



# Pathways

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

January 7, 2017

Volume 3, Number 18

## Upcoming Dates

- January 8 – (7:00 p.m.)  
School Committee  
Meeting in the RMHS  
Schettini Library – FY19  
Budget
- January 10 – Grade 6 – 12  
Early Release; (7:00 p.m.)  
School Committee  
Meeting in the RMHS  
Schettini Library – FY19  
Budget
- January 11 – (7:00 p.m.)  
School Committee  
Meeting in the RMHS  
Schettini Library FY19  
Budget Public Hearing;  
RMHS Acting Class  
Showcase in the Endslo  
PAC
- January 12 (7:30 p.m.)  
Coolidge Middle School  
Musical in the Endslo  
PAC
- January 13 – (7:30 p.m.)  
Coolidge Musical in the  
Endslo PAC
- January 14 – (2:00 p.m.)  
Coolidge Musical in the  
Endslo PAC
- January 15 – Martin  
Luther King Day - Offices  
and Schools Closed; (9:30  
a.m. Breakfast & 10:00a.m.  
Program) Martin Luther  
King Day Celebration at  
RMHS
- January 16 - 19 – RMHS  
Midterms
- January 17 – (6:00 p.m.)  
RISE Preschool Open  
House
- January 18 – (7:00 p.m.)  
School Committee  
Meeting in the Schettini  
Library – FY19 Budget  
Discussions

## Reading Public Schools Budget Bulletin 5

*Budget Presentations and Discussions Begin This Week*

Periodically, we will be publishing *Budget Bulletins* to inform the staff and the community about the upcoming FY19 budget process. This year, during the budget process, which begins this week, the Superintendent of Schools and other members of the Central Office Leadership Team will be presenting two budgets: the first budget will be a balanced budget which will follow the financial guidelines that have been put forth by the Finance Committee. The second budget will be a budget which will be considered if there is an override ballot question in April. The balanced budget will be presented during the first two nights of School Committee and the second budget will be presented on the third night after the public hearing.

The upcoming FY19 School Committee budget meetings are listed below. Please note that because of Town Bylaws regarding the length of time that the School Committee needs to have the budget available prior to the vote, the January 16<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting has been cancelled and another meeting has been scheduled for Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**January 8th**-Administration, Districtwide, School Facilities cost centers and capital

**January 10th**-Regular Day and Special Education Cost Centers

**January 11th**-Public Hearing, Override Budget

**January 18th**-Questions and Discussion from School Committee

**January 22nd**-Questions/Final Vote

The balanced budget will be posted online on the District Website on Monday evening.

If you have any questions about the budget process, please contact Director of Finance Gail Dowd at [gail.dowd@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:gail.dowd@reading.k12.ma.us) or Superintendent of Schools John Doherty at [john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us).

- January 22 – Second Semester Begins for Middle & High School Students; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Schettini Library – FY19 Budget Discussions & Vote
- January 23 – (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Guidance Sophomore Parent Night
- January 24 – Grade 6 – 12 Early Release

## Learning & Teaching Office Hours / Looking Ahead for a New Year

Beginning this month, Craig Martin, Assistant Superintendent for Learning & Teaching, and Carolyn Wilson, Director of Student Services, will be regularly holding “office hours” at various locations and times in order to connect with both staff and community and to hear/discuss input, ideas, or questions regarding topics connected to learning and teaching. Our district goals regarding literacy, mathematics, social emotional learning, and closing the achievement gap all require a close collaboration and integration of both our general education and special education efforts, and it is our hope to further these goals through these collaborative conversations. In addition, for staff, monthly focus areas that connect with specific content areas and the specific focus areas of our district goals are being identified for school and classroom visits during the school day. For both staff and community, a monthly “Learning & Teaching Update” is also being planned with information aligned to district goals and current issues, and so more information will be coming soon. We look forward to your input and ideas as we start this new year!

- For staff and/or community, office hours this week are on Thursday (1/11) from 2:15-3:15 p.m. at Coolidge.
- For staff, the focus area is currently *Mathematics*. School visits are scheduled this week for Parker (Wednesday), Killam (Thursday), and Coolidge (Friday).

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## The Importance of Academic Courage

*Courage exists in math as much as in mountain climbing, and students can develop the courage to tackle academic and life challenges.*

By [Ron Berger](#) for [Edutopia](#) Blog

Destiny, a high school junior, stood at the whiteboard with her classmates huddled close on plastic chairs, the back row sitting on desktops. She paused in the middle of writing a math solution and turned to the class. “I’m not sure this is right,” she admitted. “We chose a really hard problem, but our group thinks this works. Let me know if it makes sense.”

Jalen raised his hand. “I don’t understand. Can you explain those variables again?”

These students attend an urban public district school, the Springfield Renaissance School in Springfield, Massachusetts, an EL Education school. Ninety-eight percent of Springfield Renaissance students are graduating on time, and 100 percent of graduates have been accepted to college for eight consecutive years. What’s going on in this school that’s creating this success? Many things. But one of the most important factors is academic courage.

There’s a lot of talk these days in education about growth mindset and grit, which are important. We know that both grit and resilience are critical dispositions in successful students. But I want to suggest that we take these ideas a step further and talk about courage, which is something that students can intuitively understand.

Indeed, my eyes have been opened to a new vision of courage that we use in the EL Education network: differentiated courage.

## **Kudos and Accolades**

- Kudos to our custodians and facilities staff for the monumental job that they did keeping our buildings up and running during the recent cold snap and snow days.
- To Director of Finance Gail Dowd for her efforts during the FY19 budget process.
- Congratulations to the boys & girls hockey team, boys & girls basketball, and boys track for wins recently.

Some people have mountain-climbing courage but no public-speaking courage. Soccer courage is different from musical courage; big-city-at-night courage is different from forest-at-night courage. We all have courage in certain realms and less in others. And we can all work on our courage where we need it.

Bringing this into schools can be transformational. Students in EL Education schools explain to me that they're working on their science courage, their art courage, or their Shakespeare courage. Preschool students tell me they're working on their talking courage. Beyond high-level mathematical courage, students describe to me that they're specifically working on their fractions courage, their integers courage, or their calculus courage.

What does calculus courage even mean? It means you don't hide in calculus class, pretending you understand things when you don't, or pretending you're too cool to care about the work. It means you take the risk to raise your hand and ask questions, to share your thinking with others, to take critique from peers. It means having the courage to choose difficult problems and risk mistakes. What I saw in Destiny and Jalen in that high school math class—that was academic courage. Learning doesn't happen without it, and fortunately, it can be cultivated.

### **Start With the Teachers**

Cultivating courage in students must start with teachers. In fact, the best way for students to learn it is for teachers to model it. One of the most successful schools in our network is [Two Rivers Public Charter School](#) in Washington, DC, an urban K–8 school with a waiting list of over 2,000 families. Their success in mathematics is double digits above city averages on tests. That success does not come from a clever curriculum—it comes from the teachers.

Two Rivers school leader Jeff Heyck-Williams led the faculty for several years in a professional learning sequence to build their mathematical courage. They wrote their personal math stories—their own journeys as students when they developed their mathematical confusions and insecurities. They investigated their “math scars”—the damage to their math psyches that caused them to have fixed mindsets about understanding aspects of math. They worked together to relearn the mathematical content that they had never truly understood well as students, studying in differentiated groups. They were not, at that point, studying how to teach mathematics. They were studying mathematics, with courage, together.

### **Courage Is Contagious**

Having gone through this process, the teachers returned to the classroom charged with excitement about really, deeply understanding the math they were teaching, and the misconceptions they had encountered. They had the courage to explain to their students how they held misconceptions themselves, and demonstrated how they had overcome them, using the math itself to tell their story. They modeled the courage that the students adopted.

Destiny and Jalen and their classmates meet in a small group every day—an advisory structure we call Crew—and use courage to share their personal and academic successes and challenges.

It's hard to overestimate the value of courage—this broader vision of courage—in education.

For Destiny and Jalen, taking risks to explain their mathematical thinking in front of their classmates, the payoff of building courage goes far beyond doing well on classroom tests or

## Superintendent's Office

### Hours this Week

*All are welcome*

1/9 Superintendent's  
Office – 5:00 – 6:00  
p.m.

1/11 Parker – 7:30 – 8:30  
a.m.

1/13 Superintendent's  
Office, 9:00 – 10:00  
a.m.

## Learning and Teaching Office Hours This Week

*All are welcome*

1/11 Coolidge, 2:15-3:15  
p.m.

SATs. They take the courage to step up across differences in race, class, gender, and neighborhood to support each other. They build the courage to succeed in college and life, and to give back to others. And they take that courage with them wherever they go.

## Teaching Introverted Students: How a 'Quiet Revolution' Is Changing Classroom Practice

Susan Cain, author of *Quiet: the Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*.  
**By Brenda Iasevoli for Education Week**

December 27, 2017

At the end of each lesson, when 2nd grade teacher Erin Pawlak asked her students at P.S. 11 in New York City to reflect on their reading or share a successful strategy, the same hands would shoot up.

“Ideas came quick to these students so they were always doing the talking,” said Pawlak.

But what about the quiet students? Pawlak and fellow teacher Dawn Rosevear set out to answer that question at a teacher training conference in their city that was given by a group called **Quiet Revolution** in June of 2016. The aim of the two-week Quiet Summer Institute was to coach teachers on how to develop leadership qualities in introverted students—presumably, the students who were not raising their hand in Pawlak’s class.

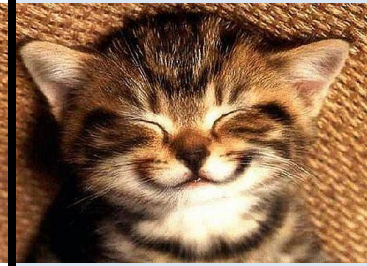
The suspicion that they may be holding quiet and otherwise bright students to an unfair standard is driving some teachers to change their conception of class participation, which can count for up to half of a student’s overall grade in some classrooms and shape the teacher’s perception of student success. For Pawlak and Rosevear, the emphasis on teaching to personality types promoted by the New York City-based Quiet Revolution seemed like a way of clearing away some longstanding notions that were getting in the way of acknowledging, and rewarding, their quiet students’ unique contributions. Quiet Revolution is the brainchild of writer Susan Cain, whose 2012 book, *Quiet: the Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*, became a bestseller, and whose talk on making the workplace more inclusive of different personality styles **became a TED Talk phenomenon**. Since then, Cain has set her sights on changing the classroom, where she says teachers unconsciously reward the extroverts who dive headfirst into discussions, sometimes without much forethought.

### **Becoming ‘Quiet Ambassadors’**

Over the course of the paid workshops that summer, Pawlak and Rosevear, along with 61 other like-minded teachers from the 19 network schools across the country, learned how to change the format of class discussion and group work in order to help the introverts—and even the extroverts—to succeed. The two became what the organization calls “Quiet Ambassadors.” Upon returning to their school, the teachers set to work training their teaching colleagues on how to measure students’ engagement, as opposed to their participation.

One of their first orders of business was to redesign the rubric that P.S. 11 teachers were using to grade class participation. Pawlak and Rosevear made one notable change: They removed hand-raising as an indicator of student engagement. “It’s archaic to think that kids are going to constantly raise their hands, and that’s how we know they’re engaged,” Rosevear said. “In our training of teachers we shared examples of traditional comments, like ‘so and so is really great, but he needs to raise his hand more.’ These are things we’ve

## Quote of the Week . . .



Making someone smile  
when they're feeling down  
is one of the best feelings.

Unknown

all said, but when we hear them now we have these cringe-worthy moments where it's like 'I can't believe I said that to a child.' "

Pawlak and Rosevear's guide, which now bears the trademark of Quiet Revolution and is available to educators in the network, suggests comments aimed at shifting teachers' views of quiet kids, like "while Chloe doesn't always offer answers to questions in class, I can see that she is engaged and understanding concepts through her body language and written responses."

The tricky part is how to evaluate body language and determine that a student is listening intently. Teachers should look for eye contact, "facial feedback," and movements like leaning forward toward the speaker, said Rosevear. But it's also telling to simply look at the projects that students complete.

"If you are engaged in the lesson, then the product you create is going to show that you're putting thought and effort into your work every day," Pawlak added.

### **Class Participation Reconsidered**

For Heidi Kasevich, the director of education at Quiet Revolution, rethinking participation is key to the success of introverts. She said some of the schools in the organization's network set class participation at 50 percent of a student's grade. Kasevich, who taught history in middle and high school classrooms in New York City for 25 years, said she has seen school cultures that were one-size-fits-all, geared more for the extroverts than for the introverts. "It's important to open up lots of different avenues to participation," Kasevich said. "We need to shift our thinking from class participation is 20, 30 or 50 percent of your grade to 'here are a lot of different ways that students can be engaged in your class,' from body language to short written check-ins to electronic communication, to quietize the thinking process"—or, in other words, create an introvert-friendly learning environment.

In the year after the Quiet Summer Institute, Pawlak and Rosevear, along with other P.S. 11 teachers, tested out the strategies with their students. First, the teachers gave students a personality survey that Pawlak and Rosevear designed, borrowing from a survey that Quiet Revolution designed for older students and translating the text into pictures. Students could choose, for instance, between a picture of a kid at a desk by himself and a kid sitting at a table with other students. Their choices revealed their preferences for working alone or in groups.

Once teachers had a sense of whether students were introverts, extroverts, or a combination, they each chose two students they identified as introverts to track their engagement during different activities throughout the school year using a scale ranging from highest (talking to the whole class and critiquing) to lowest (no engagement, not talking, no eye contact).

### **'Think-Pair-Share'**

Students shouldn't always have to show what they know out loud, according to Pawlak. That's a crucial shift in the way teachers think about class participation. Why shouldn't students be able to respond to discussion or debate questions in writing? At the very least, they should be able to write down their thoughts and discuss their ideas with another student before entering a whole-class discussion, Pawlak added. This strategy, called "think-pair-share," is highly touted by Quiet Revolution. And Pawlak said her students give her daily proof that it works.

Kathy Schultz, the dean of the education school at the University of Colorado and the author of *Rethinking Classroom Participation: Listening to Silent Voices*, said the emphasis on giving students extra time to think before articulating their ideas in a whole-class setting



## Disney Tweet of the Week



"You control your destiny -  
- you don't need magic to  
do it. And there are no  
magical shortcuts to solving  
your problems."

-- Merida (Brave)

is just good all-around teaching. But she's skeptical of the organization's emphasis on personality. Schultz thinks teachers should be able to recognize the ways quiet students think and participate, and she's not just talking about head nodding or eye contact.

"This is about more than just teaching kids the cues that are going to make them successful in a white, middle-class classroom," she said. "There are cultures where listening is more important than talking. We have to get to know who students are."

Schultz suggests teachers learn to "listen to the silence." Students are quiet for a whole range of reasons, she said, and labeling them introverts just ends up hindering them in the end. "They may just be thoughtful in a different kind of way," she said. Schultz's own daughter was graded poorly in class participation, but it turned out she didn't feel the need to speak when another student already voiced a similar idea that she had brewing in her own head. "She felt that she didn't have a unique perspective to add to the discussion," Schultz said. "That's valuable. If she's aiming for a unique perspective then it wouldn't be productive to push her to talk more."

For her part, Pawlak sees her role as helping students to explore their preferences for the way they best learn, and the changes she made in her classroom helped move students from the lowest engagement end of the scale to the highest. One 2nd grader in particular never seemed to be paying attention. More often than not, he would be gazing out the window. The survey helped Pawlak identify him as introverted. From then on, instead of jumping right into a class discussion she allowed students time to be with their own thoughts. They could write or draw to develop their ideas, then share their thoughts with one other student, and finally test their ideas out with the entire class.

"Anytime he was able to voice his opinion in writing he thrived," Pawlak said. "By the end of the year, he was a completely different student, taking a leadership role in group activities, even presenting the group's work to the class. He began participating in group discussions, saying 'I agree with you' or 'I disagree.' "

The student became a model of class participation, just by having a chance to process his ideas in his journal before he spoke. Said Pawlak, "That seemed to make all the difference for him."

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## Martin Luther King Celebration on January 15<sup>th</sup>

The Human Relations Advisory Committee of Reading would like to invite you to attend our Annual Martin Luther King Day Breakfast and Celebration at the Reading Memorial High School Performing Arts Center on January 15th from 9:30-11:30. Our theme this year is: "CommUNITY"

The morning will start with a light breakfast at 9:30 in the "Main Street" area of the PAC, where local organizations will have tables to highlight their missions and work. The program will begin at 10am in the auditorium, and will include local choirs, bands, and more!

2018 Martin Luther King Day Celebration

January 15th, 2018

9:30am-11:30am

Reading Memorial High School Performing Arts Center

## Important Websites

[Help Desk \(To submit a ticket\)](#)  
[help.desk@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:help.desk@reading.k12.ma.us)

[RPS District Website](#)  
[www.reading.k12.ma.us](http://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



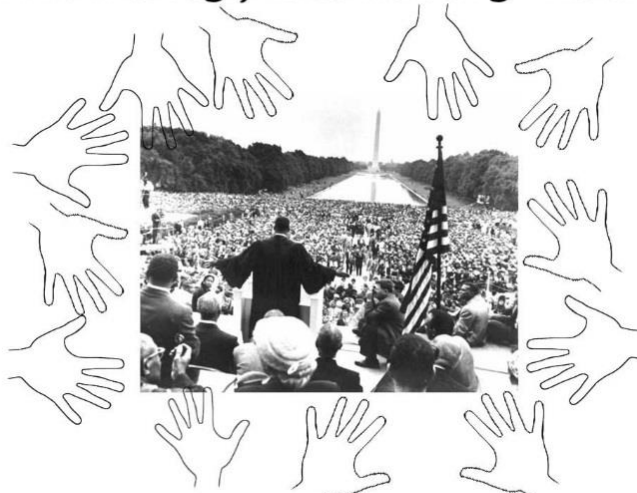
The Town of Reading has contracted with a unique **HELPLINE** service staffed by licensed clinicians that can help children, teens, & adults in Reading become connected with mental health care. Get provider matches that meet your specific needs, accepts your insurance & has available appointments.

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

**The Reading Human Relations Advisory Committee  
presents**

# **commUNITY**

**a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration**  
**Monday, January 15th**



**Reading Memorial High School  
Performing Arts Center**  
**9:30am Breakfast 10:00am Program**  
**FREE ADMISSION**  
**OPEN TO ALL AGES**

The Town of Reading encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact the Town Clerk to be put in touch with an HRAC representative (or email us directly at [rhac867@gmail.com](mailto:rhac867@gmail.com)) in advance of your participation or visit.

## **Reading Public Schools Happenings**

### **Wood End Students Spread Cheer Through Project SMILE**

Recently, the Wood End Student Council spread cheer throughout the community by delivering student made holiday cards to various groups. Below are some pictures of students and community members.



## 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](mailto:john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us)



## Stepping Stones...

- Congratulations to Parker custodian **Bob Dean** on the birth of his grandson Riley on December 22<sup>nd</sup> weighing 6 lbs., 15 oz.
- Congratulations to RMHS secretary **Illeana Napoli** on the birth of her granddaughter Ava Rose on January 4<sup>th</sup> weighing 8 lbs., 6 oz.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
  - ✓ Juliana Zingales, Daily Substitute, District
  - ✓ Thi Rome, Team Chair, Special Education
  - ✓ Amanda Green, Daily Substitute, District
  - ✓ Megan Quinlan, Nurse Substitute, District
  - ✓ Kylie Coffey, Daily Substitute, District
- **We have posted** a new position. If interested, please visit
- <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

Long Term Substitute Special Education Program Paraeducator, 55 hours biweekly, RISE Preschool



<a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=425">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=425</a>
1:1 Special Education Program Paraeducator, 55 hours biweekly, RISE Preschool (anticipated) <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=424">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=424</a>
1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher – TSP, Reading Memorial High School <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=432">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=432</a>
Extended School Year School Psychologist/School Adjustment Counselor <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=433">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=433</a>
Extended School Year Physical Therapist <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=431">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=431</a>
Extended School Year Occupational Therapist <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=430">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=430</a>
Extended School Year Special Education Teacher <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=429">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=429</a>
Extended School Year School Nurse <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=428">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=428</a>
Extended School Year Special Education Paraeducator <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=427">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=427</a>

## Blazing Trails...

**"What's Needed to Scale Personalized Learning? Ask MAPLE."** While many school districts are investing in technology, there are factors that may be frustrating efforts to scale personalized learning, according to an analysis by the Massachusetts Personalized Learning Edtech Consortium (MAPLE). Such factors include a lack of professional development and funding as well as scheduling constraints. [Read More](#)

**"Keys to Creating the Ultimate School Culture."** The best administrators know that a positive school culture is based upon the overall satisfaction and safety of the students, staff and community members -- and they also know that if they don't intentionally lead the shaping of the school culture, others will. So how can you build a culture where everyone is beating down the doors to get in? Check out how in this ASCD InService post. [Read More](#)

**"Why Words and Definitions of those Words Matter."** When it comes to education, rarely does the same word mean the same thing to different people when they hear it. Ask a mixed group of 10 different teachers, parents, students, and leaders what "success" means and you'll get 10 different answers. Same with "achievement" or "transformation" or "education." Same for "learning." We say these words on a daily basis in schools, but do we really share a common understanding of what they mean? And what are the implications if we don't? [Read More](#)

**"3 Trends in Education Leadership."** ASCD Director of Educator Engagement Emily Davis in this Q&A highlights three important issues on the minds of education leaders in 2017. Davis, a former classroom teacher who served as a Teaching Ambassador Fellow for the US Department of Education, also discusses the types of skills today's leaders need and the best environments for leadership to grow and thrive. [Read More](#)

**"Program Engages Singapore Students in Learning."** Educators and students at a school in Singapore are crediting the school's Sequoia Program for helping to improve outcomes for some students. The program allows students to learn outside of the classroom and to develop better relationships with teachers and classmates. [Read More](#)

**Have a Great Week!**