



Pathways

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

April 2, 2017

Volume 3, Number 29

Upcoming Dates

- 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
Superintendent's
Conference Room
- April 3-MCAS Testing
Begins in Grades 3-8 for
ELA
- 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 –
No school & School Offices
Closed
- April 17 – 21 – April
Vacation – No School for
Students

FY18 Budget Update

Balanced Budget Being Presented to Town Meeting

The following update summarizes the current status of the Reading Public School Department FY18 budget. As stated in the previous FY18 budget update in the [February 12, 2017 Pathways Newsletter](#), the School Committee, Superintendent of Schools, and Director of Finance has been working collaboratively with the Finance Committee and Town Officials to move forward with a balanced budget for Town Meeting which restores the middle school teaching positions for next year. This balanced budget proposal consists of two parts.

The first part, which will be voted on at April Town Meeting, is to fund the \$150,000 for the second phase of the science curriculum implementation this year (FY17). If approved at Town Meeting, the materials and supplies will be purchased this spring for the next school year. This funding will allow the district to then move forward in the next phase of the science curriculum implementation which is focusing on Grades K-2, 7-8, and 9-12.

The second part, proposed at the Finance Committee meeting last week by School Committee Chair Jeanne Borawski, Superintendent of Schools John Doherty, and Director of Finance Gail Dowd, addresses the remaining difference of \$438,000 necessary to restore the 7.0 FTE middle school teachers. This proposal, which is outlined below, includes the additional use of cash reserves, a combination of holding back one time purchases in both the Municipal Budget and the School Department budget, as well as, salary savings in the school department through retirements and administrative turnover that have occurred since the budget was passed by the School Committee in late January. The details are as follows:

1. School Department requests an additional \$100,000 of cash reserves be allocated to the School Department Budget.
2. School Committee budget will reduce the salaries total by \$90,000 to account for savings now resulting from teacher retirements and administrative turnover at Joshua Eaton and the RISE Preschool. Since January, we have learned of some additional teacher retirements for next year, the current Joshua Eaton Principal resigning to work in another school district, and the retirement of the RISE Preschool Director. The combination of new hires for these positions could result in a savings of approximately \$90,000.
3. School Committee budget will reduce \$150,000 in FY18 purchases in technology replacement and in the building based budgets. While this will result in a significant decrease in technology replacement and building based purchases, our intent is to

use any savings from this current fiscal year to offset some or all of these reductions by pre-purchasing these materials during the current fiscal year.

4. The remaining difference is \$98,000, and the Town Manager has agreed to hold back \$132,000 of purchases in the Municipal FY18 budget to offset this difference.

At the March 22nd Finance Committee meeting, the Finance Committee supported the above proposal and voted unanimously to recommend to Town Meeting the use of an additional \$100,000 of cash reserves to be allocated to the School Department Budget.

It should be noted that although this creative and collaborative approach with School and Town Officials provides a temporary balance to the FY18 School Department budget, it is a one-time solution to what will be a very tight and difficult budget year. It perhaps should be noted as well that the FY18 School Department budget is still being reduced by nearly \$1 million dollars (resulting in the loss of 10.9 FTE positions, including 6.4 classroom teachers, and tuition increases for RISE Preschool, Full Day Kindergarten, Extracurricular Activities, and Athletics). This one time solution may also make it impossible for the School Department to address within its budget any unanticipated, financial challenges during the school year such as an unanticipated special education out-of-district costs, additional staffing to address a critical school need, or long-term substitutes due to staff illness. It is possible that additional funding requests may be necessary in FY18.

We want to thank and recognize the tireless efforts and collaboration of the School Committee, Finance Committee, School Officials and Town Manager for working together to develop a plan to restore the middle school positions for next year. What has become evident during this several month budget process, both with Municipal and School Officials, is that there is growing interest and support for an override election in the next 14 months. Because this is clearly a revenue problem, it is understood that the challenge must be addressed through either an override or some other revenue-generating method, if the community wishes to sustain the current level of services in Reading. As we move forward however, we are both encouraged and grateful to see such a dedicated collaboration in our community to tackle these difficult issues. We look forward to working together as we all seek a longer term solution for our entire community.

How New Teachers Get Introduced to MTSS

When new teachers start at any of the nine Reading Public Schools, they get an introduction to Reading's Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS) framework to help them understand our system that promotes the health, wellness and academic success of *all* our students. We undertake training for all teachers because, while MTSS has been deployed in school districts around the country, some teachers have never worked in an MTSS system before.

We tell teachers new to Reading that the goal of MTSS is to improve student academic and behavior outcomes – and that to do so, *all* students have to have access to the most effective and well-implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions possible. MTSS serves as the operational framework to achieve those outcomes. It is not a new curriculum or a specialized intervention.

Using proven evidence-based academic and behavioral practices, MTSS serves as a decision-making framework that guides selection, integration and implementation.

What we mean by “evidence-based” is that we evaluate student data to help us understand what students need. We continually train teachers and staff to recognize challenges and issues, and measure our implementation fidelity – how well we’re doing what we said we’d do – and the level of student responsiveness we generate. If we find that we’re not getting the results we expected, we look to the data for explanations. We also do not blame the students. We look at additional measures we can take so that we can better support our students – and we make sure our new teachers understand that.

Why Now?

An important question teachers ask us is, “Why now?” and “What is the reason behind the MTSS initiative?”

The answers come from something then-U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said: “If we can’t help protect kids and staff, and make them feel safe at school, then everything else that we do is secondary. If kids don’t feel safe, they can’t learn. It’s that simple.”

In 2013, President Obama launched “Now is the Time,” a \$70 million program intended to protect our children and communities by reducing gun violence, making schools safer, and increasing access to mental health services. The Reading Public School District is one of 130 grantees (recipients) in 38 states to receive funding under “Now is the Time.” We’ve also received grants from the School Climate Transformation Grant (SCTG), another Federal program designed to work together to help make schools safer and improve mental health services for students and young adults.

We explain to new teachers that we’ve seen the grants payoff. Some of positive outcomes we’ve seen since deploying MTSS, under “Now is the Time” and SCTG include:

- Less reactive, aversive, dangerous, and exclusionary.
- More engaging, responsive, preventive, and productive.
- Able to effectively and efficiently address classroom management and disciplinary issues (e.g., attendance, tardies, antisocial behavior).
- Improve supports for students whose behaviors require more specialized assistance (e.g., emotional and behavioral disorders, mental health).
- Most importantly, able to maximize academic engagement and achievement for all students.

As Duncan said, “Through these grants of more than \$70 million, we are continuing our commitment to ensure that kids have access to the best learning experience possible.”

Kudos and Accolades

- Kudos to the Killam and Barrows staff for very successful Spring Open Houses this past week.

MTSS Goals

We use MTSS as a process to create structures that address academic and social emotional needs of our students. Our goals include:

1. Build capacity for supporting the sustained and broad-scale implementation of a multi-tiered behavioral framework in each school across the district through the successful creation of district, building leadership and collaborative teams.
2. Enhance sustainability of continued data-driven decision making and communication through the successful alignment and implementation of a school wide information system, Baseline Edge, in every school district-wide.
3. Enhance each school's ability to offer comprehensive behavioral health supports through the creation of a high-quality, full service multi-tiered system of supports, consisting of extensive offerings of supports and interventions at every level and school.
4. Build continued capacity of school-based staff through the successful integration of an aggressive professional development and coaching program focused on building teachers' skills and competencies in the use of a multi-tiered system of supports and behavioral health topics.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of project activities at the school and district level in meeting the needs of students and in improving outcomes for students using quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods.

Moving forward with MTSS & new teachers

While we go into more details with new teachers, we end the introduction by making a commitment to them – and to our students -- that the Reading Public Schools will:

- Never stop doing what already works.
- Use evidence-based programs and strategies.
- Implement the smallest change we can do to make the biggest impact.
- Never add something new unless we identify what we will *stop* doing to open up resources for the necessary work. (In other words, we will replace something only with a new activity or approach that has been shown or indicated that it should work better than what we've been doing.)

We also look to continually train and support all teachers on MTSS. That's one reason we continue to hold the annual Blueprint for Educational Excellence National Conference. This one-day professional development event had over 900 participants, including 300 participants from across the country with a focus on sharing best practices in education.

Parker Middle School Participates in Hoops for Heart *Raise over \$1400 for the American Heart Association*

Parker students raised over \$1400 by participating in Hoops for Heart on Friday, March 31 to help support the American Heart Association. Students who did not participate in Hoops for Heart participated in classroom activities about heart health awareness and ended the day with a school-wide Heart Health Jeopardy Game with contestants from each grade level. Below are some pictures of the event. Special thanks goes out to the Parker Staff for coordinating this important event.

Superintendent's Office

Hours this Week

All are welcome

4/4 (5:00-6:00 p.m.)-RPS
Administrative Offices

4/6 (2:30-3:30 p.m.)-
Coolidge Middle School

4/8 (9:00-10:00 a.m.)-RPS
Administrative Offices



Winning Team



Parker Staff Team



Birch Meadow Raises \$1,107 for Pennies for Patients as part of Read Across America



On Friday, March 31st, the Birch Meadow Elementary School held an assembly to announce the end of Read Across America 2017, the building's annual month-long celebration of books and reading. During the month, students and teachers celebrated "Wacky Wednesday" with crazy dress up day, silly hat day, and dress as your favorite book character. Students also created posters of book posters that covered the school. Other highlights included the Battle of the Books, with students voting for their favorite title in the library.

As part of Read Across America, Birch Meadow students logged the number of minutes they collectively read. At the end of the month, students had read for 4,699 minutes, which was 134% above the school's goal. Students and their families also raised more than \$1,100 for Pennies for Patients, which benefits The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

In the above photo, Mrs. Falvey announces the winner of the Battle of the Books. And in the photo below, the Who's Reading mascot (Mrs. Hendrix) paid a surprise visit to the classrooms. The Who's Reading mascot also met with parents, district principals and district superintendent John Doherty,



Quote of the Week . . .



No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.

-Aesop



Reading Education Foundation Announces 2017 Grants

Over \$45,000 awarded to Reading Public Schools



Reading Education Foundation
Outside the box ~ Inside the classroom.

The Reading Education Foundation (REF) is pleased to support innovation and creativity in Reading Public Schools by awarding over \$45,000 in 2017 in grants, including a professional development fund. Please join us in congratulating this year's grant recipients!

New this year, REF is thrilled to announce a great opportunity for RPS educators; a pilot fund for professional development with a rolling application deadline. This fund will allow educators to take advantage of learning opportunities that will bring new and innovative ideas back into the classroom. Details on applying for this fund will be announced in the coming weeks.

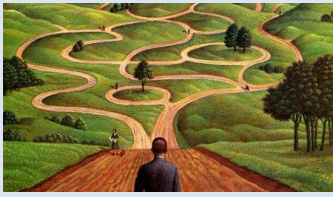
DISTRICT-WIDE FUND

Year-Long Professional Development Fund: REF is excited to pilot a new professional development fund for RPS educators to support training throughout the year. By offering a rolling deadline, this fund will make it easier for teachers to bring innovative skills and new ideas into their classrooms. *Established by the REF Board*

COMMUNITY GRANTS

Mindfulness Speaker Dr. Christopher Willard: The author of *Growing Up Mindful* will discuss how mindfulness in children can improve attention, lower stress and

Disney Tweet of the Week



It is not the destination
so much as the journey.

—Jack Sparrow

anxiety, and regulate emotions. Co-sponsored with the Joshua Eaton WASH Committee and Reading PTOs. *Grant proposed by Christine Lotterhand and Mary Giuliana*

Internet/Social Media Safety Education Speaker: Dynamic expert Katie LeClerc Greer will deliver engaging and informative presentations to students at both middle schools and RMHS, as well as an evening program for the community at large. In addition, student team activities will occur afterwards, reinforcing the presentations. *Grant proposed by Richele Shankland*

HIGH SCHOOL GRANT

Enhanced Health and Wellness Learning: By providing laptops, expanded curriculum content will provide innovative and creative ways to engage all students. Jointly funded with RMHS PTO. *Grant proposed by Katherine Fiorello, Jacqueline Callahan and Paula Graham*

MIDDLE SCHOOL GRANTS

Stargirl and Auggie, The Middle School Collection: Coolidge 6th & 7th all-grade read and associated activities will address social issues like: inclusion, bullying, and individualism. *Grant proposed by Mary Anne Cuscuna and Christine Steinhauser*

Professional Development with Dr. Mahesh Sharma: Week-long workshop highlighting strategies for teaching math-challenged students. *Grant proposed by Rebecca Lord*

Student-Centered Foyer: By providing an LCD screen, sound system and complimentary software, Coolidge will actively celebrate students, their work and achievements, stream live events, and support their social-emotional well-being. *Grant proposed by Sarah Marchant, Marcia Grant and Sarah Doane*

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GRANTS

New Kiln for Expanded Ceramics Program: With the additional of a kiln, Birch Meadow ceramic curriculum can now support greater complexity, quality, and quantity of work pieces. *Grant proposed by Christina Erb and Julia Hendrix*

Sensory Integration within the Classroom: Woodend and Birch Meadow will distribute specialized wobble chairs, ball chairs and standing desks to improve the attentiveness of highly active students throughout the schools, thus improving the learning environment for all. *Grants proposed by Karen Rando, Aynsley Harrington, Jacquelyn Pelusi and Lynda Michel*

Expanding Core Value Literature Collection: Each elementary school will receive additional funding to expand the social/emotional/mental health library collection started last year. *Grant proposed by Kim Adamo and Lisa Norcross*

Important Websites

Help Desk (To submit a ticket)
help.desk@reading.k12.ma.us

RPS District Website
www.reading.k12.ma.us

Access Your Email
<https://login.microsoftonline.com/>

Baseline Edge
<https://baseline.ioeducation.com/Site/login>

Interface Health Services
<https://interface.williamjames.edu/community/reading>

Need help finding mental health care?

 **WILLIAM JAMES COLLEGE**
INTERFACE Referral Service
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/>

The Reading Public Schools
present

A Celebration of Student Achievement in the Arts



Wednesday, April 5, 2017
Thursday, April 6, 2017

5:00-8:00 pm
K-12 Art Exhibit
Main Street, RMHS

Music Performances:

All music performances will take place in the RMHS Performing Arts Center

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5th

5:30 p.m.

6th Grade Combined Band
6th Grade Combined Chorus

6:30 p.m.

3rd Grade All-District Chorus
4th/5th Grade All-District Chorus

7:15 p.m.

Reading Memorial High School Symphonic Band
Reading Memorial High School Choruses

Donate to the
READING
FOOD PANTRY



THURSDAY, APRIL 6th

5:30 p.m.

7th and 8th Grade Combined Band
7th and 8th Grade Combined Chorus

6:30 p.m.

Middle School Jazz Band
Reading Memorial High School Stage Band
Reading Memorial High School Jazz Ensemble

Passover and Good Friday Observed During Week of April 10th

Religious Accommodation Policy in effect on April 11th and 14th

There are some major non-national religious holidays, as defined in **School Committee Policy IMDA, Accommodations for Ethnic and Religious Observances**, coming up during the week of April 10th. They are as follows:

First Day of Passover-Begins at Sundown on **Monday, April 10th** and continues on **April 11th**. Passover ends on **Tuesday, April 18th**.

Good Friday-Is observed on **Friday, April 14th**.

State and federal laws require schools to make reasonable accommodation to the religious needs of students in observance of holy days. With respect to students, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151C, section 2B reads in relevant part as follows:

“Any student in an educational or vocational training institution...who is unable, because of his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study or work requirement which he may have missed because of such absence on any particular day....No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section.”

As with the implementation of any policy, communication is important. To that end, the school district will communicate at least one week before the religious holiday to remind parents to contact their child’s school and let them know that their child will be absent for religious reasons. The main office shall let the child’s teacher or teachers know the students that will be out on the religious holidays.

School Committee Policy IMDA

In 2014, the Reading School Committee approved Policy IMDA, *Accommodations for Religious and Ethic Observances*. The full policy can be found [here](#). The main points of this policy are as follows:

- All students are entitled to individual accommodations which allow them to participate in their family religious or ethnic observances without detriment to their education or grades, including;
 - Extensions of due dates on assigned work (at a minimum the extension should be the number of days absent plus one additional day)
 - Opportunities to make up material missed in class, and
 - Reasonable accommodations as may be appropriate.
- Teachers, coaches, and advisors shall refrain from teaching difficult to make-up material, scheduling exam preparation, tests, quizzes, homework, as well as, scheduling other one-time events (field trips, athletic events, music performances, theatre plays and productions, auditions, and back to school functions), on major non-national religious holidays.
- Long-term and group assignments will not be due the day of or the day after a major non-national religious holiday.
- Any materials needed for make-up such as movies or media, should be easily and flexibly accessible within a reasonably determined time frame.
- The policy should not prevent coaches and advisors from holding practices or rehearsals for these events on school days during major non-national religious holidays. However, students whose conscientious observance of a religious or ethnic holiday conflicts with participating in a practice or rehearsal will not be required to participate nor penalized for their non-participation.
- Administrators, teachers, coaches, booster groups, PTOs and advisors shall refrain from scheduling parent, student or school community events on major non-national religious holidays.

Please note there will be several students who will be celebrating religious holidays during the week of April 10th and will not be able to prepare for any tests, quizzes, homework assignments or other assessments on those days or the following day. These students may require extensions of due dates on assigned work, opportunities to make up material missed in class, and reasonable accommodations.

As you are planning your curriculum and assessments, please be aware of these holidays and other holidays in the calendar that may affect some students. We may not always be aware of families who practice different religions. For example, an interfaith family who is both Christian and Jewish may attend both temple for services during the Jewish holidays and church for Christmas services. To that end, please provide accommodations for those students who are absent for religious reasons to make up any missed work. Also, it is recommended that you refrain from giving tests or making due dates for significant papers/projects on or immediately after major religious holidays.

A Massachusetts School Helps Its High-Risk Students Manage Stress

In this Kappan article, Ellen Spiegel, director of BRIDGE Alternative Middle School in Massachusetts, shares precepts and strategies her school has developed to work with their population of high-risk students:

- **Create a calm environment.** “Stress reduction can be taught, learned, and practiced successfully in the classroom,” says Spiegel. Some BRIDGE procedures: Drop Everything and Relax (DEAR) – Every morning, the entire school engages in this relaxation and stress reduction process, and DEAR is used at other points each week. Positivity points – Students are acknowledged for showing kindness, support, and gratitude toward one other. Stress balls – These inexpensive squeeze objects give students a simple way to release tension during classes and calm down when they feel stressed or angry. Therapy dogs – A licensed therapy dog “makes a great contribution to the school’s emotional climate,” says Spiegel, “often helping staff connect with students who are frustrated, depressed, and/or angry, especially when they seem unwilling to talk.” Students sometimes spend time with the dog before filling out an incident report. Classical music – This plays in the hallways and during individual work time and serves to create a calm environment. Soothing visuals – Pastel colors, soft light, and photographs of beaches, mountainsides, and waterfalls in counseling offices and other spaces ease stress and help de-escalate conflict. Not every student finds these strategies helpful,” says Spiegel, “but some of them do seem to respond to one or another kind of visual environment, so we make a range of them available.”
- **Ensure that students feel physically and emotionally safe.** “Growing up in a chaotic and unstable environment creates toxic stress,” says Spiegel, “which can affect a child’s ability to regulate emotions or respond appropriately to disappointments and provocations.” These steps are designed to address students’ needs:

Human dignity policy – This is the school’s explicit set of values, behavioral norms, and beliefs about how students and staff should communicate with and treat each other. It makes clear that students should not say rude, mean, or disrespectful things – and why – and helps prevent conflicts and explosive behavior.

Crisis skills – Students know that staff are trained to stay calm, de-escalate kids in crisis, and deal effectively with negative outbursts.

Take-five space – Each classroom has a semi-private area for students who need to calm themselves down. The school’s goal is to get students to the point where they can independently regulate and redirect angry emotions.

Drawing or journaling – When students appear sad or depressed, they are encouraged to write or color about it, and this calms them and gives staff a starting point for counseling.

Independent work spaces – When students can’t function safely within classrooms, they go to designated alternative spaces to calm down and talk.

Having students feel the school is a safe space is the first step to dealing with deeper problems.

• **Give students a way to communicate their feelings.** These are a few of the ways BRIDGE helps students get their pent-up emotions out in the open:

Check-ins – These scheduled daily or weekly meetings are an opportunity to talk about issues and build trust with staff members.

Signal charts – When they enter their homeroom each day, students choose a slip of paper showing whether they are happy, cool, sad, or angry/frustrated and attach it to a chart by their name, perhaps jotting some specifics. This gives staff a heads-up about issues students may be dealing with.

Mood cards – As students take their seats in regular classes, they display a green card for I’m cool, a yellow card for I’m unsure, and a red card for I’m frustrated.

Again, this gives teachers advance notice of possible problems.

Mood checks – Alternatively, a teacher might pass a ball around asking each student to rate his or her mood on a 1-5 scale, with others listening without interrupting. This reinforces the school’s effort to get students to pay attention to one another’s feelings and treat each other with respect, sympathy, and compassion.

Circles – Each day ends with a student-led discussion called a Wrap-Up, giving students and staff a chance to reflect on the day and raise questions or concerns.

Restorative justice – This quasi-judicial process gives students who’ve been harmed a way to make things right. Everyone involved in a negative incident – victims, witnesses, and offenders – has a chance to speak, with the goal of understanding what happened, why it happened, and agreeing on a way to repair any physical and/or emotional damage.

“Recognizing what children go through is not enough,” Spiegel concludes; “educators must be determined to create and implement the many kinds of strategies that meet their needs. The nation’s public schools can help all students succeed, whether those students are dealing with minor stressors or major traumas, but doing so will require a great and lasting commitment.”

“Managing Stress for At-Risk Students” by Ellen Spiegel in Phi Delta Kappan, March 2017 (Vol. 98, #6, p. 42-46), www.kappanmagazine.org; Spiegel is at espiegel@lowell.k12.ma.us. Reprinted from Marshall Memo 678.

TOGETHER FOR TEWKSBURY EVENT ON APRIL 29TH

Join us for a 5k walk/run in Reading, Massachusetts on **Saturday, April 29th, from 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.** at Birch Meadow Elementary School to celebrate the life and work of Jolene Tewksbury. This event will honor Mrs. Tewksbury's commitment to the current and former students of the Birch Meadow Elementary School. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. and the 5K walk/run begins at 10:00 a.m. Immediately after the walk/run there will be music, snacks and raffles.

All proceeds from the event will endow the Jolene Tewksbury Memorial Scholarship. This perpetual scholarship will be awarded to a graduating Reading Memorial High School senior who attended Birch Meadow School. For information about donating to the scholarship fund, please visit the [Together for Tewksbury](http://togetherfortewksbury.com/) website.

Registration fee is \$25 for individuals and \$45 for a family. Registration/check-in begins at 9am. The 5k will begin at 10am. [Register for the Race.](http://togetherfortewksbury.com/)

Please check out the website at <http://togetherfortewksbury.com/> and like us on Facebook @TogetherForTewksbury

Any questions, please contact TogetherForTewksbury@gmail.com

Reading Public Schools Happenings

Barrows Specialists Shine at Open House

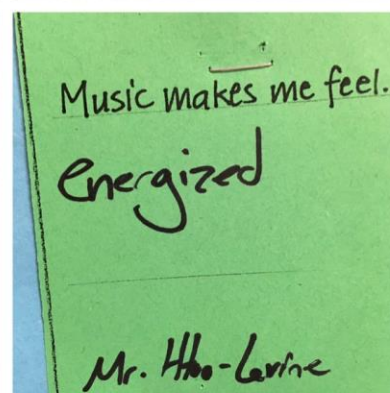
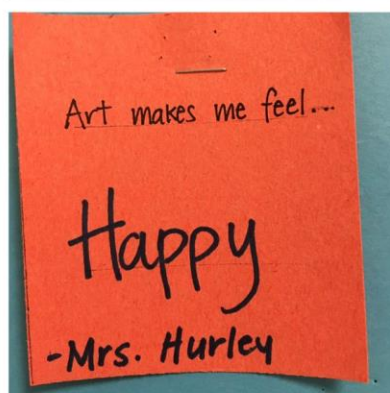
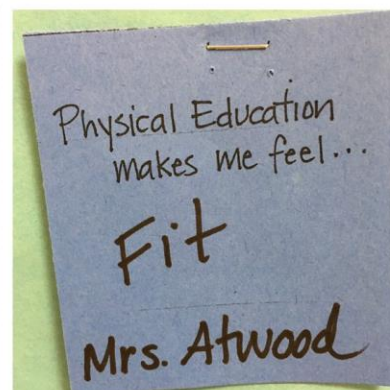
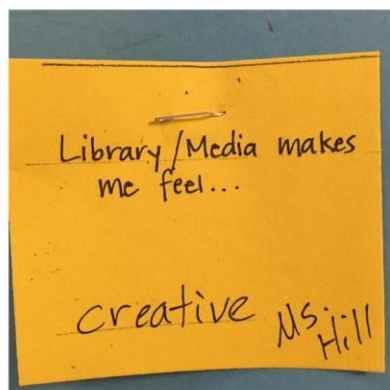
Last week, Barrows held its annual Spring Open House. As part of the event, the art, music, library media, and PE teachers worked together to create a fun and engaging activity for all students and families. Below are some pictures that celebrate the activity and the value of the specialist in the school day.



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



Barrows Cafeteria Shines at Open House

Last evening, Cafeteria Staff opened up the cafeteria at the Barrows Open House to promote the available food choices at Barrows. Thank you on a job well done!



Recently, students in Grade 2 at Joshua Eaton participated in the Wax Museum activity where they dress up as a famous person in history and recite their biography. Below are some pictures of students from Jaime Quinn's class.



RMHS Interact Club Volunteers at Rosie's Place

Last Sunday, the RMHS Interact Club, which is sponsored by the Reading Rotary Club, volunteered at Rosie's Place, a homeless shelter for women and children in Boston. The Club prepared and served meals to over 200 people.



Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts go out to RMHS Social Worker **Deb Lanigan** on the loss of a loved one.
- Our thoughts go out to retired RMHS Teacher **Angela Tenedios** on the loss of a loved one.
- Our thoughts go out to the family of **Marj Comeau Valentine**, who passed away on Thursday. Marj worked for Reading Public Schools from 2001-2010 as a Manager at Barrows Elementary School kitchen and as a worker at the Killam Elementary School. Her mother, Mary Comeau was also a Manager, and daughter Melanie graduated from Reading Memorial High School.
- Congratulations to RMHS custodian **Moe Hillis** on the birth of his granddaughter Juliette on March 27th weighing 7 lbs and 19 inches long.
- Congratulations to RMHS Science teacher **Beth Dalby** on the birth of her son Shea Spencer on March 30th weighing 6 lbs.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
 - ✓ Jennifer Golini, Cafeteria Substitute, District
 - ✓ Kristina Bove, Substitute, District

- **We have posted** a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

Special Education Paraeducator- after school support, RMHS
--

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=244

1.0FTE Long Term Substitute Grade 2 Teacher, Barrows Elementary School
--

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=245

- **Ed Camp Access**- EdCamp Access will be held on 4/8/2017 at Marshall Simonds Middle School in Burlington from 9-2. Doors open at 8:30. This is a free unconference where educators can gather together to discuss topics of interest, solve problems, and encourage each other. The focus of EdCamp Access is reaching struggling learners, but the sessions will not necessarily be limited by that topic as the sessions are set by the participants. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Click on the link below for more information and to register.

<http://edcamp.wikispaces.com/edcamp+Access>

- **Wellness Survey for RPS Staff**-As part of an ongoing effort to try and implement more employee programs, Sara Burd and Sandy Calandrella have put together a short survey to identify interests, availability, and any other suggestions that you may have. If you could take a few moments to access the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2CZHG78> and provide feedback that would be greatly appreciated. Our goal is to try and provide a variety of programs at minimal cost at times that are convenient to you. All of you, staff and educators, are the most important resources in our schools. Healthy, engaged staff and educators are essential supports for student learning and the daily operations of a school District. Staff wellness programs contribute to an overall healthy school environment and climate, affecting all members of the school community—students, educators and other staff, and families—as well as all other aspects of the health of the wider school community.

Blazing Trails...

"Customizing Homework." In this ASCD InService post by Norwell, Massachusetts, elementary principal Patrick Lenz, the discussion needs to move past are you for homework or against it. At Vinal Elementary School, they moved to individualize homework. [Read More](#)

"Getting Personalization Right." "Have it your way" may be a catchy slogan, but how does it work in education? The new issue of ASCD's *Educational Leadership*, "Getting Personalization Right," delves into the various ways educators define student-centered learning and what it looks like in schools. Our expert authors explore practical considerations for implementing student-centered learning, share cautionary tales about moving too quickly toward personalization, and offer profiles of schools and classrooms that have embraced this work. [Read More](#)

"The Path to Least Suspensions." Instead of suspending students for minor offenses, which can exacerbate racial inequities, a growing number of districts are creating opportunities for students to make amends. Read in ASCD's Education Update how restorative practices, cool-off periods, and even volunteer opportunities are bringing suspension rates down and student ownership up. [Read More](#)

"Relationship Refresh." In this ASCD Express issue, we revisit our popular "Relationships First" theme with even more strategies and success stories from educators living the adage, "They don't care what you know until they know that you care." [Read More](#)

"British Schools to Pilot Three Mental Health Programs." Officials in Britain are launching three pilot programs to teach students about mental health and give them tools to manage anxiety and stress. The program will include lessons about happiness for eight-year-olds and lessons about anxiety and suicide for teenagers. [Read More](#)

Have a Great Week!