



Pathways

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

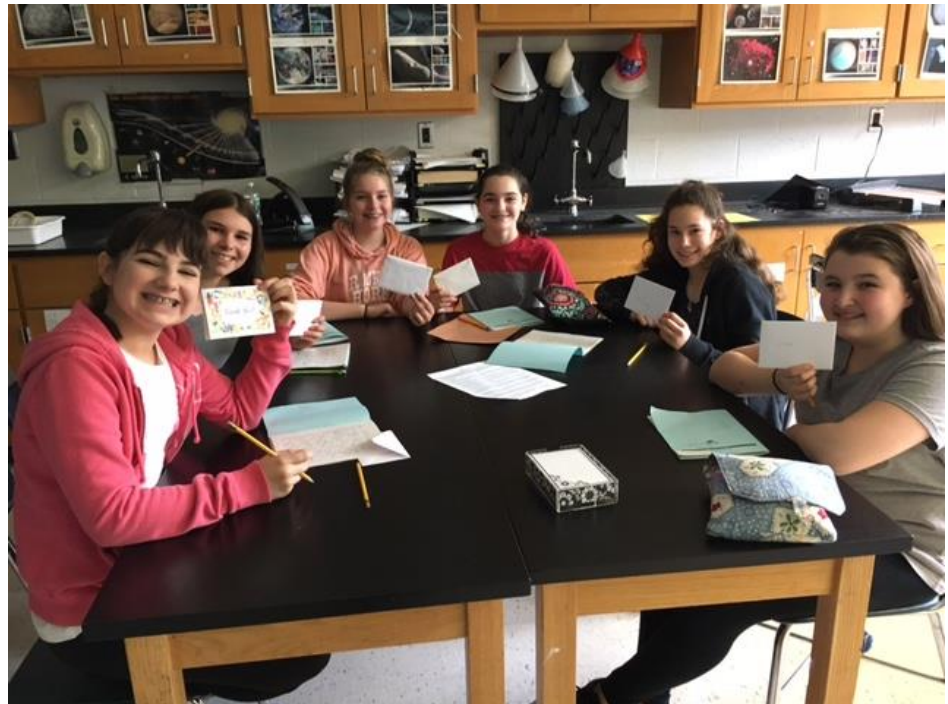
June 4, 2017

Volume 8, Number 37

Upcoming Dates

- June 4 – (1:00 p.m.) RMHS Graduation in the Hawkes Field House – Congratulations to the Class of 2017
- June 5 – (1:00 p.m.) Grade 5 & 8 Move Up Day; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Schettini Library; (7:00 p.m.) Coolidge Move Up Night for Incoming Parents
- June 6 – (6:00 p.m.) Parker Grade 6 & 7 Spring Concert
- June 7 – (8:00 a.m.) Parker Science Expo Day; (9:00 a.m.) Barrows All School Field Day; (8:45 a.m.) Joshua Eaton Grade 5 Field Day
- June 8 – (7:00 p.m.) Parker Grade 8 Spring Concert
- June 12 – (8:00 a.m.) RMHS Underclassmen Awards Ceremony in the Endslo PAC
- June 13 – (8:30 a.m.) Barrows Grade 5 Celebration & Fun Day
- June 14 – (6:00 p.m.) Birch Meadow Fifth Grade Graduation
- June 15 – (8:30 a.m.) Parker Field Day
- June 16 – (8:45 a.m.) Killam Grade 5 Move Up Celebration and Field Day; (8:45 a.m.) Joshua Eaton Grade 5 Celebration; (6:00 p.m.) Wood End Grade 5 “Moving On” Ceremony and Celebration
- June 19 – (6:00 p.m.) Parker Grade 8 Promotion Ceremony & Dance; (6:00

Parker Middle School Holds First Writing Celebration *Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 Participate in a Variety of Writing Activities*



On Wednesday, May 31, Parker Middle School held its first annual Writing Celebration. The library/media specialist, Robyn Ferrazzani, planned and coordinated this exciting experience which involved staff, community members, district/school administrators, school committee members, parents and relatives of students. The day was kicked off by a school-wide assembly with author, Tara Sullivan. She was introduced by two students: Jenny Wheeler and Catherine Adams. The rest of the day, students participated in writing workshops including but not limited to: using press releases as a marketing tool, picture books, illuminated manuscripts, personal statements, free verse poetry, write it do it, therapeutic writing in the pursuit of happiness, writing for the sharks, resume writing, thank you notes, creating original myths, Greek Gods on social media, movie music and screen writing, backwards storytelling with art, fitness goals and nutrition, Haikus, writing with a purpose and advertising 101.

p.m.) Coolidge Grade 8 Promotion Ceremony & Dance; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room

- June 20 – Last Day of School – All students dismissed at 11:00 a.m.; (8:00 a.m.) Parker Awards Ceremony



This day would not have been possible without the help of all of the Parker staff and outside presenters. Thank you to our community presenters: Linda Snow Dockser, Maryanne Downing, Dorian Hart, Lori Maracotte, Craig Martin, John Doherty, Jackie Murray, Tara Sullivan, Erin Calvo-Bacci, Hayley Barrett, and Rachel Wasdyk. A special thanks to Eileen Manning, our photographer, who spent the day capturing the excitement.

Reading's Elementary Schools Make the Grade with MTSS

In the two years since Reading Public Schools adopted the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP), as required under Massachusetts General Law, each school has been making continuous improvements towards delivering an integrated approach that supports students' academic and social-emotional competencies.

DCAP complements the Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS) framework that each school building has been deploying to meet the needs of *all* students in the district. Each school has access to the same resources, training and professional development, best practices, etc. And every school uses the same methodologies. For example, under MTSS, there are three tiers of supports: Every student receives tier 1 supports and if data shows that a student requires additional support, that child will receive additional tier 2 support and possibly tier 3.

However, under MTSS, each school is free to develop processes that fit its culture and addresses the needs of its students. That means teachers and staff at J. Warren Killam Elementary School may implement MTSS differently from Wood End Elementary School or Arthur W. Coolidge Middle School.

Each month, representatives from each school's MTSS team meet to share best practices, lessons learned and key milestones. This two-part article provides an overview of how Birch Meadow, Wood End Joshua Eaton and Killam all use MTSS; next week will profile.

Kudos and Accolades

- Congratulations to lacrosse, and boys tennis, on their wins this week.
- Congratulations to the girls track team for a strong showing at the Eastern Mass Division 2 meet recently
- Congratulations to track athlete Haley Lightbody for winning the pole vault and long jump at the same meet.
- Special thanks goes to Parker custodian Jesse Malonson, Joshua Eaton custodian John Falkenstrom, Custodian Supervisor Kevin Gerstner, Assistant Director of Facilities Kevin Cabuzzi, Director of Facilities Joe Huggins and the Reading Extended Day Program for their efforts and flexibility in preparing for the change in baccalaureate location to Joshua Eaton on Thursday night.



PAWS stickers reinforce core values at Birch Meadow.

At **Birch Meadow**, the teams responsible for tier 1 and tier 2 decided to focus on their specific areas for the 2016-17 academic year. The tier 1 team looked at how the school tracked data and behavior. The tier 1 team devised a tracking form that is quick and easy for staff to complete and is focused on the five most common minor behaviors. A representative from each grade level collects the data and is trying it out right now with full implementation planned for next year. The data is being used to identify trends when students may need additional support based on times of the day, days of the week, activities, etc. Understanding the trends can help teachers and staff anticipate and prepare, rather than wait until students are likely to act out and get in trouble.

Meanwhile the tier 2 team focused on attention-seeking behaviors. To help encourage students and keep them on track, the tier 2 team piloted using Check In Check Out (CICO) this year. CICO, which has proven to be effective, entails having students review a goal sheet in the morning and check out at the end of the day with a teacher who provides feedback and encouragement. With CICO, the school is better able to see what's working well and what needs improvement. This enables the team to understand what steps to take to help students during the middle of the day, for example, in order to help them be successful.

The initial run-through of CICO has proven to be very helpful. The team realized it needs more facilitators next year to be effective. CICO does not use the classroom teacher because, the school has found, when another adult provides feedback, students feel more accountable, which helps change behavior. In the fall, for academic year 2017-18, the school will have more facilitators in place to work with more students.

Superintendent's Office

Hours this Week

All are welcome

6/6 (5:00 – 6:00 p.m.)

RPS Administrative
Offices

6/7 (7:30 – 8:30 a.m.)

Parker Middle School

6/8 (2:15 – 3:15 p.m.)

Killam School



At the Wood End cafe, students get a helping of core values with their lunches.

At **Wood End**, teachers also split into two teams: tier 1 and tier 2/3 team, just as at Birch Meadow. The tier 1 team works on maintaining tier 1 supports and reviewing tier 1 data, which includes about 80 percent of the student body. The tier 2 team has been working behind the scenes on creating appropriate supports; for example establishing a Check In Check Out (CICO) program. The team researched, developed an installation plan, piloted it, and is now scaling up to run a full program that started in May. Based on lessons learned, the team will tweak CICO for Wood End for the 2017-18 academic year.

Part of supporting every student is also involving parents and guardians. In addition to the weekly Family Newsletter, each month, Wood End communicates important information to its families on the work related to MTSS. Recently, that included Wood End's Positive PAWs (since the school's nickname is the Wildcats), featuring the Open Circle. Every Wednesday morning, the whole school has Open Circle meetings for 30 minutes. This time is used to teach the school's social-emotional curriculum. One recent week, second grade students used their Open Circle time to talk about what to do when they feel angry. Students learned to how to handle anger in several ways:

- Practice calm breathing (take five deep breaths).
- Take a walk (outside – with permission from an adult).
- Take some space (read a book).

The school's goal in communicating this kind of information home is to encourage families to talk to their students to learn more about and reinforce these strategies.



Students at Joshua Eaton raise their hands for acting responsibly.

At **Joshua Eaton**, some of the helpful supports include the school culture and climate as well as its core values: Practice Compassion, Act Responsibly, Work Towards Success, and Show Respect, which is also known by the acronym of PAWS. The values are reinforced by having clear, consistent messages and friendly reminders for students and are incorporated into behavior matrixes, assemblies, lesson plans, morning messages, bulletin boards, school song, “Paws” and Think sheets for students.

In keeping with the dog metaphor based on PAWS, students are “spotted” for expected behaviors; staff members are expected to recognize each student for positive behavior at least 10 times a term. With 10 spots, students receive a card for recognition on the wall. Using the “spotting” data helps staff to recognize kids who haven’t been spotted, and that enables them to figure out interventions or redirections that can help better support students.

The leadership team also surveyed staff on effective classroom practices and will focus on those practices next academic year. Other actions for the 2017-18 year include working on classroom response process, piloting Check In Check Out (CICO), ensure a mentoring program is in place, and develop further tier 2 clubs for student needs.



At Killam, this bulletin board asks a question to get students thinking about positive behaviors and actions.

At **Killam**, teachers and staff are doing a range of different activities. As we approach the end of the year, Killam teacher have been meeting with students to discuss their accomplishments over the year and to start the process of thinking about what they can do differently next year to continue to build on the foundations they established this year.

Quote of the Week . . .



Opportunities, many times, are so small that we glimpse them not and yet they are often the seeds of great enterprises. Opportunities are also everywhere and so you must always let your hook be hanging. When you least expect it, a great fish will swim by.

- Og Mandino

The school also established “zones of regulation” across the school. The zones of regulation is an approach that helps students learn how to self-regulate when dealing with four different zones:

- Red Zone: when students feel intense emotions.
- Yellow Zone: when students feel elevated emotions while having some control over those emotions.
- Green Zone: when students are calm, which is the optimal state for learning.
- Blue Zone: when students are not very alert and may be sad, tired, sick or bored.

Killam conducted an assembly to introduce the zones approach, along with strategies to use in each zone. The school also added homework to the assemblies, which included bring home a specially created pamphlet of information learned, with the instructions that students take the pamphlet home and share with their parents, who then sign the ticket and students return them to their classrooms. (One the ticket is returned, the student is entered into a raffle.)

As the other elementary schools in the district, Killam uses tickets to reward positive behavior but with each teacher using them their own way. The school also is developing a tier 1 binder to help train new staff that may start mid-year (especially the paraprofessionals).

Another important element of the support Killam provides is engaging with parents and guardians. Killam conducted an electronic survey of parents at start of year and an end-of-year survey that measures the school’s communication and family engagement. The goal of the survey is to foster a positive learning and teaching environment. Parent’s input strengthens the partnerships between family and the school, an important element in the development of students’ social-emotional growth.

Overall, the district is doing well. In the Composite Performance Index, conducted by the state, in English, math and science, Reading students finished at least five points and as many as eight points above the state’s average. That trend continues for graduation rate. Meanwhile, Reading’s in-school (0.9%) and out-of-school suspension (0.6%) rates are much lower (1.9% and 2.9%) than the state’s average. Some of these numbers provide a sense that MTSS and DCAP is working to support all students’ academic and non- cognitive needs.

Five Ways to Say Goodbye to Your Graduating Class

By Rebecca Alber for *Edutopia*

I remember the first batch of seniors I said goodbye to. I was a brand new teacher and had just spent the last nine months, an hour and a half a day, talking, reading, and writing with them in a creative writing class.

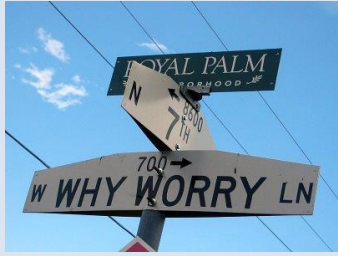
Then came that final class period. They shuffled in laughing and excited about the ceremony and parties to come. I, too, felt joy and a celebratory spirit -- more so for some who having enough credits to graduate had proved a close call. Nevertheless, the mood was a festive one.

Some of the things we teachers say to graduating seniors that last day: *"Of course I'll sign your yearbook! What are your plans after graduation? Okay, goodbye! Good luck and take care! Keep in touch!"*

And then they walk out the door.

I recall at the close of my rookie year, following that last day, I lamented, *"Argh, I should have done something!"* So the following June I came up with a last-minute idea to write an

Disney Tweet of the Week



Why worry? If you've done the very best you can, worrying won't make it any better.

—Walt Disney

individual note to each student and attach it to a ballpoint pen as a gift. They enjoyed receiving the note and gift. And the following year, I got better at it because I'd collect in my notebook little tidbits of information about each one of them starting in September: *Demitre loves to draw and wants to be a commercial artist. Marisol hopes to be a journalist. Nicole's laugh could bring levity to any situation. Jose enjoys heartfelt books, like Tuesdays with Morrie.*

I found from my own years teaching seniors and in my discussions with twelfth-grade teachers: There is no activity or gesture too small when it comes to saying goodbye to graduating students.

From those experiences, here are five suggestions for you to consider for sending off seniors:

#1. Give Individual Notes or Cards

Write an individual note to each student acknowledging or celebrating something specific and unique about her or him. Include a tiny gift -- a ballpoint pen, a lollipop, a carnation. You'll be surprised how delighted they'll be.

#2. Make an Advice Wall

This is modeled after the "[Guide to Life for Graduates](#)" commencement speech written by Mary Schmich (commonly referred to as the "Wear Sunscreen" speech. Remember that one? Someone even made a song out of it.)

Read the speech together then give each student a large sticky note or half sheet of paper to place on the wall over the next few days. Tell them to really think about it. Once they've done this, ask a volunteer to type them all up and print it out on pretty paper, giving each student a copy. Then do a class reading: while dramatic instrumental music plays softly in the background, ask each student to read aloud her/his own. Conclude with a standing ovation for all the wisdom shared. (Don't forget to write one yourself!)

#3. Create a "Photo Booth"

In the corner of your classroom have students design a fun backdrop (for science teachers, space, for example) and you and your students bring in some props. Create a banner for each class that indicates something like the following, "Ms. Johnson's Journalism Class, Period 3, 2013-14." Take photos with each of your students and allow them to take photos in groups, too (with their phones or cameras). Print two copies of you with each of your students giving one copy to the child and you keep the other. (Four-by-six, glossy prints are only fifteen cents each on Shutterfly.com.)

#4. Craft a Class Appreciation Poem

Collect one line from each student about someone else in the classroom. It can be a positive memory of something the other student did or said, for example. Then pass out a strip of paper for each student to write the one line. Collect them. Mix them up and lay them out, up to down. Read it aloud to the class. This will probably be followed by some reminiscing, some laughter, some nostalgia. Be sure to type it up and either give each student a hard copy, publish it on the class blog, or email it to them.

#5 Give an Admiration Speech and Cookies

For each class period, write a sincere speech and read it aloud. Speak to the collective group ("Period three, how you have entertained me...!"). Speak to the individuals ("Jessica, you asked the tough questions that inspired so many great class discussions"). Speak to the challenges ("the research project proved a struggle for most"). Speak to the triumphs ("that first class debate in October, though there were heated moments, it really brought us

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/>

together as a group"). Conclude your speech by passing around the celebratory treats and while eating, informally chat and reminisce about the year.

In these precious last days, what are ways -- grand or small -- you will celebrate the departing graduates you teach?

REBECCA ALBER'S PROFILE

Reading Clergy Association Holds Interfaith Baccalaureate Service for RMHS Seniors

On Thursday evening, the Reading Clergy Association held its annual Interfaith Baccalaureate Service for RMHS Seniors at the Joshua Eaton Elementary School. Originally, the service was going to be held at the First Congregational Church of Reading, but due to the Sanborn Street Fire, the service was relocated to Eaton.

The Baccalaureate service gives students an opportunity to reflect on their faith as they finish their time at Reading Memorial High School. Many members of the Reading Clergy Association spoke, as well as, Superintendent of Schools John Doherty, Assistant Principal Michael McSweeney. RMHS Seniors Troy Anderson, Jamie Azulay, Katie McKenna, and Morgan Neff-Gatchell gave their reflections of faith. Senior Tim Sanford gave his reflection, *the Lark Ascending*, in music, beautifully playing the violin. The RMHS Select Choir and Mixed Choir sang beautifully to the sounds of *Matilda* and *Let There Be Peace on Earth*.

The event was well attended with over 200 families and seniors attending. A special thanks goes to the Reading Clergy Association for sponsoring the event and the First Congregational Church of Reading, United Church of Christ, for hosting the event.



RMHS Assistant Principal Mike McSweeney



RMHS Senior Troy Anderson



RMHS Senior Morgan Neff-Gatchell



RMHS Seniors Jamie Azulay and Katie McKenna



RMHS Mixed Choir

REF Professional Development Fund Now Accepting Applications

Reading Education Foundation (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 as they come available.

Professional Development Grant applications will be accepted from June 1st - Dec 31st. After Dec 31st, please apply through the regular grant application process.

Applying is easy!

- Download and fill out the Professional Development application from REF website http://readingef.org/?page_id=32
- Obtain Principal and Assistant Superintendent's electronic signatures. Applications will then be submitted from the district office.
- Please allow enough time before program registration deadline to obtain required signatures and a 2 week processing time at REF.

Please contact REF with any questions at grantcommittee@readingef.org

Reading Public Schools Happenings

RISE End of Year Picnic

Last week, RISE students, staff, and families participated in the annual end of the year picnic to celebrate another great year. Below are some pictures of the event.





Parker Grade 8 Students Participate in Service Activity

Last week, Parker Grade 8 students participated in a day long field trip in Boston. As part of this trip, students packed over 200 kindness kits and we dropped them off at the Pine Street Inn. Thanks to the Parker students and staff for participating in this worthwhile activity.



Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts go out to Joshua Eaton Office Assistant **Joy Pippy** on the loss of a loved one recently.
- Our thoughts go out to Wood End teacher **Jillian Iwanuk** on the loss of a loved one recently.
- Our thoughts go out to Extended Day Community Services Coordinator **Rich Belmonte** on the loss of a loved one recently.
- **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 Language Based Program Teacher, Joshua Eaton Elementary School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=277

1.0FTE Middle School English Teacher, Coolidge Middle School
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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

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=278>

Behavioral Health Coach

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=279>

0.6FTE Preschool Teacher (one-year assignment), RISE Preschool

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=280>

1.0FTE School Psychologist, Coolidge Middle School

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=281>

1.0FTE Reading Specialist, Wood End Elementary School

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=282>

Summer ELL Tutor

<https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=283>

Blazing Trails...

"Stop Sabotaging Feedback." In this article of ASCD's *Educational Leadership* educational writers Doug Stone and Jenn David-Lang discuss how school leaders can get the most from giving and receiving feedback. [Read More](#)

"Go and See: The Key to Improving Teaching and Leading." In this ASCD Express post Justin Baeder explores making a daily practice of visiting classrooms, observing briefly, and talking with teachers has the greatest potential to improve student learning, help professionals grow, and help schools become more effective learning organizations. "I've come to this conclusion by studying an unlikely role model: Toyota." [Read More](#)

"School Lunches Hit The Road For Summer Delivery To Children." The Buzzin' Bistro in New Britain, Conn., the Lunch Lizard in Mesa County, Colo., and the HCS Tomahawk in Hillsboro, Ohio, are brightly decorated food trucks that will make their way through local neighborhoods this summer to provide free meals for children. Nutritionist Dan Sharp in Mesa County's District 51 says meals are provided daily for thousands of children who otherwise might not get the nutrition they need during the summer. [Read More](#)

"Moving Beyond Disability Labels in the Classroom." Do you have 15 minutes? Join us as we rethink how we treat, teach and talk about students with disabilities. In this episode of ASCD Learn Teach Lead radio, "Moving Beyond Disability Labels in the Classroom," Mike Janatovich, assistant principal of Harmon Middle School in Aurora, Ohio, and ASCD Emerging Leader, interviews Toby Karten, author of "Building on the Strengths of Students with Special Needs: How to Move Beyond Disability Labels in the Classroom." [Read More](#)

"PISA Shows Many US Teens Lack Financial Literacy." Politico Morning Education reports that according to the latest data from the Program for International Student Assessment, "More than a fifth of 15-year-olds in the U.S. lack basic financial literacy skills." The assessment "tested students' knowledge of financial concepts, risks and their ability to navigate real-world financial situations, among other things." Though US scores have remained steady since the test was last given in 2012, "big gaps have persisted between students attending low-income schools and students attending high-income schools." [Read More](#)

Have a Great Week!