



Pathways

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

March 19, 2017

Volume 3, Number 27

Upcoming Dates

- March 18 – 19 – (all day) New England Robotics Competition in the Hawkes Field House
- March 21 – 23 – RMHS – MCAS Testing
- March 22 – Grade 6 – 12 Early Release; (after school) District PLC Meetings
- March 23 – (after school) RISE/Elementary Building Meetings – Grade Level Common Time
- March 24 – No School for Students; Blue Ribbon Conference for Staff
- March 25 – (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Sophomore Semiformal in the RMHS Cafeteria
- March 27 – (7:00 p.m.) Parker Transition Meeting for Grade 5 Families
- March 28 – (2:30 p.m.) Five Star Theatre Camp Auditions in the Endslo PAC; (6:15 p.m.) Coolidge Transition Meeting for Grade 5 Families; (7:00 p.m.) Coolidge Math/Science Night
- March 29 – (6:00 p.m.) Joshua Eaton Open House
- March 30 – (5:30 p.m.) Barrows Open House; (6:30 p.m.) Killam Learning Fair
- April 2 – (2:00 p.m.) RMHS Formal Recital
- April 3 – 6 – Kindergarten Screening in the Elementary Schools
- April 3 – (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the

2017 Reading FLL Science & Engineering Exhibition Held at Endicott College



The FIRST LEGO League challenges kids to think like engineers and scientists. During this year's Animal Allies season, each team chose and solved a real-world problem in the Project. They also built, tested, and programmed an autonomous robot using LEGO MINDSTORMS technology to solve a set of missions in the Robot Game. Throughout their experience, each team operates under the FIRST LEGO League's set of Core Values, celebrating discovery, teamwork, and Gracious Professionalism. The Core Values are the heart of the FIRST LEGO League. Kids learn that friendly competition and mutual gain are not separate goals, and that helping one another is the foundation of teamwork.

On Saturday, March 11th the 2017 Reading FLL Science & Engineering Exhibition was held at Endicott College that included fourteen teams comprised of elementary and middle school students. Each of these teams have been meeting since October and this event was the culmination of all of their hard work. Dr. Justin Topp, Assistant Dean of Science, Technology, and Mathematics gave a group of parents and children a tour of the Judge Science Center before the event so that they could see actual digital lab areas, the new Makerspace, and even a virtual dissection table!

Superintendent's
Conference Room

- April 4 – Local Election in the Hawkes Field House
- April 5 – Grade 6 – 8 Early Release; (after school) Secondary District PLC Meetings; (5:00 p.m.) Artsfest @ RMHS
- April 6 – (after school) RISE/Elementary Building Meetings – Collaborative Proposal; (5:00 p.m.) Artsfest @ RMHS
- April 7 – (6:00 p.m.) RMHS Drama MiniGolf Fundraiser @ RMHS
- April 10 – Passover begins at Sundown
- April 14 – Grade PreK – 12 Early Release @ 11:00 a.m.
- April 17 – Patriot's Day – School Offices Closed
- April 17 – 21 – April Vacation – No School for Students



Each of the teams was judged by Endicott College professors, students, and two additional volunteers from Reading. Teams were judged in three categories: Robot Games, Project Presentations, and Robot Design & Software Assessment. The Party Animals from Joshua Eaton and the Unanimous Unicorns from Coolidge Middle School were the overall winners of the day. Congratulations to both teams for their wins and to all of the teams for their hard work! Thank you to all of the coaches for their time and dedication to the students and to the FLL Program!



Annual Blue Ribbon Institute This Friday

As you know, our annual Blue Ribbon Institute will be held this coming Friday (March 24), and we are very pleased with the number of outstanding sessions we are able to offer this year. This is a professional development day for all staff with a great variety of topics presented not only by our talented Reading staff but also from many other professionals from outside of Reading. In addition to our nationally-known keynote presenter Ron Suskind (Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and best-selling author), we are also honored to be hosting such presenters as Denelle West, Director of Professional Development for Research for Better Teaching (presenting on “High Expectations Teaching,” the topic of Jon Saphier’s latest book), Morris H. Ervin Jr. (Youth Development Specialist and Founder of Mansa Consulting), Missy Sturtevant (from the Massachusetts Safe Schools Program), Keith Trawick (Principal of a nationally recognized elementary school in Madison, Alabama), Stacy Barnette (First Grade Teacher from Tennessee and Instructor for Blue Ribbon Academy), and so *many others!*

We are also again very pleased to be welcoming some nationally-recognized presenters on the topic of MTSS and PBIS, including Dr. George Sugai (Co-Director of the National Center on PBIS), Dr. Devon Minch (University of South Florida), Dr. Ashley MacSuga-Gage (University of Florida), and Dr. Sara Whitcomb (University of Massachusetts Amherst).

As always, we are also thrilled to be expecting hundreds of educators as well from outside our district—as both presenters and attendees! Attached is the draft program if you are interested in browsing through it prior to Friday.

Please note the following information regarding the Institute:

1. It is recommended that you carpool, if possible. Additional parking will be available at the old Imagination Station site, Birch Meadow Drive, and Oakland Road.
2. Breakfast will be available beginning at 7:00 a.m. on Main Street at RMHS. We will be serving pizza from local restaurants, salad, dessert and water for lunch.
3. In order to have the Institute run on schedule, we will begin our opening session promptly at 8:00 a.m. in the Fine and Performing Arts Center. We will ask attendees to start moving to the Fine and Performing Arts Center at 7:50 a.m.
4. **For safety and security reasons, please wear your staff ID badge.**
5. Professional development points (PDPs) will be available for attending or presenting at this conference. A separate email will be sent out with further information about PDPs.
6. Recycling stations will be set up in the cafeteria and dining areas for water bottles.
7. RMHS maps are available in the conference program and the wiki to help you locate rooms.

Kudos and Accolades

- To the Joshua Eaton Principal Screening Committee for all of their hard work last week during the interview process.
- To Director of Finance Gail Dowd for the countless hours that she has put into the FY18 budget process.

You may access the program on our wiki at the below link. This wiki will also contain the handouts for each session at the conclusion of the Institute. This information should be ready soon.

<https://2017blueprintforexcellence.wikispaces.com/>

We are very excited to again be hosting this event at Reading Memorial High School, as it is a great opportunity to share and learn together with many talented practitioners. A special thank you goes out to the many staff members who have contributed their time, effort, and energy to make the institute happen. We would also like to thank Assistant Superintendent Craig Martin for his leadership in making this professional development opportunity come to fruition and Administrative Assistant for Learning and Teaching Lori Miller for coordinating all of the logistics of this event.

How Reading's MTSS Meets the Needs of All Students in the District

The goal of the Reading MTSS framework, which we began enacting in 2012, is to provide system-level changes across the classroom, school and district. We took the framework developed at the state level and have been applying it here in Reading to support all students, including students with disabilities, English-language learners, and students who are academically advanced. In addition to providing targeted interventions to and support of all students' academic and non-academic (i.e., social and emotional) needs, MTSS is designed to ensure all schools are a safe environment for students because that makes it easier for them to learn.

Part of what makes MTSS –Multi-Tiered System of Support – successful is that the framework is “guided by three Universal Design for Learning principles (multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expressions, and multiple means of engagement),” according to the [MTSS Blueprint](#) produced by the Mass Department of Education.

The MTSS Blueprint provides “the structure needed to develop the policies, practices and procedures to successfully implement MTSS” across a school district. This is a key point, actually. The Reading MTSS initiative is deliberate and coordinated within each school building and across the district. Each month, representatives from each building meet to discuss MTSS activities, updates and data as well as discuss the following items:

- ☐ Leadership and Governance.
- ☐ Student Support (School Culture, Family and Community Engagement).
- ☐ Financial and Asset Management.
- ☐ Human Resources and Professional Development.
- ☐ Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (Fidelity of Implementation).

Of these, in this article, we want to talk about school culture.

From the start, in 2012, each school principal identified teachers within their building who could champion MTSS, specifically in terms of creating a specific culture for each building. We feel that it is important to create a healthy school climate is one that, as noted in the MTSS Blueprint, “promotes mental health and positive social, emotional, and intellectual growth for students,” and that climate needs to be “understood and practiced by every member of each school.”

Superintendent's Office

Hours this Week

All are welcome

3/20 (5:30-6:30 p.m.)-
RPS Administrative
Offices

3/23 (7:45-8:45 a.m.)-
Killam School

3/25 (9:00-10:00 a.m.)-
RPS Administrative
Offices

The foundation for creating a health environment for each school has been to identify specific values. Each school's values are incorporated into many academic lessons and activities; the values are also integrated into lunch, recess, and physical education.



At the Joshua Eaton Elementary School, the core value are PAWS: Practice Compassion, Act Responsibly, Work Towards Success and Show Respect. Sometimes that's highlighted on a bulletin board where students are recognized for demonstration of Core Values and expected behaviors.



... at Birch Meadow students receive recognition for demonstration of their Core Values with their Birch Meadow Way Yays! Through paw stamps on their hands!

The emphasis on values helps students develop non-academic skills that help them navigate the school, understand expectations and gain insight into appropriate behavior towards other students as well as faculty and staff. The values help students make effective transitions from one grade to another as well as from one school within the district to another. For example, the values also help teachers and staff and students be more inclusive and sensitive to cultural, linguistic and family diversity (this can include disability and socioeconomic differences, too). MTSS has helped students to manage their motions, and better understand and prevent bullying and substance abuse.

This is important because bullying and substance abuse set up barriers to learning, and have significant negative impact on students that could lead to depression, anxiety, alcohol or drug

Quote of the Week . . .



What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

use. Not only do core values help with non-academic skills, but they also increase students' abilities to attend to academic demands and readiness for learning!

As part of this effort, the Reading School District has trained more than 350 educators, town librarians, crossing guards, and bus drivers. We have enlisted them to help us identify students who might be at risk as well as provide those adults with procedures to get help for a possibly affected student.

We also have gotten in parents involved and have also asked them to provide input into the needs of their students. And we bring in community partners such as human service agencies, corporate and civic sponsors and others to offer students and their families with access to health, social, recreational and supplemental education services that may provide enrichment, intervention and support.

With a clear set of values, Reading MTSS has helped the district reduce suspensions and other discipline referrals, minimize dropping out and make each school feel and be more inclusive and supportive for all our students. And because the MTSS initiative supports *all* students, we can work hard to ensure that no student feels singled out.

Yoga helps stretch young minds

Mindfulness and yoga are two approaches used across the district to help students learn to focus and remove distractions so they can concentrate on learning. The board at RISE Preschool offers different poses that students can use as they seek to get in touch with their emotions, which helps them do better in class. This is helpful, whether in pre-school or elementary school all the way through high school as a way to help students cope with the pressure, with grades, an oversubscribed after-school calendar, college or personal or family issues.



How to Get the Most Out of Small-Group Math Conversations

In this article in *Teaching Children Mathematics*, Hala Ghouseini, Sarah Lord, and Aimee Cardon (University of Wisconsin/Madison) address the challenge of getting elementary students to have good math discussions when they're working in small groups. Some teacher frustrations they've encountered:

- "Because students do not listen to me when I give directions, I end up talking too much during group work, mainly explaining the directions over and over."

Disney Tweet of the Week



Sometimes who we wish
we were, what we wish
we could do; it's just not
meant to be.

—Sina (Moana)

- “I spend my time settling disagreements because students don’t know how to work with each other.”
- “The strongest students just end up doing all the work.”
- “My students always want me to help them right away if they think they’re stuck – and they want to check with me all the time to see if they’re doing it right. They just don’t know how to be independent.”

The key to productive small-group work, say Ghouseini, Lord, and Cardon, is how teachers launch the lesson before students begin working in groups:

- *Modeling good collaboration* – Many students are inexperienced at sharing their thinking in clear ways and negotiating solutions to problems with their peers, so it’s helpful for the teacher to demonstrate a possible scenario. For example, a teacher preparing students to work in pairs skip-counting by fives and tens acts out the back-and-forth with a student and makes a deliberate error, saying 58 instead of 60. What should her partner do now? she asks the class, and guides them to a good coaching response: “Take another look at your skip-counting chart. So far, all the numbers we’ve said have ended in five or zero, and fifty-eight ends in an eight.” Teaching a lesson on fractions, she might say, “When you throw out your idea, you don’t want people to say, ‘Oh, you’re wrong! You did that wrong! You’re not good at fractions.’ You don’t want people to feel that way about fractions.”

- *Providing opportunities for guided mathematical talk* – During the lesson launch, the teacher can walk students through the kind of thinking they’ll be asked to do in groups. For example, a teacher introducing a small-group activity on comparing fractions elicits several different ways of expressing equivalence – *How do you know that this drawing of $\frac{1}{6}$ is the same as that one?* “Her requests for multiple explanations engaged students in different ways of articulating their thinking and reasoning,” say Ghouseini, Lord, and Cardon. “This form of guided math talk during the lesson launch gives all students space to get into the habit of listening, responding to one another’s ideas, and providing explanations for mathematical concepts. It allows students with different levels of mathematical proficiency to learn skills that can support equitable participation in small-group work.” A teacher might also ask students to do a quick turn-and-talk about a specific question – for example, *How would you know how to circle multiples of three on a hundreds chart?*

- *Providing resources that support mathematical talk* – In the lesson launch, the teacher can draw students’ attention to manipulatives, visuals, or props that support high-quality math talk in groups. For example, with the 5-10 skip-counting activity, the teacher might say, “I would make sure I had my skip-counting chart in front of me. If you don’t need to use it, don’t use it. It’s there just in case you ever get stuck on a number.” A teacher could also remind students of vocabulary they’d learned, perhaps referring to a word wall or an anchor chart.

Then, while students work in pairs or small groups, the teacher circulates, monitors, and intervenes as necessary, watching for insights or misconceptions to bring up when the class comes back together.

“Supporting Math Talk in Small Groups” by Hala Ghouseini, Sarah Lord, and Aimee Cardon in *Teaching Children Mathematics*, March 2017 (Vol. 23, #7, p. 422-428), available for

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/>

purchase at <http://bit.ly/2nfiy3e>; the authors can be reached at ghousseini@wisc.edu, mtslord@gmail.com, and cardon@wisc.edu.

Reprinted from Marshall Memo 676.

Connecting With Your Teens

An evening of relationships, engagement, and connection



We are inviting parents, teens, and young people to an evening of real connection and fun!

Thursday - March 23, 2017

Coolidge Middle School
Multipurpose Room
6:30-8:00 p.m.

- Listen to *understand each other*, suspend judgments and assumptions.
- Learn how to *tap into the happiness, creativity, and confidence from within*
- Gain *mindful tips* that reduce overall stress.
- Practice the *communication skills* essential to bringing balance, peace of mind, and harmony to your family.

Morris H. Ervin, Jr. is an educator, entertainer, motivational speaker, and Youth Development Professional committed to helping the youth, families, communities, and institutions "turn fear into strength, and pain into passion." He has provided assemblies, workshops, mentoring programs, and leadership camps/retreats to thousands of students. For more than a decade, Morris's programs, trainings, and retreats have helped youth . . .

- *Develop critical thinking skills.*
- *Learn and apply character strengths.*
- *Build solid interpersonal communication skills*
- *Become confident and assertive in how they live.*
- *Embrace the peace and harmony inside themselves.*
- *Become reflective and purposeful about shaping their own future*

Students of all ages are welcome. Parents bring the kids!

"He makes a person realize that anyone can make a change. Mr. Ervin helped me realize my gift . . . you can express yourself and be what you want to be!" - A student

"I've never felt so invigorated and open in this kind of conversation in this kind of setting. I can't express to you enough how meaningful and vital this experience was!" - Amy Ma

Are you a Grandparent raising Grandchildren?



If yes, then this group is for you!

Grandparents Raising Again Monthly Group Meetings

**Next Meeting:
Wednesday, March 29th, 2017
6:00p-7:30pm**

Host: Boys & Girls Club of Wakefield
Location: Americal Civic Center, 457 Main St, Wakefield, MA—Side Door
Childcare will be provided for School Aged children
Refreshments will be served.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF STONEHAM & WAKEFIELD**

For more information or questions, contact
Riley at riley@bgcwakefield.org or 781-832-3302.

Reading Public Schools Happenings

Brooke Claroni, Class of 2017



Brooke is being recognized for her outstanding achievement in academics, athletics, leadership, and service. Academically, Brooke ranks in the top 3% and is a member of both the National Honor Society and the Spanish National Honor Society. Last year, she earned a silver medal on the National Spanish Exam and was a member of the Century Club in both her freshman and sophomore years. Taking a rigorous course load of Honors and AP classes, Brooke's favorite class is AP Computer Science. Athletically, Brooke has been a 4 year member of the Varsity Gymnastics team, and a co-captain this season. She has competed in both balance beam and floor exercise, earning her the Most Improved Award in her freshman and senior years. She helped the Rockets qualify for sectionals the past two years and a Middlesex League Title this year for the first time since 2007. Brooke also helped lead the Rockets to a first place finish at the Middlesex League Championship, as well as a #2 ranking in the North and a #6 ranking in the State. In terms of service, Brooke teaches gymnastics to children ages 3-9 at Winchester Gymnastics Academy and is an assistant coach for the 7 & 8 year old Xcel Bronze gymnastics team. Next year, Brooke will be attending college and majoring in either Computer Science or Computer Engineering.

Erik Bonnabeau, Class of 2017



Erik is being recognized for excellence in academics, athletics, leadership, and service. Academically, Erik is in the top 30% of the Class of 2017 and challenges himself by taking a rigorous course load of Honors and AP classes including his favorite course: AP Statistics. He has consistently demonstrated scholarship in his time here at RMHS, earning Honor Roll status throughout all four years. Athletically, Erik is a two sport athlete, swimming for three years and running outdoor track for two. This year, he was selected by his swim peers and coaches to serve as one of the team's captains and earned Middlesex League All-Star recognition for his outstanding accomplishments in the pool. In outdoor track, Erik helped the Rockets to win States in the relays last year and is very much looking forward to another great season this spring. In terms of service, Erik has selflessly dedicated over 150 hours to the Sunday Swim program at the YMCA, helping children with disabilities to learn how to swim and to build confidence in themselves in and out of the pool. Next

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

year, Erik will be attending the University of Connecticut and will be majoring in Statistics. Congratulations, Erik!

RMHS Book Club Hosts Local Author

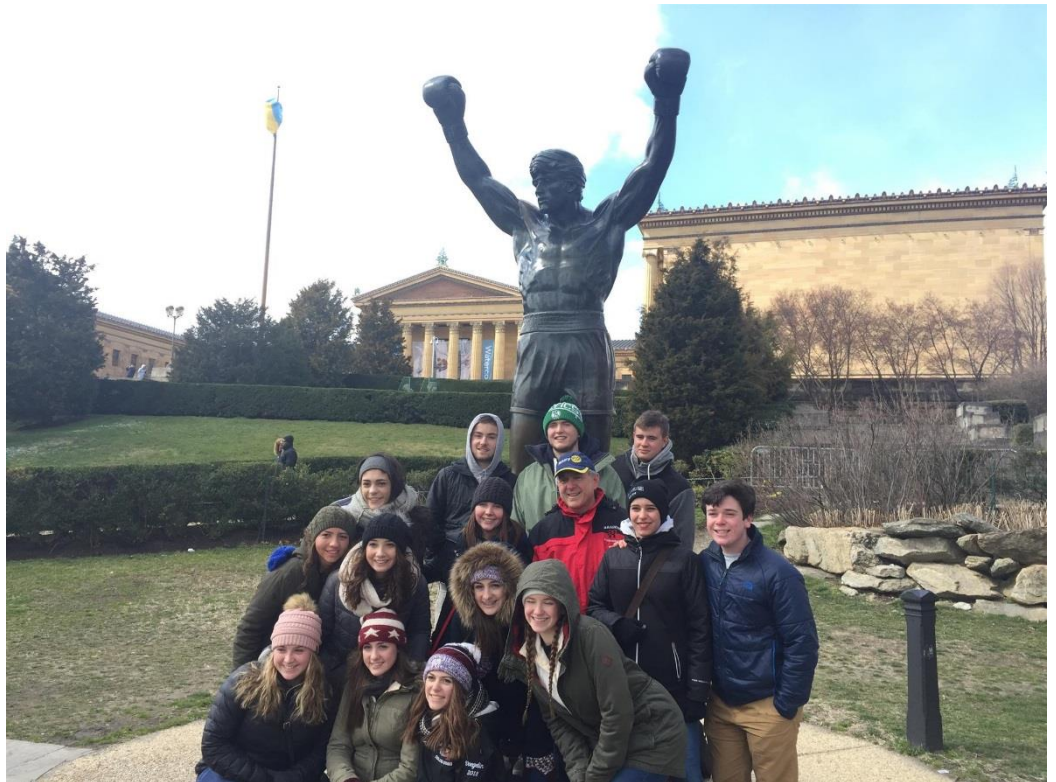
The RMHS Book Club, under the guidance of Kara Gleason recently hosted a Q & A discussion with celebrated local author Tara Sullivan. Club members read Ms. Sullivan's book *The Bitter Side of Sweet* in which she addresses the topic of modern-day child slavery in the cacao plantations of the Ivory Coast. Sullivan was also featured as a recent guest author at Coolidge where she led students in writer's workshop.



Reading Interact Students Bring Service to Philadelphia

14 students from the RMHS Interact Club traveled to Philadelphia last weekend to serve meals at the Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission, a soup kitchen serving homeless. Interact served over 175 meals on Saturday evening. The Interact also made fleece blankets for donation to Sunday Breakfast for distribution to their clients. They also did some sightseeing of Philly, including visiting the Liberty Bell. They toured the Philadelphia Museum of Art after first running the stairs made famous by Rocky. Reading Rotary presented a donation of \$500 to Sunday Breakfast. Interact Club Co-President Allie Foley, who coordinated the planning of the trip, said: "We were excited to take this fieldtrip and see Philadelphia. Giving service to people who are so needy made us feel good but also opens our eyes to how important it is to work to reduce homelessness and hunger." - See more at:

<http://readingmarotary.org/Stories/interact-bringing-service-to-philadelphia#sthash.NS3DkCeS.dpuf>



Barrows Read-A-Thon Assembly

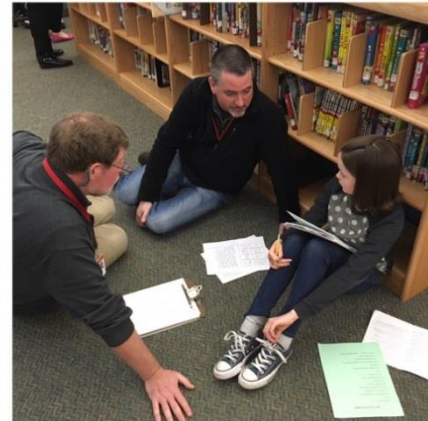
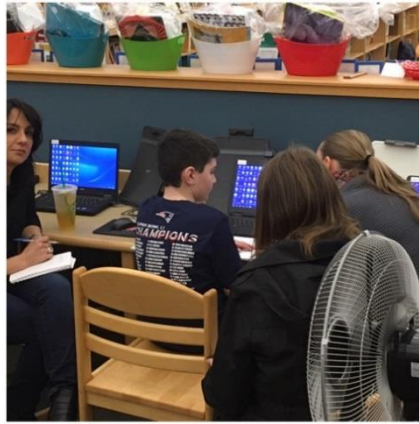
Recently, Barrows held a Read-A-Thon Assembly, led by Barrows Teachers Colleen DeRosa and Sarah Lanzo.



Barrows Writing Workshop Demo Lesson

Recently, as part of our ongoing focus on literacy and writing, teachers and students were part of a writing workshop demonstration lesson led by writing facilitator Maggie Roberts. Below are some pictures of the event that was held at Barrows.





Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts and prayers go out to RMHS Assistant Principal **Jessica Theriault** on the loss of a loved one recently.
- Our thoughts and prayers go out to Data Analyst **Courtney Fogarty** on the loss of a loved one recently.
- Congratulations to RMHS teacher **Raymond Albright** on the birth of his son William Edward on March 7th.
- Congratulations to Killam teacher **Alison Currier** on the birth of her son Raymond John on March 14th weighting 7 lbs. 14 ozs.
- Congratulations to Birch Meadow School Psychologist **Anna Jervinis** on the birth of her daughter Christina Katherine Jervinis who was born on born on 3/10/17 at 9:26pm, weighing 7 lbs 11 oz and 20 inches in length.
- **We have posted** a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

1.0FTE Special Education Teacher-High School Compass Program, 2017-2018 school year

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=237>

1.0FTE Long Term Substitute High School Health Teacher

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=238>

1:1 Aide Prindle Pond (April Vacation), Coolidge Middle School

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=239>

1.0FTE 6th Grade Science Teacher, Coolidge Middle School

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=240>

Blazing Trails...

"Literacy in Every Classroom." The concept of personalization in learning appeals to many K-12 teachers and students weary of regimented, one-size-fits-all instruction. In this ASCD Ed Leadership article, differentiation expert Carol Ann Tomlinson poses 10 questions leaders should work through and begin to answer as they prepare to usher personalized learning into their unique school context. [Read More](#)

"About that Tweet: The Difference Between Information & Knowledge." Recently "Teach Like A Champion" author Doug Lemov posted on Twitter a picture a friend had sent him of work a young student did in the classroom. The post went a little viral (or as viral as something can in his tiny corner of the universe) and people seemed to interpret it in different ways. Here he thought he would write a quick post in response to it. [Read More](#)

"One Size Does Not Fit All: How to Adjust, Acquire and Adapt Your Curriculum." As 8th grade Language Arts Teacher Kelisa Wing started her teaching career, she vowed to never get locked into mundaneness, and to always be willing to adapt and change based on the needs of her students. "Help your students develop a passion for your content with these three ways to adapt curriculum to increase student participation" in this ASCD InService post. [Read More](#)

"The Genius of Design." Genius Hour is a time built into the school day or week to enable students to actively create their learning rather than passively consume it. Drawing on his more than 10 years implementing Genius Hour projects, John Spencer offers a design thinking protocol that teachers can use to guide students through Genius Hour projects. [Read More](#)

"In Singapore, Every Space Could Be a Learning Space." Singapore's Ministry of Education is helping schools adopt informal learning spaces through programs such as the Flexible School Infrastructure program. Flexible learning spaces at some schools include a filtered band room, an outdoor music garden and an eco-aquarium. [Read More](#)

A graphic display of immigration history – This graphic gives a comprehensive picture of the flow of immigration into the U.S. from 19 countries and regions of origin over the last two centuries:

<http://insightfulinteraction.com/immigration200years.html> .

Have a Great Week!