



Pathways

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

May 20, 2018

Volume 4, Number 35

Upcoming Dates

- May 21 – 24 – Senior Finals
- May 21 – (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room
- 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 Endslo PAC
- May 31 – (7:00 p.m.) Baccalaureate Service (Unitarian Church)
- June 1 – (7:00 a.m.) RMHS Senior Class Day in the Endslo PAC
- June 3 – (1:00 p.m.) Graduation in the Hawkes Field House
- June 4 – (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room
- June 5 – (7:30 p.m.) RISE PTN Meeting
- June 11 – (1:00 p.m.) Grades 5 & 8 Move-Up Day
- June 20 – Last Day of School; (11:00 a.m. Release Prek - 12

Safety Summit on Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

Town, Public Safety, and Schools Will Present

On Friday, May 18th, our country witnessed the 13th school shooting of this year, this time at Santa Fe High School in Texas. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the affected families of this tragic situation. To better inform our community of our school and town safety procedures and protocols, the Town of Reading will be holding a Safety and Security Summit on Wednesday, May 23rd, at 6:00 p.m. in the Schettini Library at Reading Memorial High School. Representatives from the Town of Reading, Reading Public Schools, and Reading Police and Fire will be presenting on topics such as school safety, public safety training, and community response to safety issues. Although this was scheduled prior to the most recent school shooting at Santa Fe High School in Texas, the topics discussed will be very pertinent to overall safety and security of our Town and School buildings. All are invited to attend. If you have any questions, please contact the Reading Public Schools Administration Offices at 781-944-5800.

UNITY Project Begins at RMHS

Opening Ceremony Scheduled for Tuesday, May 22nd at 7:30 a.m.



RMHS Staff, Students, and Community Members Setting Up for Unity Project

In June of 2016, UNITY, an interactive public art project, was created as a response to the divisiveness and negative rhetoric in American politics. Created to raise

consciousness about the labels we give ourselves and others and explore how those labels both support and limit building interconnected, interesting communities. UNITY is a larger-than-life structure that helps us celebrate our uniqueness and strengthens our ties to each other. The project consists of 32 posts, each with identifiers such as, “I’m a parent; I speak English as a second language; I identify as LGBTQ,” etc. Participants tie colorful yarn to posts that reflect their identities. Their yarn intertwines with others’ to create a web of interconnectedness. In the end, we see that we are all connected by something, and it’s our diversity that builds a strong and vibrant community.

Generously funded by RMHS PTO, Student Council and advisors Leia Richardson and Annemarie Cory invite RMHS students and staff to participate in The Unity Project May 21-25 (weather permitting) with an opening ceremony Tuesday May 22nd at 7:30 during Office Hours. The Reading community is invited to participate in The Unity Project on Tuesday May 22nd from 5:30-6:30 pm.

Twelve Ways Teachers Can Build Resilience

“When talking about a profession that loses 50 percent of its workforce in the first five years of their careers, it would be an understatement to say teaching is challenging,” says Jennifer Gonzalez in this *Cult of Pedagogy* article. “It traps us in small rooms with an unpredictable assortment of personalities, energies, and needs. It forces us to make hundreds of small, exhausting decisions every day. And over and over again, it puts us in predicaments that test our confidence, wear out our patience, and break our hearts. You can learn all the techniques, plan outstanding lessons, and set up a watertight classroom management system, but to do this work and stick with it long enough to get good at it, you need a level of emotional resilience most other jobs will never require.”

Fortunately, says Gonzalez, there is helpful advice in Elena Aguilar’s just-published book, *Onward: Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators* (Jossey-Bass, 2018). “The best way to make all twelve of these habits stick,” says Gonzalez, “is to work through them slowly, over the course of the year. Even better, do it with a group of committed colleagues.”

- *Know yourself.* “Being really anchored in your purpose, being really clear about what you want to be doing in life, helps you deal with challenges and setbacks,” says Aguilar.

- *Understand emotions.* It’s important to examine the way feelings influence our thinking (and vice-versa) and work with them instead of against them.

- *Tell empowering stories to reframe classroom events.* For example, when a student rolls her eyes at you, the story could be, “This student doesn’t respect me,” but it could also be, “This is very typical behavior from 12-year-olds, and I’m going to move on to the next part of the lesson.”

- *Build community.* Nurturing relationships with colleagues, students, parents, and administrators strengthens resilience. The beginning of the school year is an ideal time to focus on this.

- *Be here now.* Mindfulness – focusing on what is happening right now without judgment – can help prevent unhelpful “triggered” reactions to daily challenges. Daily meditation or brief moments of focusing on our breathing can help bring us to that place of calm.

- *Take care of yourself.* “I think people know what to do,” says Aguilar. “We know we should be eating more leafy greens and exercising more and so on, but why is it so hard?” Finding out why can help develop healthier habits.

- *Focus on the bright spots.* “Our brains have a negativity bias,” says Aguilar, “so everything that is challenging, that is potentially a threat, appears really vividly and clearly

Kudos and Accolades

- Congratulations to girls and boys tennis, girls track, and girls lacrosse on recent wins.
- Good luck to RMHS tennis doubles team of Marielle Verrier & Ainsley Cohen as they compete in the next round of the tennis tournament at Newton North this weekend.
- Congratulations to all the seniors recognized at the Senior Awards Night.
- Kudos to the RMHS Choral students on an outstanding Spring into Song concert.

to us, because of the way our brains are wired, and so one of the skills that we need to hone is the ability to see all the things that are going well or even just okay.”

- *Cultivate compassion.* We can get out of the drama of the moment by empathizing with others’ points of view and seeing the big picture.

- *Be a learner.* “Resilient people experience a challenge and turn around and say, *Wow. That was really hard. That pushed me to my limits. What can I learn from that?*”

- *Play and create.* “I think it’s a human right to be creative, to create, enjoy, and appreciate art,” says Aguilar. “Playing and creating can unlock inner resources for dealing with stress, for solving problems... It can help us see different things and find different approaches to tackle problems.”

- *Ride the waves of change.* Slow down, face and deal with fear, and ask how we can direct our energy to the actions that make the biggest difference.

- *Celebrate and appreciate.* Savor our own accomplishments and those of our students and colleagues.

“12 Ways Teachers Can Build Their Own Resilience” by Jennifer Gonzalez in *The Cult of Pedagogy*, May 6, 2018, <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/resilience/>
Reprinted from Marshall Memo 736.

What My Teachers Taught Me About Teaching

For Teacher Appreciation Week, a 10-year veteran reflects on what he learned about his future job from teachers he admired.

By **David Cutler** for **Edutopia Magazine**

My fourth-grade teacher, Sharin Russell, was consoling me after I scored below perfect on a weekly vocabulary quiz.

“David, nobody gets everything right all of the time,” she said. “It’s important to be OK with making mistakes, so long as we learn from them and move on. I know that you can do that.”

After 10 years in the high school history classroom, I can’t overstate how much these words continue to guide my instruction. Early in my career, with Mrs. Russell in mind, I decided to allow students full-credit retakes on most assessments. I want them to know that they can make mistakes in my class—the world won’t come crashing down around them, and they have a chance to recover.

Mrs. Russell isn’t the only teacher who made a lasting impression on my thoughts and actions in terms of becoming and remaining an effective teacher.

LISTEN AND CARE DEEPLY

In eighth grade, I had the good fortune of being taught history by Paul Murray, who was not only gifted at making the learning interesting, but also showed how much he cared about me—far beyond my performance in his class.

He took the time to really listen to what I had to say, even as I rambled on about fears of not doing well in some capacity or another. He never seemed rushed or anxious to have me leave. And through the simple act of listening, he boosted my confidence in being able to handle whatever came my way.

Thanks to Mr. Murray, I strive to listen deeply to my students. I want them to know that I care about them and their success, and that I’m here for them. I’m still working on

Superintendent's Office

Hours this Week

All are welcome

5/22 Superintendent's
Office

5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

5/25 Coolidge

7:00 – 8:00 a.m.

cultivating Mr. Murray's patient ear, but I'm making progress. When a student approaches me, even during a busy time, I pause whatever I'm doing to give them my undivided attention. If I don't have time at that moment, I'll make a plan with them to talk later in the day.

MAKE YOUR LOVE FOR TEACHING OBVIOUS

I always struggled with math, and it remains my weakest subject. However, in high school, I had a great Algebra II teacher in Nancy Bradley. She did her best to make the math relevant, often by giving real-world problems. With a terrific sense of humor and an obvious love for teaching, she made coming to class a true joy.

She paid attention to our lives outside of class too: Like Mr. Murray, she cheered students on at sporting events and theatrical performances. Mrs. Bradley made me want to study even harder. I wanted to do well to show my appreciation for her skill as a teacher and her eagerness to provide additional help.

Mrs. Bradley wasn't putting on an act. She loved her job, and she made sure her students knew it. I strive to convey a similar passion for teaching history.

Students know my love for Mondays, when they have a whole week of learning ahead of them. I'm genuine about sharing my love of clear, concise writing, which I get across by showing my own work.

OFFER KIND BUT HONEST FEEDBACK

When I was a high school junior, my writing and critical thinking skills benefited from two talented and dedicated humanities teachers.

In AP English Literature and Composition, Judith Guild offered kind but honest feedback. She never soaked my work in red ink. Instead, she focused on two or three areas that I could work on improving. Her candor played a huge role in helping me hone my thoughts and craft a cogent thesis statement.

"Without kind but honest feedback, nobody can hope to improve," she told me.

So now I'm cognizant of not providing too much feedback at any given time, fearful that students will feel overwhelmed by it. I sometimes catch myself going too far, but by and large I'm committed to providing focused feedback.

Ted Barker-Hook, my U.S. history teacher that same year, saw that though I had deep thoughts, I couldn't always express them clearly, especially in writing. After I did poorly on my first essay, he sat me down and said something that changed my life.

"David, you're an incredibly hard worker. I know that you're upset with your grade, but I'm willing to work as hard as you are to help you improve," he said. "Whenever you and I are available to meet, I'm here to help you succeed. I see a fire in you, and I know that you're capable of great things."

To pay that forward, I strive to do the best I can to meet one-on-one with my own students about their writing. In my experience, this is the most effective way to promote growth and understanding.

Quote of the Week . . .



There are so many people out there who will tell you that you can't. What you've got to do is turn around and say, "Watch Me".

Reading Public Schools Happenings

RMHS High Fives For This Week

Below are the RMHS High Fives for this week.

Emma Chasse, Class of 2018



Emma Chasse is being recognized for her outstanding achievement in academics, activities, and service. Academically, Emma has taken on challenging courses such as AP European History as well as Honors Creative Writing. She won the Perseverance Award in theater last year and had one of her original plays chosen to be read at Boston University in the BU Playwright Theater Competition. In terms of activities, Emma has been in all 12 seasons of Drama during her four years of high school. She played the role of Grumio in *The Taming of the Shrew* and played Wilbur the Pig during this past weekend's excellent production of *Charlotte's Web*. She has also done Improv for the last 2 years, playwrighting for the last 3 years, and was in RMHS Singers for three years. Emma has also found time to give back to her community by helping to clean at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Reading. Additionally, she has helped at the Reading Fun Fair and as a member of the Lobby Crew during Drama shows that she is not directly involved in. Emma also assists the Middle School with their play productions and is a mentor to young artists aspiring to continue on at the high school level. Next year, Emma will be attending Columbia College in Chicago and will be majoring in Comedy Writing and Performance. Congratulations, Emma!

Evan Shapiro, Class of 2018

Evan Shapiro is also being recognized for his excellent achievement in academics, activities, and service. Academically, Evan has challenged himself this year by taking 5 AP courses including—AP European History, Computer Science, Statistics, AB Calculus, and Environmental Science. He is a hard worker who has enjoyed the rigor of this demanding

Disney Tweet of the Week



"Life's not a spectator sport. If you're just a watchin' is all you're gonna do, then you're gonna watch your life go by without ya."

Laverne (The Hunchback of Notre Dame)

schedule and has done a terrific job balancing the requirements of his classes and of balancing his in-depth involvement in music and the performing arts.



Throughout his four years at RMHS, Evan has been involved in all 12 seasons of the Drama Club's productions, performing in various shows and roles including—*Urinetown*, *1776*, where he was "New York abstains courteously", *Harvey*—where he was Mr. Wilson the Strong Arm of the Sanatorium, and most recently Templeton the Rat in *Charlotte's Web*. Evan is also the Vice President of the Marching Band and serves as the front ensemble section leader. His favorite performance as a member of the Marching Band was entitled, *American Exploration*—performed during his junior year. Lastly, Evan of course serves as one of the talented "Voices of RMHS", reliably and creatively delivering the morning announcements on a daily basis. In spite of this very busy schedule, Evan still finds time to give back to his community by serving as a lifeguard at the Malden YMCA and as a Hiking Camp Counselor at a camp in Maine for children ages 7-16. Evan will be attending Brandeis University in the fall.

RMHS Jazz Band Performs At Berklee School of Music

Last Sunday, the RMHS Jazz, under the direction of Joseph Mulligan, performed in the Gold Medal Showcase at the Berklee School of Music. This Showcase featured the best High School Jazz Bands in the State. Congratulations to the RMHS Jazz Band on an outstanding performance and season!

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, accept your insurance & has available appointments.

Call 1-888-244-6843 (toll free) • M-F • 9am-5pm

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



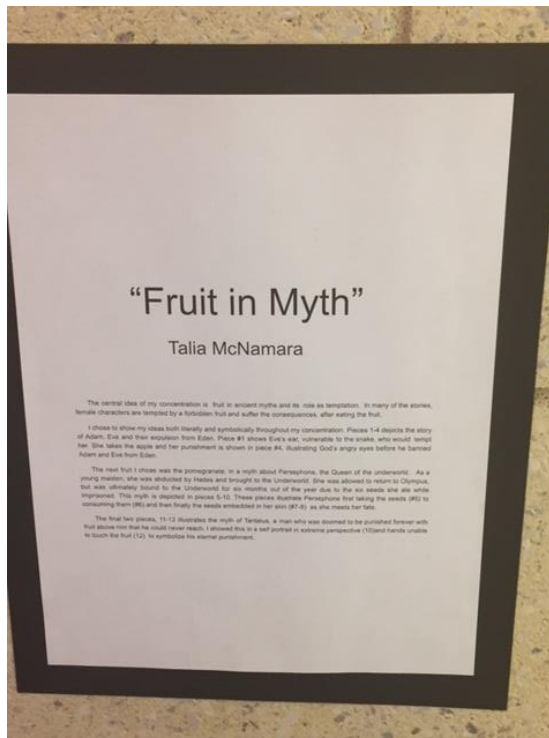
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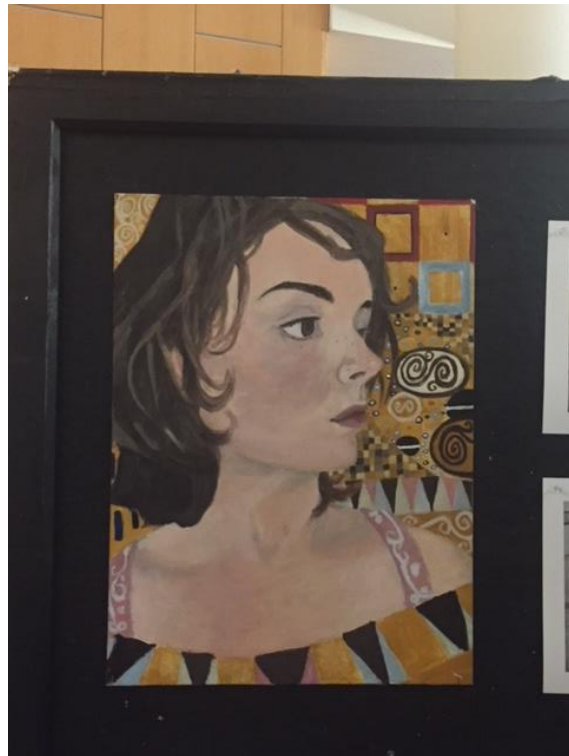
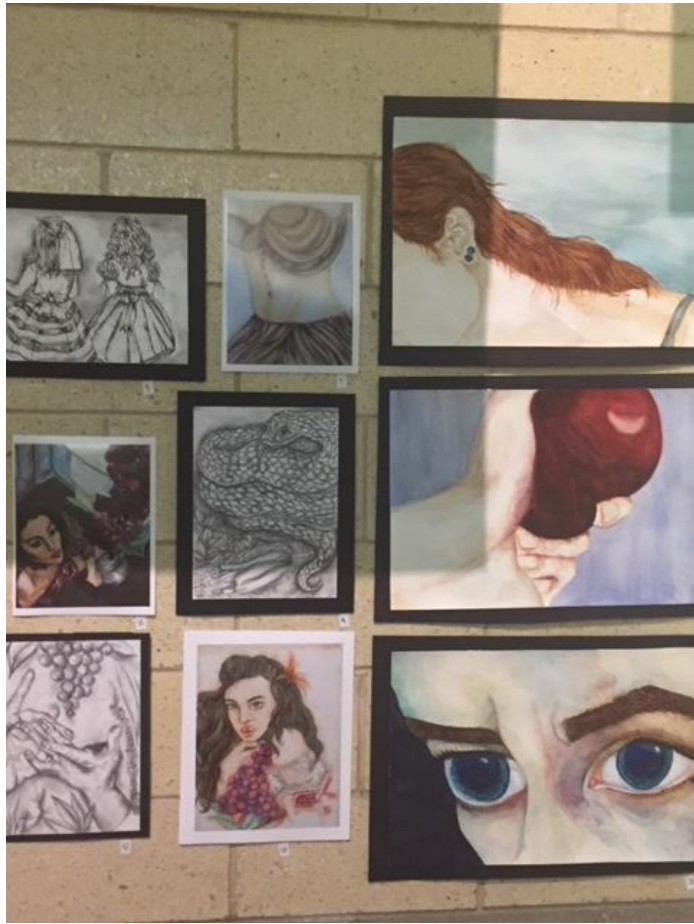
The Pathways newsletter is published weekly for the Reading Public School Community. If you have anything that you would like to share, please email your info to John Doherty at: john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us



AP Art Show

Last week, the RMHS Art Department held its annual AP Art Show to celebrate the work of the Advanced Placement Art Students. Some of the work is below. Congratulations to these students on an outstanding job!







Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts go out to **Wood End Principal Joanne King** who lost a loved one last week.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
 - ✓ Michelle Chawkate, Long Term Substitute Paraeducator Tutor; Killam
- We have posted a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

0.6 FTE Kindergarten Teacher, Wood End Elementary School
https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=496
0.6 FTE Kindergarten Teacher, Killam Elementary School
https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=497
0.6 FTE Kindergarten Teacher, Joshua Eaton Elementary School
https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=498

Blazing Trails...

"The Keys to Content-Area Writing: Short, Frequent, and Shared." If you want students to be better readers, writers and thinkers in every content area, then writing every day in every class is key as cited by this ASCD Express post. Students need sustained writing practice for an audience other than you, their teacher. Here are several ideas for incorporating informal, spontaneous writing tasks that are short, frequent and shared into your students' daily routine. [Read More](#)

"Why Students Should Choose What They Read." It's unlikely that every student will find the same book equally engaging, asserts Jason DeHart, a graduate teaching

associate and former middle-grades teacher. In this Edutopia blog post, he suggests giving students more autonomy over classroom reading. [Read More](#)

"Fostering Metacognition and Learning Transfer through Reflective

Writing." Using writing as a way for students to reflect on their learning supports the metacognition that leads to deep learning transfer. In this ASCD Express post, here's how to create regular, low-stakes and informal opportunities for students to reflect in writing. Reflecting on prompts that target interest, application and strategic effort helps students home in on personal and curricular connections. [Read More](#)

"Nahant, Mass. Students Program Robots in STEAM Class." Third- through sixth-grade students at a Massachusetts elementary school are learning how to code by programming Sphero robots. The coding and other activities are part of a weekly science, technology, engineering, art and math class, which offers hands-on reinforcement of lessons learned in other classes. [Read More](#)

"Australian Primary School Adopts Mindfulness Practices." Educators at a primary school in Australia say students are more focused and productive since the school adopted mindfulness practices. Deputy Principal Roxanne Picoaga noted that the school adopted such practices to support student well-being and achievement. [Read More](#)

Have a Great Week!