



# Pathways

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

January 21, 2017

Volume 4, Number 20

## Upcoming Dates

- January 22 – Second Semester Begins for Middle School Students; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Schettini Library – FY19 Budget Public Hearing Discussions & Vote
- January 23 – (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Guidance Sophomore Parent Night
- January 24 – Second Semester begins for High School Students; Grade 6 – 8 Early Release; (7:30 p.m.) Financial Forum (Reading Public Library)
- February 2 – (7:30 p.m.) RMHS Drama Presents “The Workshop” in the Endslo PAC
- February 3 – (7:30 p.m.) RMHS Drama Presents “The Workshop” in the Endslo PAC
- February 5 – (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Superintendent’s Conference Room
- February 7 – (7:30 p.m.) School Committee FY2019 Budget Presentation to the Finance Committee
- February 8 – (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Guidance – Junior Parent Night in the Endslo PAC
- February 10 – (5:00 p.m.) RMHS Freshman Progressive Dinner in Cafeteria

## Reading Public Schools Budget Bulletin 7

### *Superintendent’s Message on FY19 Reconstruction/Override Budget*

As we look to a possible election for a Proposition 2 ½ override, the entire leadership team of the Reading Public Schools realizes that we are faced with a challenge requiring a renewed vision for our school system, which not only provides the children of Reading with a first-class education consistent with the expectations of our current era—but also aligns with the understandable fiscal parameters of a small community and our desire to have a financially sustainable structure for all our educational and municipal services. To honor both goals, these two objectives must be intertwined or complementary, and certainly not polarizing or oppositional to each other—as both goals are integrated in the foundational values of our community. To do so means that we must make some difficult decisions, restructure some existing expenditures to satisfy new needs, and keep our goals both streamlined and focused to yield maximum impact from what would still be a relatively modest infrastructure when compared to many other school districts.

Over the last five years, Reading has not been able to support a level-service budget for the school district, which means that sufficient funding was not available to sustain the same level of programs and services as the previous year. As a result, cuts to a level-service budget have had to be made each of those years. With reductions that have been occurring in both federal and state aid, and with increasing costs in mandatory areas such as transportation and Special Education services, budget funds have needed to be reallocated to these items—resulting however in nearly \$4 million of reductions from level-service over the last five years in other areas of the budget. As our leadership team looks to the future however, we realize that it is neither possible nor fiscally sound to restore everything, or to navigate the future by attempting to simply go back to the past. Instead, we must prioritize and restructure in a way that is both effective for our district’s goals and more sustainable for our community. The voters indicated that the dollar amount of the previous Prop 2 ½ ballot question was not attainable; and many Town leaders have understandably reached the conclusion that if an override question were to be considered again, the total amount would need to be significantly smaller. The following plan incorporates these assumptions, while still accounting for the demands of effectively educating our children in an era of profoundly different demands and realities from the past—and still addressing the current improvement needs of our school district.

The education landscape has changed drastically in the last several years, largely in response to the demands of the digital era. Another change of course has been the state’s accountability system, used to assess district performance. Although there have been understandable obstacles, we have perhaps been too slow in adapting

## Kudos and Accolades

- Kudos to boys & girls hockey, gymnastics and swimming on wins this week.

our district structures to effectively navigate these changes. Our entire team realizes, however, that we must now implement new ways of doing things to ensure achievement for all children and for all schools. In short, we must explore a “reconstruction” of our system to implement a structure better designed to ensure student outcomes, to better support our staff, and to be a school system that contributes both to our children and to our entire community. This plan does not attempt to restore all the positions that have been reduced over the years; nor does it attempt to implement many positions that are commonplace in comparable districts. That would not be sustainable. Instead, our leadership team is proposing the addition of 2 curriculum support positions to ensure consistency across the schools and the restructuring and expansion of current Team Chair positions to more quickly identify and address student needs and to increase our elementary principals’ opportunities to provide curriculum and instructional leadership to staff. This plan reflects our community’s values to be both fiscally sound *and* to provide a great education to its children. For our district, we understand that an override must not be simply a list of items to fund—but rather, an opportunity that marks a new way of doing things and a new beginning toward better performance capacity and ultimately greater results for our students.

## Teachers / Student Personnel

Most importantly, most of the plan’s funding is devoted to classroom teachers and personnel who directly support students, and it will provide the financial resources to retain excellent educators in the Reading Public Schools. These educators are of course the backbone of our school system and need to be restored to meet student needs. This plan will restore several key positions, in order to bring class sizes back to desired levels in elementary school, maintain the Foreign Language program in Grades 7 and 8, sustain a middle school structure that has been so successful for our district, strengthen academic intervention opportunities for all students, and increase Advance Placement and other course offerings at Reading Memorial High School. It will also allow RMHS to use recommendations from the ongoing NEASC Accreditation Process to restructure or redevelop offerings to better address the needs of all students.

### Teachers / Student Personnel

<b>Restore 6 High School Teachers</b> <i>(which were eliminated in previous budget reductions)</i>	\$420,000
<b>Retain 7 Middle School Teachers</b> <i>(which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	\$500,000
<b>Retain 4 Elementary Teachers</b> <i>(which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	\$300,000
<b>Retain 1.0 FTE Elementary Tutor – Regular Ed/School Day</b> <i>(which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	\$20,000
<b>Salary Adjustments for Retaining/Attracting Staff</b>	\$360,000

## Learning & Teaching Support

### Curriculum Materials, Training, and Technology

This plan also addresses our district’s need for curriculum updates and technology replenishment. In an era when so many curriculum standards have changed significantly, it is critical that we are updating resources to ensure the best results for our students. The state DESE has recently reminded districts that “providing teachers access to high-quality, standards-aligned curricular materials can significantly improve student outcomes” and well-designed curricular materials can also “lessen teachers’ workloads, deepen their pedagogical content knowledge, and increase coherence within and across grades.” Next year, curriculum funding is

### Superintendent's Office

#### Hours this Week

*All are welcome*

- 1/23 RMHS  
7:15 – 8:15 a.m.
- 1/24 Joshua Eaton  
12:15 – 1:15 p.m.
- 1/25 Superintendent's  
Office  
4:30 – 5:30 p.m.
- 1/30 Superintendent's  
Office  
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
- 1/31 Wood End  
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.
- 2/2 Parker  
7:15 – 8:15 p.m.

### Reading Public Schools "Learning & Teaching" Office Hours

(For Staff and/or Community) w/Craig Martin, Assistant Superintendent and Carolyn Wilson, Director of Student Services are scheduled this week for:

- Wednesday, January 24, 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
(Barrows Elementary School)
- Wednesday, January 24, 2:15-3:15 p.m.  
(RMHS, Learning & Teaching Office)

**School/Classroom Visits during the school day are scheduled this week for:**

- Wednesday, January 24, Barrows Elementary School (11:15-12:15)
- Thursday, January 25, Reading Memorial High School (1:00-2:00)

**District Goal/Focus Area for this week:**  
*Literacy*

allocated to complete the science curriculum implementation. In future years, funding will allow a curriculum review cycle for areas such as social studies, reading, math, and computer science/engineering (all areas that the state has either recently updated or has plans to soon implement a revised framework). Funding is also allocated in the plan to provide necessary training for teachers to become more familiar with revised curriculum and to make important adjustments in instructional practices. During this time of vast curriculum transition, our teachers greatly need not only updated resources that are aligned with standards, but also the ongoing support to successfully make the shift to new expectations. As any teacher might attest, technology is also now an integral component to education, and can be an effective instructional tool on which teachers now depend to meet the diverse needs of students. To be a competitive school district—and more important, one that prepares students to meet demands of the emerging workplace—we must not disregard this important component. Technology replenishment funding will be used to move our district closer to a 5-year replacement cycle (versus the current 8-year cycle). The funding also includes restoring 1 Computer Technician position to better support classrooms, install replacement technology, and more efficiently service existing network hardware and the wireless infrastructure. Our staff has clearly indicated that this is an area where they need to be better supported and in which we must improve our capacity.

### **Instructional Leadership and Support**

During this era of tremendous change in education, *instructional leadership* has also become critical to successfully navigate new expectations. In the past five years alone, we have seen at the state level three new curriculum frameworks in science, mathematics, and literacy; and we now of course also have more rigorous MCAS, SAT, and AP exams. All of this unfortunately has been happening during a time in Reading when budget reductions were required. As a district that has been comparatively very lean in support positions, changes have been more challenging to navigate than for many other districts who have already ensured instructional leadership capacity. For these reasons, it is necessary to reform our leadership and support infrastructure to reflect the demands of new educational standards, to better support our current administrators to function as instructional leaders, and to effectively address the challenges our district has faced with meeting the needs of *all* students—especially students with disabilities.

First, the plan includes two ***K-8 Curriculum Coordinators*** (one for English Language Arts/Social Studies and one for Mathematics/Science). In practice, these positions would focus primarily on improving consistency among our five neighborhood elementary schools, but would also provide the coordination necessary for a smooth curricular transition to middle school and a vertical coherence within our K-8 continuum. Overall, these coordinators will work closely with building principals and teachers to facilitate ongoing improvement of the educational program, coordinate and maintain curriculum documents aligned to state standards, provide content expertise and feedback for staff, and help coordinate and provide ongoing training for teachers. By ensuring a strong Tier 1 curriculum program for *all* students, we believe this will also provide the proactive leadership necessary to improve our effectiveness for students with disabilities and potentially generate cost-savings for the district. While the curriculum coordinator concept is relatively new to Reading, it is common in school districts across our state and its

## Quote of the Week . . .



Everyone comes into your  
life for a reason; some  
good, some bad. They  
shape, form and break us.  
But in the end make us  
who we are.

Unknown

effectiveness is well-documented. These positions are integral to a district that wishes to use efficient, evidence-based practices to improve outcomes.

Secondly, the plan includes a restructuring of current positions in PreK-5 Special Education with an additional *2.4 FTE* to provide better support across the district. First, *.4 FTE* would be added to the existing *.6 RISE Team Chair* to create a single position for both preschool and out-of-district students. Then, *2.0 FTE* would be added to existing *3.0 FTE* (currently structured as elementary Team Chairs) to provide **Assistant Principals** at each of the elementary schools. This provides an administrative team at each elementary school, creating consistent supports for students, families and teachers—and allowing principals to become more effective in their role as instructional leaders. Assistant Principals would be responsible for Special Ed Team Chair responsibilities, as well as supervision and evaluation of staff, IEP implementation and resource allocation, and building-level leadership for special education. They would also be able to make stronger connections with students and families who receive special education support. Additionally, they will be able to spend time in *all* classrooms to support the practices of both general *and* special educators. The opportunity to provide timely and meaningful feedback to teachers ensures that all students are being exposed to a robust Tier 1 curriculum, as well as high leverage classroom practices that result in improved student achievement.

Lastly, the current Preschool Director position (*.4 FTE*) is restructured with an additional *.6 FTE* to form an **Assistant Director of Student Services**. The Assistant Director would assume director responsibilities of RISE preschool, including direct supervision and evaluation of staff—but also would provide much needed support to our Special Education programs across the district. This position would provide central leadership for in-district programs, provide consultation to school teams if specific areas of expertise are required, and coordinate ongoing training for all staff. All these components are designed to work cohesively and to forge a strong integration of both general and special education. With limited resources, we will never be able to provide many of the supports and services that other school districts might provide. With this plan however, we are envisioning a renewed structure that not only supports both general and special education needs for the future of the Reading Public Schools, but also provides a more cost-effective and proactive way of meeting our district goals and improving student outcomes. In addition, this instructional leadership structure will make the Reading Public Schools more desirable to retain and attract outstanding educators for our children.

### Learning & Teaching / Instructional Leadership and Support

Curriculum Updates and Renewal	\$150,000
Restore Teacher Training (e.g., Science, ELA, Math) for curriculum	\$75,000
1 Districtwide K-8 Curriculum Coordinator (Mathematics/Science)	\$95,000
1 Districtwide K-8 Curriculum Coordinator (English Language Arts/Social Studies)	\$95,000
Restructure existing admin positions for Elementary Assistant Principals	\$215,000
Restructure existing admin positions for Special Education Assistant Director	\$70,000
Restore Classroom Computer/Technology	\$50,000
Restore 1.0 FTE Computer Technician	\$57,000

### Operations / Facilities / Athletics

Our leadership team has also realized that we must improve our district operation in all personnel related matters. A Payroll/HR generalist position will improve the

## Disney Tweet of the Week



"A true hero isn't measured by the size of his strength, but by the strength of his heart."

-- Zeus (Hercules)

onboarding process for new employees and support their transition into the school district more effectively. This position, along with our current HR Administrator, will allow us to recruit and train substitute teachers more successfully, provide more support for teachers in their first three years in the school district, and extend our recruitment process to attract the best candidates possible for all positions. Funding also will fully restore the vacation cleanings for the custodial cleaning contract at RMHS in order to appropriately maintain the facility and reduce costs later. And finally, this plan will restore full game schedules for all levels (Varsity, JV, and Freshmen) in all sports.

### Operations / Facilities / Athletics

<b>Clerical Support (Payroll/HR Generalist)</b>	\$45,000
<i>Retain Vacation Cleaning at RMHS (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	\$18,000
<i>Retain Athletics/Extracurricular funding (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	\$25,000

### Conclusion and "Override Budget" Summary Table

In summary, this restructured plan recognizes our community's need for fiscal sustainability, but also effectively addresses the challenges of our school system and provides Reading children with an educational experience in which our community can take pride. By revising current practices for existing positions and by exploring new partnerships with both business and higher education, our goal also is to reconstruct our school system in a way that serves our *entire* community and all its residents. In many ways, a school system reflects the values of its community and is a living symbol of the link among its generations. The educators of Reading are so proud to serve this community as stewards of its future; and by working together with all stakeholders, we feel confident in the future—for our children and for our entire community.

Summary of Plan Components	Budget
<i>Restore 6 High School Teachers (which were eliminated in previous budget reductions)</i>	\$420,000
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<i>Retain 4 Elementary Teachers (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	\$300,000
<i>Retain 1 Elementary Tutor – Regular Ed/School Day (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	\$20,000
<b>Salary Adjustments for Retaining/Attracting Staff</b>	\$360,000
<b>Curriculum Updates and Renewal</b>	\$150,000
<b>1 Districtwide K-8 Curriculum Coordinator (Mathematics/Science)</b>	\$95,000
<b>1 Districtwide K-8 Curriculum Coordinator (English Language Arts/Social Studies)</b>	\$95,000
<i>Restructure existing admin positions for Assistant Principals at Elementary Schools</i>	\$215,000
<i>Restructure existing admin positions for Special Education Assistant Director</i>	\$70,000
<i>Restore Teacher Training (e.g., Science, ELA, Math) for curriculum</i>	\$75,000
<i>Restore Classroom Computer/Technology</i>	\$50,000
<i>Restore 1 Computer Technician</i>	\$57,000
<b>Clerical Support (Payroll/Human Resources Generalist)</b>	\$45,000
<i>Retain Vacation Cleaning at RMHS (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	\$18,000
<i>Retain Athletics/Extracurricular funding (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	\$25,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,495,000</b>

## 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?**



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/>

## **In Closing**

The remaining FY19 School Committee budget meeting is 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 22<sup>nd</sup>**-Public Hearing/Questions/Final Vote-RMHS Schettini Library

**January 24<sup>th</sup>**-Financial Forum/Budget Summit-Reading Public Library

**January 30<sup>th</sup>**-Board of Selectmen meeting to decide override ballot question-Location TBD

All budget information is posted on the Reading Public School website, located below:

<https://www.reading.k12.ma.us/test/budget-information/fy19-budget-information/>

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).

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## **RMHS Drama Club Visits Hospice**

*Students Perform Selections from Pippin*



On Tuesday January 9<sup>th</sup>, members of the RMHS Drama Club had the pleasure of performing selections from our fall musical Pippin for a resident in end of life care at Compasus Hospice.

Earlier this year Drama Director Natalie Cunha was contacted by a care provider for Compasus saying she had a resident who spent much of her relationship with her husband in the theatre. They were season ticket holders at the North Shore Music

## 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)

Theatre in Beverly and traveled to Ogunquit ME and Pawtucket to see performances at their regional theatres. Because this was such a cornerstone of her relationship with her husband, her care team wanted to do something special for them and put on a private concert for them to enjoy. She said the reputation of talent and skill of the RMHS Drama Club had preceded us and she knew we were her first choice. She said she often drives by our signage in town and is always impressed by our level of professionalism.

The day was emotional, and so rewarding. As soon as Mrs. Cunha reached out to students to volunteer she was met with enthusiasm and eagerness to give back to someone in need. We cannot speak highly enough of the compassion, energy and professionalism of the students who performed that afternoon. It speaks so highly of them as people, and our community, to see them so selflessly give to another person. Our administration went above and beyond approving our trip knowing time was of the essence. The students sang a selection from their fall show, and all of us agree the most touching moment of our afternoon was watching the resident's husband reach for her hand and hold it during "Love Song". We all remarked at how important the theatre is. It transports us to different places and times, and it was clear this couple had traveled back to a simpler and happy time between them.

Special thanks goes out to the students and to Mrs. Cunha for arranging the visit.

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### **Jon Saphier on High-Expertise Teaching and Cultural Proficiency**

"There are many outstanding professional teachers at work in our schools, including those serving our most economically disadvantaged children," says PD guru Jon Saphier in this article in *The Learning Professional*. "But there are simply not enough of them... The fundamentals of high-expertise teaching have not been provided to or expected of large portions of our teacher corps." What's missing in too many cases, says Saphier, is a good understanding at the federal, state, district, and school level of the complexity of teaching and the kind of continuous professional learning needed to bring everyone up to par.

Saphier imagines a situation where a teacher tells you about a successful classroom practice that's different from the one you've been using. If you believe there's generally a right and a wrong way to teach something (the effectiveness or "best practices" paradigm), your reaction may be that this colleague is trying to show you up or is patronizing you. But if you view teaching as a vast repertoire of practices that need to be matched to individual classroom situations, you'll have a different reaction: *Hmmm, that's an interesting alternative. I might want to try it.* "That view of professional knowledge not only accepts the legitimacy of different ways of doing things," says Saphier, "but also encourages debate and professional problem solving."

A crucial first step for principals, then, is shifting colleagues from the "best practices" to the "repertoire and matching" way of thinking. Step two is orchestrating team meetings in which teachers are constantly talking about what's

working and what's not, based on assessment evidence. Step three is getting people to see beyond their silos: "Fully professional teachers," says Saphier, "are leaders who take the initiative to influence colleagues toward ideas they value and move the school toward practices they believe will strengthen everyone." This involves giving up some classroom autonomy in service of the greater good.

Cultural proficiency is a particularly important area for professional development, Saphier continues, given the increasing percentage of students from the Caribbean, Central and South America, Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. "Cultural improficiency in the classroom leaves students who are culturally and linguistically diverse feeling misunderstood and excluded," he says. "Like all children in all schools, they need to feel known and valued to have their energy available for learning." Among the proficiencies that need to be affirmed and developed in all teachers:

- Curiosity and continuous learning about the cultures of all students;
- Acknowledging and valuing cultures different from one's own;
- All students feeling valued and that they have a place in the classroom and school;
- Curriculum, classroom artifacts, and instructional examples reflecting diverse cultures.

One problem is that discussions of culture are sometimes taken as an accusation of racism. "Racism is certainly a first cousin of cultural blindness and cultural improficiency," says Saphier, "but it is profoundly different. Cultural improficiency arises from lack of interest, awareness, and respect for other cultures. It assumes the dominant white culture is just 'normal.' But racism comes from an ancient tradition of dominance and control," he says. Some ways racism manifests itself in schools:

- Views of intelligence as innate, fixed, and unevenly distributed by group;
- Different educator behaviors toward students believed to be academically less able;
- Tracking and disproportionate placement of students in special education;
- Unequal application of discipline to some subgroups;
- Microaggressions committed by unaware individuals;
- Internalized racism in individuals belonging to marginalized groups;
- Stereotype threat – the unconscious loss of performance edge based on racial cues.

"The quest for racial awareness and antiracist teaching should propel us to push back on negative stereotypes, correct distortions, and remedy omissions in our behavior and curriculum that stem from racism," says Saphier. "Most powerfully, it should inspire us to ensure that if some students of color doubt themselves, it is our job to make them believe they can grow their ability and teach them how to act effectively from that belief. In the process, we will have to work hard to convince ourselves, since we are all, without exception, tainted by traces of racism and belief in the bell curve of ability."

All this requires humble and skillful leadership by district officials, school principals, and teachers.

“The Equitable Classroom” by Jon Saphier in *The Learning Professional*, December 2017 (Vol. 38, #6, p. 28-31), e-link for members only <http://bit.ly/2r55IHH>; Saphier can be reached at [saphier@rbteach.com](mailto:saphier@rbteach.com). Reprinted from Marshall Memo 719

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## Reading Public Schools Happenings

### RMHS High Fives For This Week

During the week of October 20<sup>th</sup>, we inadvertently omitted the High Fives for that week. This week, because there are no High Fives, we are including the High Fives for the week of October 20<sup>th</sup>. We apologize for this earlier omission.

### Jillian Rhodes, Class of 2018



Jillian is being recognized for her excellence in scholarship, athletics, and service. Jillian is in the top 5% of her class—earning High Honors throughout her time at RMHS. She has consistently challenged herself—taking five AP classes. Last year, Jillian earned Century Club recognition and was inducted into both the National Honor Society and the Spanish Honor Society. She also earned a Bronze Medal on the National Spanish Exam, as well as the Hamilton Book Award and the Core Value Award for Responsibility in both her sophomore and junior years. Athletically, Jillian is a four-year member and co-captain of the Varsity Girls Swim and Dive Team. She has been a standout swimmer, helping to lead the Lady Rockets to Middlesex League Championships in 2015 and 2016, and ultimately the Division II State Championship last season. Jillian was named as a Middlesex League All-Star all three seasons and is also a member of the Gator Swim Club. In terms of service, she enjoys teaching swimming to children at her Club, as well as at Sunday Swim—where she assists children with disabilities in becoming comfortable in the water. She also serves as a

lifeguard and a coach at Meadow Brook Golf Club and recently worked as an Upper Connector and as a Tour Leader for Freshman Orientation. Jillian even finds time to volunteer for Samantha's Harvest and to tutor her peers in a variety of subjects. Next year, Jillian plans to attend college and hopes to swim competitively. She will be pursuing a Pre-Med track with a minor in Spanish.

#### **Patrick Dane, Class of 2018**



Patrick is being recognized for his outstanding achievement in academics, athletics, and service. Patrick is a hard-working student in the top 40<sup>th</sup> percentile of the senior class. He has challenged himself during his time at RMHS—taking a rigorous course load consisting of Honors classes and Advanced Placement Spanish. Last year, his dedication and achievement in Spanish earned him induction into the Spanish National Honor Society. In terms of athletics, Patrick is a two-year member of the Boys Varsity Soccer Team and is one of this year's captains. Last season, he was an important part of the team's notable 2016 season where the Rockets achieved a 10-6-2 record and made the playoffs. This season, Patrick recently helped lead the team to a 2-1 victory over Middlesex League rival, Winchester, which had not been done in four years. Patrick also makes time to give back to his local community by working at the Target Soccer Academy, where he helped elementary-aged children to further develop their soccer skills. In addition, he volunteered at EMARC's Challenger Soccer Program, where he helped children with disabilities and served as a terrific role model. Next year, Patrick will be attending college and will be pursuing a career in business. Congratulations, Patrick!

#### **Coolidge Students Perform Honk**

Over Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend, Coolidge students performed Honk at the RMHS Endsloew Performing Arts Center. Congratulations to the Cast and Crew on a job well done!



### **Coolidge Students Visit Museum of Fine Arts**

This past week, Grade 6 students at Coolidge attended the Museum of Fine Arts as part of their ancient history studies. Below are some photos of the event. Special thanks to Coolidge teacher Ann Jacobsmeier for providing the photos and coordinating the event.



### Coolidge Holds Annual School Wide Science Olympiad Day

Recently, Coolidge Middle School held its annual schoolwide Science Olympiad Day for all students named in memory of long time Coolidge Science Teacher John McCarthy. Below are some photos from this event.



## Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts go out to the family of former Parker teacher **Gerry Gomes** who passed away last week.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
  - ✓ Kevin Mahoney, Daily Substitute, District
  - ✓ Andrew Jacobs, 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

Night Shift Custodian, Wood End Elementary School <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=437">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=437</a>
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## Blazing Trails...

**"Find Time for Feedback."** Feedback on writing assignments can be time consuming, and worse, wasted effort if it is ultimately ignored by students. Find time for feedback, and turn it into a nonthreatening, accessible tool for writing development, by giving less (but more focused) feedback earlier in the writing process. Take the dread out of feedback for yourself, and your students as stated in this ASCD Express post. [Read More](#)

**"Classroom Management Survival Tips."** One of the biggest causes of teacher stress is "trying to convince students to behave." Don't let disruptive or defiant students get the best of you. In this ASCD Education Update post, "Stay Calm and Teach On," classroom management experts, including Doug Lemov, share simple yet effective techniques to keep your cool in any situation. [Read More](#)

**"Tips for Forming TED-Ed Clubs for Students."** Participating in TED-Ed Clubs -- an offshoot of TED Talks -- can help students recognize the power of their voice, writes Marcos Navas, a technology facilitator for the Union City Board of Education in New Jersey. In this commentary, Navas offers insights into implementing TED-Ed Clubs. [Read More](#)

**"Using Rubrics to Provide Meaningful Formative Feedback."** Analytic rubrics provide a road map to a learning goal, but their criteria need to be contextualized for teachers and students to have a clear image of the destination. These tips will help you use rubrics as part of a more effective feedback loop; providing next steps for student effort and for your instruction. [Read More](#)

**"Two Tales from Peace Corps Africa-But Useful for Teachers Everywhere."** This year "Teach Like A Champion" Blog had the pleasure of connecting with Dee Hertzberg and Audrey Spencer, who help direct teaching programs for the Peace Corps in Africa. They use the strategies from the "Teach Like a Champion" book there and this has led to a series of amazingly useful conversations about education in Africa, sure, but also about teaching and learning more. [Read More](#)

**Have a Great Week!**