



Pathways

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

February 4, 2017

Volume 4, Number 22

Upcoming Dates

- 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 RMHS
Schettini Library
- February 7 – (7:30 p.m.)
School Committee FY2019
Budget Presentation to
the Finance Committee in
the RMHS Schettini
Library
- February 8 – (6:30 p.m.)
RMHS Guidance – Junior
Parent Night in the
Endslo PAC
- February 13 – (6:30 p.m.)
RMHS Guidance Junior
Parents Night (snow date)
- February 14 – Grade 6 –
12 Early Release
- February 19 – President’s
Day – Schools and Offices
Closed
- February 20 – 23 –
February Vacation

Kudos and Accolades

- Kudos to boys and girls
basketball, RMHS Mock
Trial team and
swimming on wins this
week.
- Congratulations to the
cast and crew of the
RMHS Drama Club’s
production of “The
Workshop”

Reading Public Schools Budget Bulletin 9

Board of Selectmen Vote to Place Proposition 2 1/2 Ballot Question and Amount

Last Tuesday evening, the Town of Reading Board of Selectmen voted 5-0 to place a Proposition 2 ½ Override Question in the amount of \$4,150,000 on the April 3rd election ballot. The School Department share of this amount, minus a calculation of 18% benefits and 5% capital is \$2,137,250. On Monday evening, the Reading School Committee will vote on a prioritized list from the components of the original reconstruction budget (see below), which will total \$2,137,250. The list voted on by the School Committee will be the list funded if an override ballot question is supported by the Community.

The details of the reconstruction/override budget are captured below and in the document that is located at the link below:

https://www.reading.k12.ma.us/files/8315/1700/3562/Override-Reconstruction_Plan_1-26-2018.pdf

Summary of Plan Components	FTE Request	Amount
<i>Retain Vacation Cleaning at RMHS (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	N/A	\$18,000
<i>Retain 1 Elementary Tutor – Regular Ed/School Day (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	1.0	\$20,000
<i>Retain Athletics/Extracurricular funding (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	N/A	\$25,000
Clerical Support (Payroll/Human Resources Generalist)	1.0	\$45,000
Restore Classroom Computer/Technology	N/A	\$50,000
Restore Computer Technician	1.0	\$57,000
<i>Restructure existing admin positions for Special Education Assistant Director</i>	0.6	\$70,000
<i>Restore Teacher Training (e.g., Science, ELA, Math) for curriculum</i>	N/A	\$75,000
Districtwide K-8 Curriculum Coordinator (Mathematics/Science)	1.0	\$95,000
Districtwide K-8 Curriculum Coordinator (English Language Arts/Social Studies)	1.0	\$95,000
Curriculum Updates and Renewal	N/A	\$150,000
<i>Restructure existing admin positions for Assistant Principals at Elementary Schools</i>	2.4	\$215,000
<i>Retain Elementary Teachers (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	3.0	\$241,000
Salary Adjustments for Retaining/Attracting Staff	N/A	\$360,000
<i>Restore High School Teachers (which were eliminated in previous budget reductions)</i>	6.0	\$420,000
<i>Retain Middle School Teachers (which would be eliminated in FY19 budget)</i>	7.0	\$500,000
Total		\$2,436,000

In Closing

The remaining FY19 budget meetings is listed below. The balanced budget that was approved by the School Committee on January 22nd, is now the School Committee budget, which will be reviewed by the Finance Committee on Wednesday, February 7th at 7:30 p.m. at the RMHS Library.

February 5th-School Committee Meeting to review Board of Selectmen vote from January 30th and revote reconstruction/balanced budget (if necessary). (7:00 p.m.- Reading Memorial High School Library)

February 7th-Finance Committee Meeting to review School Committee balanced budget (7:30 p.m.-RMHS Library)

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 or Superintendent of Schools John Doherty at john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us.

Boston Globe Scholastic Art and Writing Awards Announced

Coolidge and Parker Students Honored

Coolidge and Parker Middle Schools are pleased to announce that 16 students have received awards in the Boston Globe Scholastic Art and Writing Competition. The names and awards are listed below. Congratulations to these students and their teachers on an outstanding accomplishment.

First Name	Last Name	Award	Area	Name
Lauren	Ciccariello	Silver Key	Personal Essay/Memoir	Fears
Tiffany	Nguyen	Gold Key	Personal Essay/Memoir	Sun, Sky, and Sea
Ryan	McCann	Gold Key	Mixed Media	Out of the Branches' Box
Isabella	Staffier	Gold Key	Drawing and Illustration	Self-Portrait

Killam Holds National Geographic Geography Bee

During the month of January, Killam's 4th and 5th grade students have been competing in individual class geography bees during their Media Center class time. The finalists of these class Bees- Isabelle Parent, Owen White, Grace Ryan, Levi Emmanuel, Justin Canada, Nina Taubman, Clara Healy, Cameron Gigler, David McCann, and Liam Benson- competed in the Championship round of the National Geographic Geography Bee this past Wednesday. The winner of Killam's Geography Bee is Clara Healy. Congratulations to all our competitors and good luck to our school winner. A special thank you goes out to Mrs. Palmieri for creating special Geo Bee t-shirts for all our finalists and Mrs. Iozzo for being our time keeper.

Superintendent's Office

Hours this Week

All are welcome

- 2/6 Barrows
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- 2/7 Coolidge
2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
- 2/15 RISE Preschool
2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
- 2/16 RMHS
7:15 – 8:15 a.m.

Reading Public Schools "Learning & Teaching"

Office Hours

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, February 7, 2:00-3:00 p.m. (RMHS, Learning & Teaching Office)
- Thursday, February 8, 2:15-3:15 p.m. (Parker Middle School)

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

- Wednesday, February 7, Coolidge Middle School (12:45 p.m.)
- Thursday, February 8, Parker Middle School (1:00 p.m.)



Killam Geography Bee Winner Clara Healy



Killam Geography Bee Participants with Mrs. Iozzo and Mrs. Adamo

Quote of the Week . . .



Just because it's not what
you were expecting,
doesn't mean it's not
everything you've been
waiting for.

Unknown

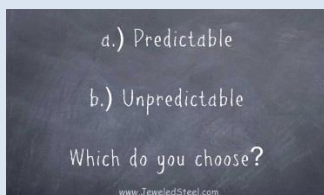
RMHS Student Wins Shot Put at Large School State Coaches Meet

Shannon Parks breaks RMHS and Meet Record

Last Monday, RMHS Student Athlete Shannon Parks won the shot put competition at the Large School State Coaches Meet. Shannon threw her personal best throw of 42'6.25" in the shot put to shatter the RMHS School indoor shot put record by 2'6.75". She also broke the meet record by 7 inches. She was awarded the Field Event Athlete of the meet for her great performance. Congratulations to Shannon and her coaches on this outstanding accomplishment!



Disney Tweet of the Week



"The only thing predictable about life is its unpredictability."

-- Remy (Ratatouille)

Jay McTighe on What Matters When We Assess Learning

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, curriculum design guru Jay McTighe says that educators, parents, and policymakers need to address three questions about classroom learning: What matters, how we measure it, and how to make assessment part of the learning process.

- *What really matters in our schools?* Schools strive to impart knowledge, skills, conceptual understanding, and long-term transfer:

- Knowledge – For example, vocabulary, factual information, and basic concepts;
- Skills – For example, multiplication, handwriting, drawing, shooting free-throws;
- Enduring understandings – “Big ideas” that are conceptual and abstract;
- Long-term transfer – Students’ ability to apply their learning in new situations, over time – for example, communicate well in writing, work in a team, solve problems, take the initiative. These are the areas most valued by employers.

Knowledge and skills can be assessed quite accurately with multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blanks tests. But conceptual understanding and transfer can be assessed only with authentic, performance-based assessments that ask students to apply their learning in new situations, explain their thinking, show their reasoning, and justify their conclusions.

“Authentic assessments are like the game in athletics,” says McTighe. “While the players have to possess knowledge (the rules) and specific skills (dribbling), playing the game also involves conceptual understandings (game strategies) and transfer (using skills and strategies to advantage in particular game situations).” It’s also important to involve students in choosing how to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, creativity, persistence, and community contributions.

- *What are the best ways to assess student learning?* Assessments should be geared to what students were supposed to learn and give an accurate picture of what was actually learned. Because no assessment is perfect, multiple measures are best: a “photo album” is preferable to a single snapshot. The biggest problem with standardized tests is that they tend to measure what’s easiest and cheapest to assess, shortchanging outcomes like speaking, listening, argumentation, creative thinking, scientific investigation, research, historical inquiry, and transfer.

Classroom assessments should do a better job than standardized tests at measuring these important outcomes, but that’s seldom the case. One study that gathered all of a school’s classroom assessments over a six-week period found that most mirrored the shortcomings of standardized tests – they measured lower-level skills with mostly multiple-choice, true-false, matching, or fill-in-the-blanks items. McTighe suggests that schools do a similar “stack audit” of classrooms assessments to see if they are assessing higher-order learning – and if not, make a concerted effort to move in that direction.

- *How can assessments enhance, not just measure, learning?* The best way to accomplish this is through performance tasks that simulate real-world situations. “Like the game in sports or the play in theater, authentic performances are motivating to learners,” says McTighe. “They give relevance and purpose to learning, and they underscore the need for practice. Authentic tasks also influence teaching. Coaches recognize that their job is not to simply ‘cover’ the playbook play-by-play and teach individual skills. They understand that knowledge and skills are in service of larger ends, and that their role is to prepare players for authentic transfer performance in the game.” Here are some characteristics of assessment practices that enhance learning:

- The ultimate learning goal and its assessment criteria are known up front.
- Models of excellent performance are available.
- Assessment tasks demand application in a realistic context.
- Assessments are challenging yet attainable.
- There isn’t a single right way of doing well.
- Collaboration is built in.
- Students show tangible products as they progress.

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?



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/>

- Detailed feedback is provided during the learning process.
- Students can practice, refine, and re-do based on feedback.
- The teacher is not the only audience.
- Students have some choice in how they will demonstrate learning.
- The teacher functions like a coach.
- Students self-assess, reflect on their learning, and set future goals based on the results.

Schools that have adopted assessment practices like these have needed to make shifts in grading practices and scheduling, including carving out blocks of time for teacher teams to craft assessments and analyze student results.

“3 Key Questions on Measuring Learning” by Jay McTighe in *Educational Leadership*, February 2018 (Vol. 75, #5, p. 14-20), <http://bit.ly/2ElBcfw>; McTighe can be reached at jay@mctighe-associates.com. Reprinted from Marshall Memo 721.

Reading Public Schools Happenings

RMHS High Fives For This Week

Below are the RMHS Fives for this week. Special thanks to RMHS Teacher Steve McCarthy for sharing this information.

Eliza Fandel, Class of 2018



Eliza Fandel is being recognized this week for her outstanding accomplishments across multiple realms. Eliza has excelled academically at RMHS over the past four years ultimately gaining her acceptance into the National Honor Society and the Century Club during her junior year. Eliza currently holds a spot in the top 30% of the senior class. Looking back at her time in the classroom, Eliza truly enjoyed her WWII and Environmental Issues classes. Outside of the classroom, Eliza has participated as a four-year member of the Winter and Spring Track Teams. This year, she co-captains both teams. As a member of the track teams, Eliza has competed in a number of different events including the 600-meter run, the 4x400 relay, and the long jump. Last season, the Outdoor Track Team finished with only one loss to a strong Woburn team. Eliza has been an integral member of the track program at RMHS. Finally, in the area of service, Eliza is co-president of the Leo Club and has committed many hours to volunteer work. Much of her volunteer time has been spent at the elementary schools, helping out at Halloween events. She also volunteers after school at Little Treasures as a Group Leader, assisting children ages 6-11 with their homework, playing games, and doing arts and crafts. Eliza will continue to demonstrate excellence next year as she plans to study Business Administration with a

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

concentration in Hospitality Management. When you see Eliza, be sure to give her a high five!

Matthew Farwell, Class of 2018



Matthew Farwell is being recognized for his achievement and leadership both inside and outside of the classroom. Academically, Matt was accepted as a member of the National Honor Society and the Century Club in his junior year. He was also nominated and recognized as the recipient of the St. Michael's Junior Book Award. This year, Matt is enrolled in both Advanced Placement Calculus BC and Advanced Placement Physics C. Matt currently holds a spot in the top 10% of the senior class. Athletically, Matt has been a two-year member of the Varsity Boys Hockey Team playing right wing. He has also participated as a three-year varsity member of the Boys Lacrosse Team as a midfielder. Last year, the Boys Lacrosse Team made it to the Division 1 North Finals. When Matt is not on the ice or on the field, he is spending his time volunteering. Matt has been a four-year member of the Leo Club, a volunteer at Wood End Elementary School, a two-year member of Soles for Souls, and he has shoveled snow for the elderly in Reading. Matt has also spent many hours volunteering with the Special Skates program at the Burbank Arena where he assisted children with special needs, teaching them to skate. Matt will continue his well-rounded success next year at Tufts University where he plans to study Math and Science. If you see Matt, be sure to give him a high five!

RMHS Band Holds Tea Party Fundraiser

Last weekend, the RMHS Band held a Tea Party Fundraiser with different characters. Below are some pictures from the event.



Color Guard "Princesses" - Nicole Politano, Sarah Murphy, Eileen Sweeney, Julia Scozzari



Percussionist Evan Shapiro pours tea as a little princess looks on



Elsa with several little princesses

RMHS Core Values Logo Winner Unveiled

During this school year, RMHS Assistant Principals Jess Theriault and Michael McSweeney, and RMHS Graphic Arts Teacher Kathleen Dailey have been working with graphic art students on designing a free hand logo to represent the RMHS core values of Respect, Responsibility, Perseverance and Scholarship. As part of this work, Ms. Dailey and Mrs. Theriault co-taught lessons whereby the students critiqued the logos and selected their top four choices. The students revised their work based on the feedback from staff and their peers, and submitted them to be judged by the RMHS school community. Online voting occurred two weeks ago and concluded on 1/26. The artists were revealed this last week and the winners are:

- 1st: Joshua Gray
- 2nd: Michael Aucella
- 3rd: Jay Zampitella
- 4th: Sean Barbera

Joshua Gray's winning logo is below. Congratulations to all of the students who participated and a special thanks to Ms. Theriault, Mr. McSweeney, and Ms. Dailey for all of their hard work in the process.



Stepping Stones...

- Wishing a speedy recovery to RMHS Custodian **Joe LaVita** who is recovering from a recent injury.

Blazing Trails...

"And the Award Goes To...." The SmartBrief Education team each year celebrates educator voice with the annual Educator's Choice Content Award. Meet this year's winners including Kerry Gallagher, Massachusetts teacher, MASCD Board Member and ASCD Emerging Educator. [Read More](#)

"ASCD Empower18: The National Conference in Boston for Every Educator." ASCD Empower18, a conference designed by educators, for educators, provides the expertise and formats you need to develop sustainable and practical plans of action that solve problems of practice. From learning sessions to interactive panel discussions, discover learning opportunities suited to your individual style and content supporting the whole child. Join us March 24-26 in Boston. [Read More](#)

"Are School Lockers Obsolete?" Students in some schools have stopped using their lockers -- and many schools are removing them altogether. Lockers, in some cases, no longer are necessary because some students prefer to keep their books in their backpacks and some schools have replaced traditional textbooks with digital resources. It is changing the designs of new constructions. [Read More](#)

"Supporting Mental Health in Schools." According to the National Institute of Mental Health, one in five youths ages 13-18 experiences a serious mental health condition, and of chronic cases of mental illness, 50 percent begin by age 14. Yet, on average, it takes 8-10 years from the onset of symptoms until intervention. How can schools play a stronger frontline role in identifying potential issues and helping affected students thrive both academically and socially? Check out this ASCD Express Issue. [Read More](#)

"Ireland Mulling Over Eliminating Homework in the Elementary Level." Homework may do more harm than good among younger students, some education experts say. Lawmakers in Ireland's Oireachtas committee on public petitions are considering a petition that calls for the elimination of homework in primary grades. [Read More](#)

Have a Great Week!