



Pathways

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

May 6, 2018

Volume 4, Number 33

Upcoming Dates

- May 6 – (2:00 p.m.) RMHS Drama presentation of Charlotte's Web in the Endslo PAC
- May 7 - 18 – RMHS AP Testing
- May 7 – (6:30 p.m.) School Committee Office Half Hour; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room
- May 8 – (2:00 p.m.) MAJE Junior Jazz Festival @ RMHS
- May 9 – Grade 6 – 12 Early Release
- May 10 – (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Band Spring Concert in the Endslo PAC
- May 14 – (6:00 p.m.) Grade 5 Instrument Night for Wood End, Barrows & Birch Meadow at Coolidge
- May 15 – (5:30 p.m.) RMHS AP Art Show; – (6:00 p.m.) Grade 5 Instrument Night for Killam and Joshua Eaton at Coolidge; (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Senior Spring Awards
- May 17 – (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Choral – Spring into Song in the Endslo PAC
- May 18 – Last Day of School for Seniors
- May 21 – 24 – Senior Finals
- May 21 – (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room

Thank You To Our Teachers

Dear Reading Public School Teachers:

This week, May 7th through May 11th, is National Teacher Appreciation Week. I would like to take a moment to recognize and acknowledge each of you for the work that you have done and will be doing with Reading children throughout this school year. Some of you have just entered the profession and have already begun to make significant contributions to the young people throughout our school system. Others of you have been in our school district for a few years and have made meaningful differences in the lives of students. Some of you will be retiring this year and over the next few years from an outstanding and productive career. No matter what stage of your career, I want to thank you for who you are and what you do for children. I do not believe that people outside the profession can truly understand the dedication and commitment that you bring to your classroom each day as teachers and educators in the Reading Public Schools.

You are making a difference, just by being who you are; a teacher. You have the ability to inspire a child forever and in doing so, impact the future. I commend you for the lessons you teach, the knowledge you share, and the dreams that you inspire.

This has been a challenging year to be a teacher in our school district, but with recent support by the Community of the Override Ballot Question, I am convinced that we have begun to turn a corner and move in a very positive direction that will benefit our schools, our teachers, and our students.

On behalf of the Reading School Committee, the administrators, the parents, the community as a whole and the 4300 students that enter our schools every day, I would like to thank you for your outstanding accomplishments. We honor you on this very important week for all your time, effort and personal commitment to the children of the Reading Public Schools.

Thank you,

John Doherty

John Doherty
Superintendent, Reading Public Schools

- May 22 – (7:00 p.m.)
RMHS Scholastic Awards Night
- May 24 – (7:00 p.m.)
RMHS Senior Prom @
Fairmount Copley Plaza
- May 28 – Memorial Day –
Schools & Offices Closed
- May 29 – (5:00 p.m.)
RMHS Senior Boat Cruise
& All-Night Party
- May 30 – (7:00 p.m.)
Reading Scholarship
Foundation Night in the
Endslow PAC
- May 31 – (7:00 p.m.)
Baccalaureate Service
(Location TBD)
- June 1 – (7:00 a.m.) RMHS
Senior Class Day in the
Endslow PAC
- June 3 – (1:00 p.m.)
Graduation in the Hawkes
Field House

Reading Memorial High School Principal Announcement

Kathleen Boynton Appointed New Principal

The Reading Public Schools is pleased to announce that Kathleen Boynton has been appointed as the new Principal of Reading Memorial High School. Kathleen is currently an Assistant Principal at Bedford High School in Bedford, Massachusetts. She is currently in a Doctoral program at UMass Lowell and has a Master of Arts in Secondary Education/History from Boston College and a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from American University. Earlier in her career, Kathleen was a Program Co-Leader for the Brookline Global Leadership Academy for Brookline High School, and she was an Instructional Resource Specialist for the History and Social Studies Departments and a History and Social Science Teacher at Brockton High School. In addition to her strong content and instructional background, Kathleen has been the lead Assistant Principal for the STEP full inclusion program for students with social and emotional disabilities and the Lighthouse program for students transitioning to school from long absences at Bedford High School.

Mrs. Boynton will begin at RMHS on July 1st. Please welcome to the RMHS Community, Kathleen Boynton.

STEM Coordinator Appointed

Barrows Principal Heather Leonard Appointed

The Reading Public Schools is pleased to announce that Barrows Principal Heather Leonard has been appointed as the new K-6 STEM Coordinator for the Reading Public Schools. Mrs. Leonard is well qualified for this position not only with her background as a Barrows Principal for the past five years, but her strong background in science and mathematics. Mrs. Leonard has a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from the University of New Hampshire, was a sixth grade science and mathematics teacher at the O'Malley Middle School in Gloucester where she wrote science and mathematics curriculum, and in the past was a program site director in environmental education for the National Audubon Society. In Reading, Heather has served as the administrative liaison for the elementary math and science Professional Learning Communities, and has been instrumental in the development and implementation of our science curriculum at the elementary level. She will work very closely with Christine Kelley, our new Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Teaching, in developing aligned curriculum and instructional practices in mathematics, science, and technology in our school district. I want to thank Mrs. Leonard for the outstanding work that she has done as Barrows Principal and look forward to her continuing that work at the district level. With Mrs. Leonard transitioning to a new position in the district, we will begin the search process for a new Principal for the Barrows Elementary School. The position was posted on Friday and it is our intent to coordinate a full search process for this position, culminating with an appointment of a new Principal prior to the end of the school year. Mrs. Leonard will remain in her role as Barrows Principal until a successor can be named.

Kudos and Accolades

- Congratulations to girls and boys tennis, boys & girls track, baseball and softball and boys & girls lacrosse on recent wins.

Coolidge PTO and Wellness Team To Show *All of Me*

Coolidge PTO and the Coolidge Wellness team is proud to announce the showing of the documentary film *All of Me* by award winning filmmaker Bess O'Brien.

When: Tuesday, May 8th

Time: 6:30-8:30pm

Where: Coolidge Middle School Multi-Purpose Room

Costs: FREE to the public and school community

All of Me focuses on the lives of women, girls and boys who are caught in the downward spiral of eating disorders and their struggle to regain a sense of self-compassion and healing. The film also focuses on the parents who struggle with their children around this devastating disease. Throughout All Of Me, a variety of disordered eating issues are touched upon. In addition, the film delves deep into the often-pervasive ways that food, dieting, and body image affect all of us on a daily basis. Many of us may not be diagnosed with an official eating disorder but struggle with our own histories and insecurities around food and weight. Most importantly All of Me centers on what are the underlying emotional issues that eating disorders stem from including depression, anxiety, trauma, sensitivity, control, perfectionism, and other mental health issues. This movie gives hope to those who are struggling -- people can recover and reclaim their bodies as well as their emotional connection with themselves and others. For more information please view the documentary trailer at: <https://vimeo.com/124336661> or contact Jennifer White Morneault at jennifer.white@reading.k12.ma.us.

Life Lessons

In this article in *Psychology Today*, science writer Jena Pincott lists correctives for some common cognitive biases (inborn and acquired):

- *Understand that not everything that happens to you is about you.* "At the very least, the egocentric bias causes us to misread others," says Pincott. "It undermines empathy and tolerance. It also traps us in a bubble; we waste vast amounts of psychic energy recovering from insults that were never targeted at us in the first place. To live a life that is less reactive, more directed, it is necessary to put the ego in its place."

- *Worry less about what others think of you.* It turns out that people are much less aware of our competence, awkwardness, verbal flubs, facial expressions, even what we wear, than we imagine. "When we care less about our curated self-image, we open the door to interacting more genuinely," says Pincott. "We can let down our guard. Others may respond in kind, focusing less on their own self-image and opening up."

- *Realize that you don't have to act the way you feel.* Pincott advises "self-distancing" to keep disappointments and negative emotions from spilling into everyday interactions. This involves processing our feelings from an outsider's point of view, addressing ourselves in the third person to normalize and make meaning of

Superintendent's Office

Hours this Week

All are welcome

5/8 Birch Meadow
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

5/10 Joshua Eaton
2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

5/11 Barrows
2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Student Services Office

Hour and Classroom

Visits This Week

5/9 Office Hour at WE
7:30-8:30 a.m.

5/9 Building Visit 8:30-
9:30 WE

5/10 Classroom/ Building
Visit 10-11:30 a.m. Killam

5/10 Office Hour at
Parker 2:30-3:30 p.m.

disturbing experiences. This makes it possible to preserve our dignity, privacy, and self-respect when we're not at our best.

- *Reframe and manage disappointment and adversity.* "There is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so," said Hamlet. Social psychologists have confirmed Shakespeare's wisdom, showing that although there are differences in people's innate ability to handle stressful events, mental fortitude can be acquired. This means learning how not to jump to conclusions, overgeneralize, catastrophize, personalize, and engage in black-or-white thinking. "Resilient people do not define themselves by their adversity," says Pincott. "They understand that bad times are temporary affairs."

- *Solicit honest feedback.* It's possible to be internally self-aware (in touch with our own values and passions) and not externally self-aware (knowing how others see us). "External self-awareness allows us to be more in sync with others," says Pincott. "It makes us more effective leaders because we have more empathy, which comes from understanding other people's perspectives." She advises identifying several "critical friends" and periodically asking them questions like, *What am I doing that I should keep doing? What should I stop doing? What about me annoys you?*

- *Stay true to your own values despite what others expect.* There's sometimes a tug-of-war between what we want and what others expect – parents, teachers, love partners. "People high in both internal and external self-awareness can navigate competing expectations," says organizational psychologist Tasha Eurich. They value authenticity and integrity, knowing what they want to do and illuminating it with other perspectives.

- *Be open to revising your thinking.* "The world doesn't stand still," says Pincott. "Situations change. Available information changes. However much we get emotionally attached to our own decisions, however much our opinions and perspectives may have once served us, there comes a point at which constancy can curdle into rigidity." Studies show that we're most open to change when we're feeling good about ourselves, most resistant to change when we feel threatened and uncertain. Hanging out with a four-year-old is a good way to see what cognitive flexibility looks like.

- *Find ways to tackle tasks you want to avoid.* Pincott suggests several approaches: write down how the drudgery will end with a success; gamify the activity, introducing an element of competition; use second-person self-talk (*You can crush this, Ted!*); bite off a small piece to get started (*Just 20 minutes on this and I'll do something else*); and get into a routine (for example, rising at six to exercise).

- *Zone in on your purpose in a zoned-out world.* "The two most important days in life are the day you are born and the day you discover the reason why," said Mark Twain. But a sense of big-picture purpose depends on focus and self-regulation, and that's undermined by the current obsession with checking social media every few minutes, driven by the fear of missing out on something. "You may want big ideas," says author Larry Rosen, "but if your attention is jerked away

Quote of the Week . . .



The superior person is modest in speech, but exceeds in actions."

- Confucius

constantly, they won't come. There's no time to process anything on a deeper level." There isn't even time for the overstimulated brain to daydream. Rosen strongly recommends 30-minute tech breaks. Turning away from the small screen, he says, can reorient us to the big picture.

- *Tolerate ambiguity.* Uncertainty is a "sure-fire fuel of anxiety," says Pincott, but it's part of modern life, and dealing with it has many rewards. "We're more able to shift gears, experiment, be more flexible, take in new information that we'd otherwise reject, and let a situation develop before pulling the proverbial trigger," she says. "We're better able to handle risk and to make decisions without deluding ourselves into thinking we know everything there is to know. In the end, we're less anxious." Studies have shown that one way to make yourself more flexible in uncertain situations is to read fiction. "When nothing is sure," says novelist Margaret Drabble, "everything is possible."

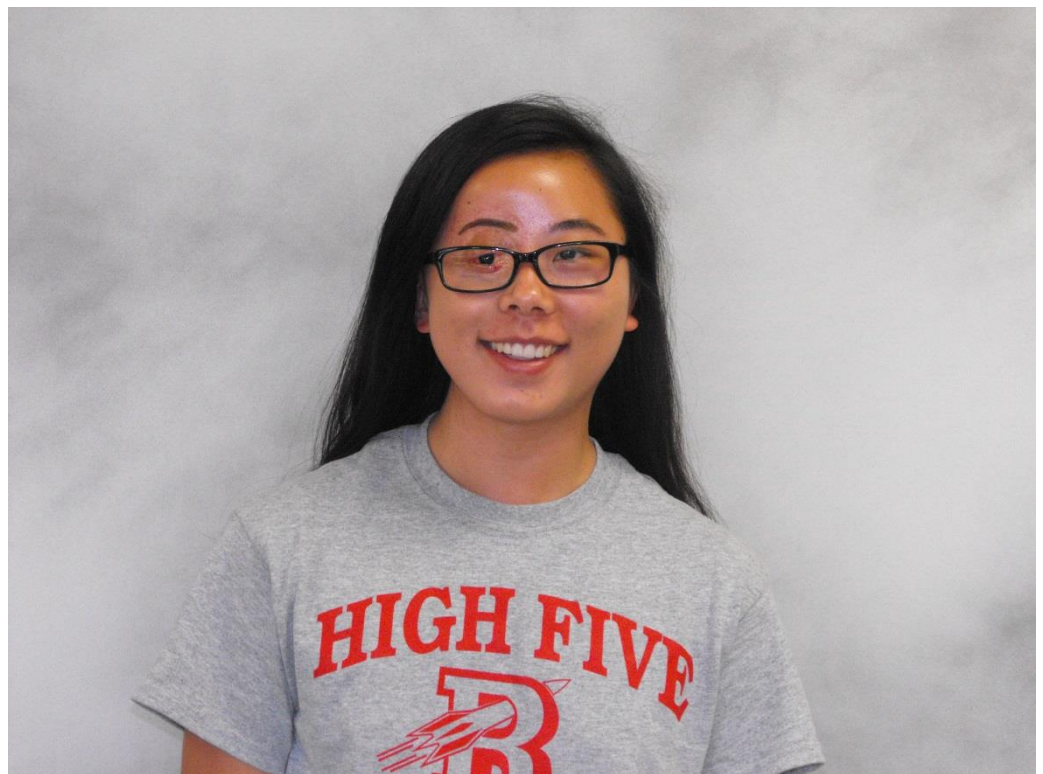
"Lessons You Won't Learn in School" by Jena Pincott in *Psychology Today*, May/June 2018, Reprinted from Marshall Memo 734.

Reading Public Schools Happenings

RMHS High Fives For This Week

Below are the RMHS High Fives for this week.

Luyao Friedmann, Class of 2018



Luyao Friedmann is being recognized as this week's high five for her excellence in the classroom and beyond. Luyao has taken advantage of courses offered at the most rigorous level, enrolling in Advanced Placement Chemistry, Biology, European History, French, and

Disney Tweet of the Week



"All it takes is faith and trust."

-- Peter Pan (Peter Pan)

Statistics. Luyao has committed herself for the past four years to being a dedicated student in the classroom, ultimately earning her a place in the top 10% of the class and a two year member of the National Honor Society. Outside of the classroom, Luyao has danced for the LaPierre School of Dance and she has been a member of the Model United Nations Club where she attended this year's conference in New York City representing the country of Albania. She also works during the summer months as a camp counselor at Camp Sunshine, a camp that is offered for families who are going through a difficult time with a sick family member. Luyao will share her excellence next year as she attends New York University with a major in Chemistry. Congratulations to Luyao!

Jackson Dunnell, Class of 2018



Jackson Dunnell is being recognized as this week's high five for his commitment to academics and extracurricular activities. Academically, Jackson has consistently challenged himself in the classroom. This year, he is enrolled in four Advanced Placement courses including U.S. History, Calculus, Chemistry, and Spanish. Jackson also completed courses in Biology and Chemistry at the AP level. Jackson's hard work in the classroom has paid off as he is currently in the top 10 percent of the class. Outside of the classroom, Jackson has participated as a two-year member of the Varsity Baseball Team, Treasurer of Samantha's Harvest, and he serves as an acolyte and Sunday School Teacher at his local church. Jackson plans to attend Tufts University in the fall where he will pursue a major in Biochemistry on a Pre-Med track.

Parker Presentation on Vaping Prevention

Last Friday, RMHS High school students partnered with Erica McNamara from the Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse and School Resource Officer to provide Parker students with an interactive assembly focused on Vaping Prevention. RMHS students hosted a quiz show and shared their personal reasons why they are interested in educating others about this topic. A special thanks goes out to RMHS Students Molly Hamlin, Sarah Murphy, Katie Kneeland, Autumn Hendrickson, Matthew Segalla and Mason Haynes for their efforts.

Important Websites

RPS District Website

www.reading.k12.ma.us

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/>



Coolidge Celebrates National Lunch Super Heroes

Recently, our school district thanked our cafeteria staff on School Lunch Superhero day! Below is a Coolidge picture from Mr. Simpson's sixth grade classes sharing their thanks with our cafeteria staff on this Superhero day! They gave them a salad bowl filled with thanks, along with the song they revised.

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



School Committee Participate on Day on the Hill

Recently, School Committee members Linda Snow Dockser and Sherri VandenAkker visited the Massachusetts State House and participated in the Massachusetts Association of School Committee's Annual Day on the Hill. At the visit, they joined School Committee members from across the state and listened to informational sessions about the issues and challenges public schools are facing including Chapter 70 and Special Education Circuit Breaker Funding, Transportation Aid, METCO Funding, the "Children's Services Safety Net", Early Education Programs, Charter School Reform, and Unfunded Mandates. Below is a picture of Linda and Sherri with Representative Jim Dwyer, who is retiring at the end of this year.



Coolidge Science Olympiad Team Visits State House

Recently, the Coolidge Science Olympiad Team visited the State House as the Massachusetts State Science Olympiad Champions for 2018. Below is a picture of the team with State Senator Jason Lewis. Coolidge will be participating in the National Science Olympiad at Colorado State University in mid-May



Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts go out to RMHS teacher **Leah Richardson** who lost a loved one recently.
- Our thoughts go out to Food Service Director **Kristin Morello** who lost a loved one recently.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
 - ✓ Nina Lukens, Daily Substitute, District
 - ✓ Catarina Angelou, Special Education Paraeducator, Joshua Eaton
- We have posted a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

1.0 FTE Computer Technician
https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=485
1.0 FTE Spanish Teacher, Parker Middle School
https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=486
Football Coaching Assistant, 2018-2019 School Year, Reading Memorial High School
https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=487
Elementary Principal, Alice M. Barrows Elementary School
https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=488
1.0 FTE Grade 4 Elementary Teacher, Joshua Eaton Elementary School
https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=489

Blazing Trails...

"Framing Failure as Setback through Success." Motivational speaker, blogger, mountain climber, and Boston Marathoner, Randy Pierce unexpectedly lost his vision when he was 22, yet continues to be an inspiration to all those who are lucky to meet him and hear his story. He has spoken at many New England schools spreading a message of encouragement and motivation to all. In this post, he speaks of his attempt to finish the 2018 Boston Marathon through horrendous conditions and the lessons to draw upon it. [Read More](#)

"Massachusetts Court Rejects Challenge to Charter School Cap." The Lowell (MA) Sun reports the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court affirmed in a unanimous decision Tuesday "the dismissal of a case challenging the state's cap on charter schools, delivering another blow to advocates for publicly funded alternatives to traditional public schools." The plaintiffs in the case, "five students attending lower performing public schools who failed to secure charter school seats through a lottery, had argued in part that the cap violates the constitution 'because the students were not able to attend the public charter schools of their choosing.'" The state court found the students did not plead facts suggesting the state failed to fulfill its "constitutionally prescribed duty to educate." The court also said the students "have not alleged any facts to support a claim that the Commonwealth's public education plan does not provide reasonable assurance of improvements for their schools' performance over a reasonable period of time." [Read More](#)

"Does Failure Have Educational Value?" Learning about failure could help boost student performance, asserts Columbia University researcher Xiaodong Lin-Siegler. The university has launched the Education for Persistence and Innovation Center to learn more about the role failure plays in learning. [Read More](#)

"No Opt Out." Reinforce the practice of answering questions, even if a student doesn't know the answer, through different formats of the *No Opt Out* technique. Teach Like A Champion's Grab N Go this month is a visual reminder of the different ways that you can utilize *No Opt Out* in your classroom, ending always with a reinforcement of your initially called-upon student repeating the correct answer. [Read More](#)

"Some Schools in England Switch to Digital Clocks." Some educators in England are installing digital clocks following reports that students were unable to read analog clocks correctly while taking exams. Malcolm Trobe, deputy general secretary at the Association of School and College Leaders, said the move is intended to help students feel more relaxed when taking the exams. [Read More](#)

Have a Great Week!