 a.m. – Bedtime 7:30 p.m.
- Wake-up time 4:45 a.m. – Bedtime 7:45 p.m.
- Wake-up time 5:00 a.m. – Bedtime 8:00 p.m.
- Wake-up time 5:15 a.m. – Bedtime 8:15 p.m.
- Wake-up time 5:30 a.m. – Bedtime 8:30 p.m.
- Wake-up time 5:45 a.m. – Bedtime 8:45 p.m.
- Wake-up time 6:00 a.m. – Bedtime 9:00 p.m.
- Wake-up time 6:15 a.m. – Bedtime 9:15 p.m.
- Wake-up time 6:30 a.m. – Bedtime 9:30 p.m.
- Wake-up time 6:45 a.m. – Bedtime 9:45 p.m.

“Later Start Time for Teens Improves Grades, Mood, and Safety” by Kyla Wahlstrom in *Phi Delta Kappan*, December 2016/January 2017 (Vol. 88, #4, p. 8-14), <http://www.kappanonline.org/late-start-time-for-teens>; Wahlstrom can be reached at wahls001@umn.edu. For data on later start times, see www.startschoolslater.net. Reprinted from Marshall Memo 666.

2 Secrets To The Good Life, Backed By Ancient Wisdom And Research

By Eric Barker, [Barking Up the Wrong Tree Blog](#)

On the first day of his class on ancient Chinese philosophy, professor Michael Puett makes a promise to all the students:

If you take the ideas in these texts seriously, they will change your life.

Big words. But he may not be crazy -- his class is currently the third most popular one at Harvard. Luckily, you don't have to brave a winter in Cambridge to hear what he has to say.

Disney Tweet of the Week



Whoever thinks they're not good enough, you're wrong. Everyone is good enough.

—Goofy

Michael Puett and Christine Gross-Loh are the authors of **The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life**.

Most people in the West assume Chinese philosophy is all profound maxims about balance and harmony... and they're wrong. A lot of it actually says that life is messy. From **The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life**:

...the truth is that many Chinese philosophers actually saw the world very differently: as consisting of an endless series of fragmented, messy encounters. This worldview emerged from the notion that all aspects of human life are governed by emotions, including the endless human interactions that take place.

So this is looking both pretty useful and quite realistic because many of us are wondering how we can find fulfillment, happiness, and the good life in today's very messy world.

Well, Confucius and his bros have two insights that are worth learning about that also jive with the latest findings by modern research. Alright, let's get to it...

It's The Little Things

When you think about Confucius, you probably think wise sayings that are big picture and, frankly, kinda vague. Wrong.

His classic book, **The Analects**, is often the exact *opposite*. The guy wrote about how high he preferred to position his elbows and the intricacies of how he acted at dinnertime. You're probably thinking what I'm thinking: *Huh?*

Here's the deal: Confucius wasn't into the big metaphysical questions. He was practical. He believed living the good life was bottom up, not top down. And to him, the focus was on **the little rituals of life**.

And he wasn't crazy. **Research** shows 40% of what you do every day is done out of habit. If you get the little rituals down -- if you get rid of bad habits and build good ones -- then nearly half of your life will be lived well. Sounds like a good deal.

You often label yourself as this kind of person or that kind of person. "*I'm emotional. That's just how I am.*" or "*I have no attention span. It's the way I'm wired.*" These days we try to "know our authentic self."

But Confucius and other ancient Chinese philosophers weren't on board with that. They thought that **you are what you do**. Your temperament doesn't shape your behavior as much as your behavior shapes your temperament.

From **The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life**:

Every person has many different and often contradictory emotional dispositions, desires, and ways of responding to the world. Our emotional dispositions develop by looking outward, not inward. They are not cultivated when you retreat from the world to meditate or go on a vacation. They are formed, in practice, through the things you do in your everyday life: the ways you interact with others and the activities you pursue. In other words, we aren't just who we are: we can actively make ourselves into better people all the time.

And a lot of science agrees. UVA professor **Tim Wilson** has shown that often it's not thinking you're a good person that makes you altruistic. It's the reverse. When we force ourselves to do good, we see ourselves as good.

Important Websites

RPS District Website

www.reading.k12.ma.us

Interface Health Services

<https://interface.williamjames.edu/community/reading>

Need help finding mental health care?



The Town of Reading has contracted with a unique **HELPLINE** service staffed by licensed clinicians that can help children, teens, & adults in Reading become connected with mental health care. Get provider matches that meet your specific needs, accepts your insurance & has available appointments.

Call 1-888-244-6843 (toll free) • M-F • 9am-5pm
<https://interface.williamjames.edu/>

UCLA neuroscientist [Alex Korb](#) has written about how happiness and depression aren't as hardwired as you may think. Little things you do habitually can create an upward spiral of positive feelings in the brain.

From **The Upward Spiral**:

Everything is interconnected. Gratitude improves sleep. Sleep reduces pain. Reduced pain improves your mood. Improved mood reduces anxiety, which improves focus and planning. Focus and planning help with decision making. Decision making further reduces anxiety and improves enjoyment. Enjoyment gives you more to be grateful for, which keeps that loop of the upward spiral going. Enjoyment also makes it more likely you'll exercise and be social, which, in turn, will make you happier.

Confucius knew that the little rituals we choose to engage in have the power to snap us out of negative patterns or the influence of our surroundings.

When you shower and get dressed, you feel ready for the day. When you organize your desk, you feel more in control. The ritual lets you be a different you for a while, and that's far more powerful than merely urging yourself to "get in gear" or "calm down."

From **The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life**:

He understood that seemingly minor actions such as arranging the place where people would sit with him would create a different environment that could affect them profoundly. The modern-day equivalent of the mat ritual might be our dinnertime routines: when we set the table, perhaps laying out placemats and napkins, even lighting candles, we step out of our regular lives and create an alternate reality for ourselves and those with us. Even if the day has been stressful, if there's been a lot of conflict, there's no need for someone to declare, "Okay, it's time to stop fighting and relax now." The dinner table ritual simply creates a break that allows everyone to enter a different mode.

Harvard Business School professor Francesca Gino has found that having a little ritual before a meal **actually makes the food taste better**. Want a happier family? Get thee some rituals.

From **100 Simple Secrets of Happy Families**:

Consistent family rituals encourage the social development of children and increase feelings of family cohesiveness by more than 17 percent. – Eaker and Walters 2002

You're going to have habits; that's inevitable. Wouldn't it be better if you decided what they were, rather than having them decided for you? And according to Confucius, you're not just creating the way that you'll do things in the future. You're creating the person you'll become.

(To learn the scientific steps to ending bad habits once and for all, click [here](#).)

Alright, Confucian rituals for the win. Those little things make a big difference. But how do we approach our big goals? Do you need a life plan to be happy and successful? Nope...

Don't Make Life Plans. Cultivate Opportunity.

Mencius is another ancient Chinese philosopher that Michael Puett covers in his class. And Mencius also believed life was messy. While you'll nod your head when I say that nobody can predict the future, you still act like there are certainties when you make plans. Then things inevitably go sideways and you get angry that life didn't follow your plan.

But I'll give you the benefit of the doubt. Maybe you're an awesome planner. Maybe you're like the protagonist in a heist film, synchronized watches and all. Here's the problem: it isn't just life that's messy. You're messy too. You can account for many factors in the world that might change, but what if you change? What if what you want changes? Uh-oh...

This is what leads to a midlife crisis. You executed your plan perfectly. But in the process your goals shifted and now there's no way to change course.

From **The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life:**

When you hold too tightly to a plan, you risk missing out on these things. And when you wake up one day in that future, you will feel boxed in by a life that, at best, reflects only a piece of who you thought you were at one moment in time.

As Oscar Wilde once quipped: "There are only two tragedies in life: one is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it." So Mencius says in an uncertain world (which contains an uncertain you) don't focus on rigid life plans -- cultivate opportunities.

Keep giving new things a try. Have hobbies. Develop different sides of yourself.

From **The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life:**

Most of us have hobbies and interests we pursue on the weekend or in our free time. We often don't think of those things as relevant to figuring out what we want to do with our life. And yet laying the ground means something as simple as scheduling time to take part in activities that speak to the different sides of yourself that you are interested in developing: joining a wine tasting class, learning how to paint in watercolor, or brushing up on your high school French once a week in a language swap. By proactively building room in your life for all sorts of possibilities, and then remaining open and responsive, you are akin to a farmer preparing his field so that his crops can flourish.

Sounds nice, but is this really all-around good life advice?

Yup. Trying different things and making "little bets" is how most creative geniuses **develop their best work**. But there's an even bigger benefit: it makes you lucky.

When professor **Richard Wiseman** studied what lucky people have in common he found they were open to new experiences and more likely to act upon chance opportunities in their lives. And when he had "normal" people try those things, **they became luckier too**. Here's Richard:

Lucky people just try stuff. Unlucky people suffered from paralysis by analysis. They wouldn't do anything until they walked through every single angle and by then the world had moved on. They don't gain the benefits of learning through doing. I'm a big fan of starting small, trying lots of projects, seeing what works and what doesn't, and iterating based on feedback.

Lots of things can make you happier and more productive. How many things can make you *luckier*? When you "engineer serendipity" you create opportunities and possibilities. And that means even if the master plan fails -- you won't. (To learn the four things that can make you luckier, click [here](#).)

Okay, we've got two pieces of ancient wisdom. Let's review and see how they can work together to make sure you live the good life...

Sum Up

Here's what you can learn from ancient Chinese philosophers:

- **It's the little things.** Rituals are key. You are your habits; so take the time to get rid of the bad ones and develop good ones.
- **Don't make life plans. Cultivate opportunities.** The master plan may fail. Your goals will change. So guarantee that new possibilities will keep coming your way by making "little bets."

There's no simple turnkey solution to life. And anybody that says there is is selling something.

Believing "life is messy" isn't cynical or a rationalization, it's realistic. Saying "I can be anything I want to be" is naive and untrue. You can't control the future. But saying, "I don't know yet what I can become" is hopeful and honest.

From **The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life:**

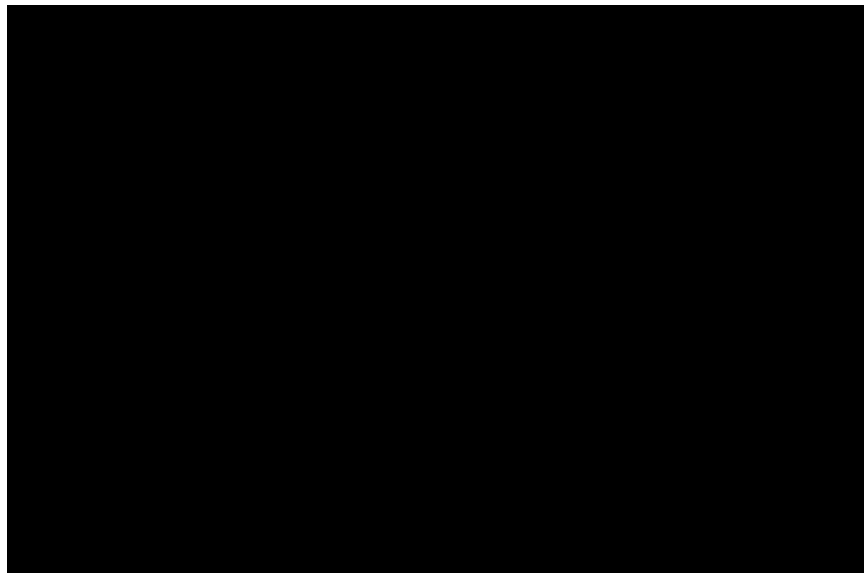
Rather than going into all of this thinking, "I can be anything I want to be," the approach you're taking is "I don't know yet what I can become." You don't know where any of this might take you; it's not possible to know that now. But what you learn about yourself and what excites you won't be abstract; it will be very concrete knowledge born of practical experience... You become the fruit of your labor.

"Doing the right things and feeling engaged as new opportunities keep coming your way."

Sounds like a realistic vision of the good life to me.

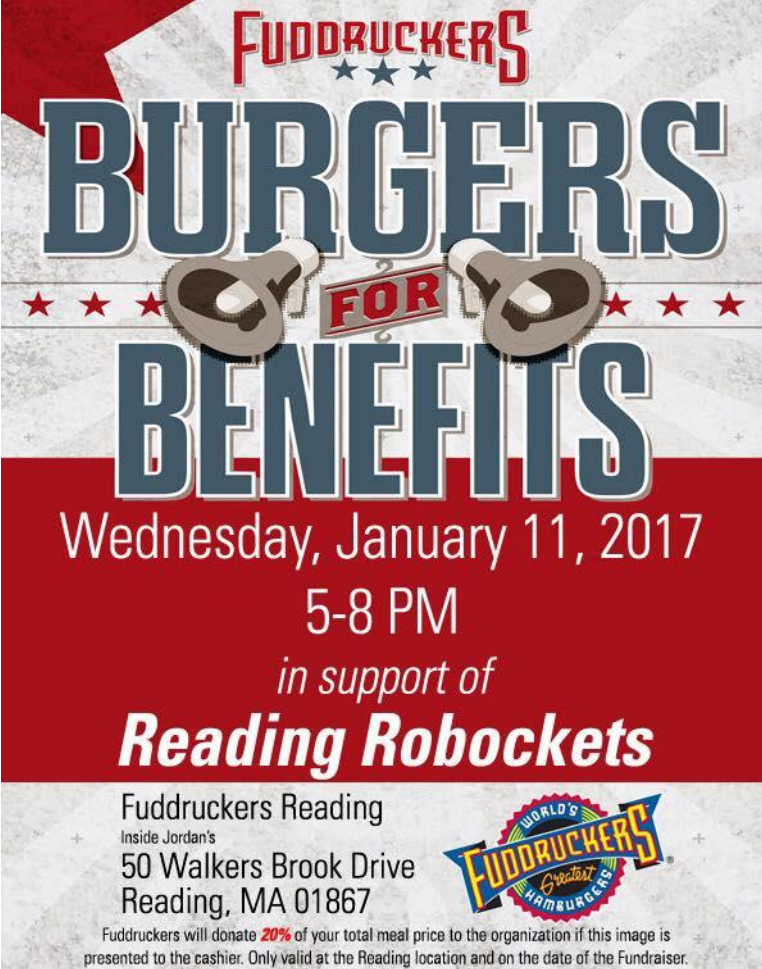
2017 FIRST Robotics FIRST STEAMWORKS Competition

Last Saturday, FIRST Robotics Competition held its annual kickoff announcing the task for the 2017 FIRST Robotics Competition. The RMHS Robockets were one of thousands of teams that participated in the event. Below is a video of a description of this year's competition. You can also access it [here](#). Good luck to the Robockets in this year's challenge!



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 info to John Doherty at: john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us



FUDDRUCKERS
BURGERS
FOR
BENEFITS

Wednesday, January 11, 2017
5-8 PM
in support of
Reading Robockets

Fuddruckers Reading
Inside Jordan's
50 Walkers Brook Drive
Reading, MA 01867

Fuddruckers will donate **20%** of your total meal price to the organization if this image is presented to the cashier. Only valid at the Reading location and on the date of the Fundraiser.

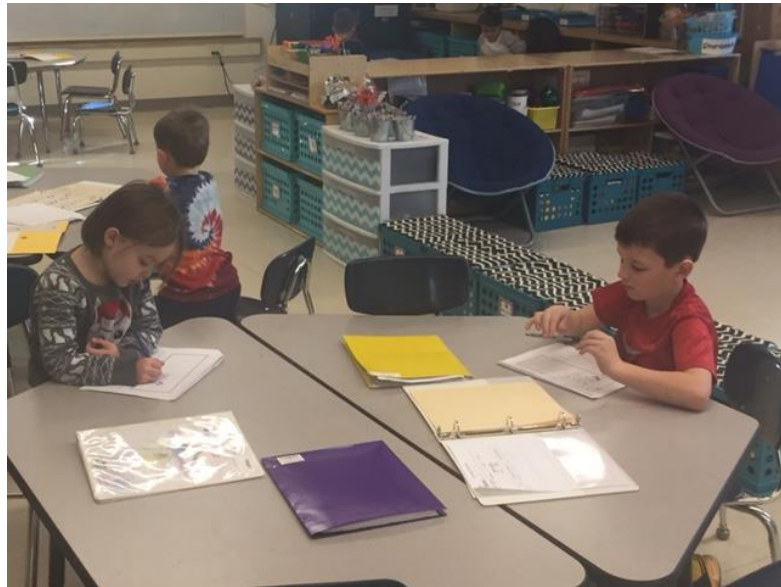
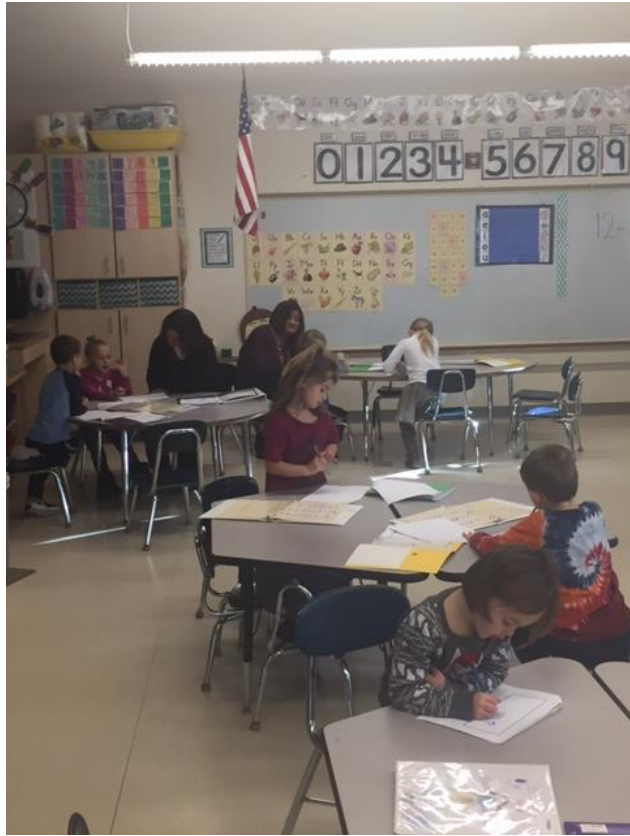
WORLD'S GREATEST FUDDRUCKERS HAMBURGERS

Reading Public Schools Happenings

Writer's Workshop in Kindergarten

Recently, kindergarten students in Sarah Bielicki's Class at Wood End were focused on writing individual stories in Writer's Workshop. Future authors at work!





Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts and prayers go out to Wood End Secretary **Lisa Finigan** who recently lost a loved one.
- Our thoughts go out to the family of retired Parker Assistant Principal **Bill Cowles**, who passed away last week. Bill worked in the Reading Public Schools for 36 years and had a tremendous positive impact on staff and students.

- Our thoughts go out to retired Preschool Director **Vicki Griffin** and former Reading Public School Team Chair **Pam Girouard**, who lost a close family member recently.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
 - ✓ Tessa Haynes, Substitute, District
 - ✓ Jillian Iwanuk, Grade 2 Teacher, Wood End
- **We have posted** a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

Long Term Substitute Reading Specialist, Killam Elementary School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=209

1.0FTE Special Education Teacher (Crossroads Program), Wood End Elementary School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=210

Per-Diem Substitute Teacher and Substitute Paraeducator, Reading Public Schools
https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=211

Blazing Trails...

The Buzz: Boston EdTalks is Seeking Applicants-**Boston EdTalks**, an annual event sponsored by The Boston Foundation, is looking for five outstanding educators to present on exciting classroom practices or ways educators are addressing challenges at their school. The event will be May 4, 2017, but the **application** deadline is 8 a.m. January 17, 2017. **More information**, including **examples of past Boston EdTalks**, is available online.

What We're Reading: Digital Literacy Challenges and Resources- In this "**Hechinger Report**" **Tech Smart** article, Chris Berdik shows just how far behind teens are when it comes to evaluating bias and truthfulness in online sources and points to the need for greater digital literacy at a time when, fortunately, there is also a renewed interest in civics.

Jonathan Anzalone, assistant director of the Center for News Literacy at Stony Brook University in New York, told Berdik, "One of the messages we've tried to stress more and more lately with the rise of fake news is this: Do you want to be fooled?... Wouldn't you rather make up your own mind?"

Here in Massachusetts, digital literacy learning standards are part of the **Digital Literacy and Computer Science Curriculum Framework** approved last year, and on the civics front, we are planning for our second annual Civics Literacy Conference on May 8 with the **Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the U.S. Senate** in Boston.

Fact Vs. Fiction-How can students tell the difference between real and fake news when teens admit they stay informed primarily through social media? Organizations like **The News Literacy Project** founded by a Pulitzer prize-winning investigative reporter **Alan C. Miller** are helping teachers and students figure it out. Their latest offering, a digital curriculum called **checkology virtual classroom**, gives students the tools to be smarter consumers — not just of news, but of all information (**Turner**, NPRED).

Have a Great Week!