



# Pathways

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

September 23, 2018

Volume 6, Number 4

## Upcoming Dates

- September 24 – (6:30 p.m.) RMHS Guidance – Financial Aid Night in the Endslo PAC
- September 26 – Grade 6 – 12 Early Release; (6:30 p.m.) RMHS Open House
- September 27 – (6:30 p.m.) RCASA Annual Meeting in the Endslo PAC
- October 5 – (11:00 a.m.) Prek – 5 Early Release, Teacher In-Service Day, (6:00 p.m.) RMHS Choral Game Night
- October 5 – (11:00 a.m.) Grade Prek – 12 Early Release – Teacher In-Service
- October 6 – (8:00 a.m.) SAT Testing @ RMHS;
- October 8 – No School – No School/Offices Closed
- October 10 – Grade 6 – 12 Early Release, PSAT Testing @ RMHS
- October 18 – (6:30 p.m.) Annual College Fair @ Shriner's Auditorium; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the RMHS Library

## Bridge Program and PRIDE Survey Results Presented

POSTED ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2018 BY KEVIN VENDT FOR THE READING POST

Superintendent of Schools John Doherty presented the results of the PRIDE survey to the School Committee on September 20. A copy of the presentation can be found [here](#). The survey, which was grant funded, was administered in June of last year to pre-school to high school staff, parents from kindergarten to high school, and students from grades six through eleven. Doherty described the survey, which measures the perceptions of the survey takers, as “anonymous, reliable, and valid.” “This is a snapshot in time.” Doherty continued. The survey takers rated questions on a scale of one to four based on how satisfied they are with current circumstances, with a score of 2.5 being the fulcrum between a good and concerning score.

### School Committee Packet with PRIDE survey results

The survey was taken by 1,668 students and reported good scores in overall school climate, teacher/student relationships, and student engagement and support. Two hundred fourteen of 380 teachers returned the survey and reported positive results in general feelings about teaching, commitment, and trust in leadership. Lower scores appeared when asked about decision making on school planning and compensation. Doherty was quick to point out that concerns about compensation mirrored national results. He also shared that steps were being taken on the school building level to find out what areas the staff would like more input into when school planning decisions are made. Doherty reported that these conversations will inform school improvement plans and initiatives.

Five hundred thirty-three parents also responded to the survey. They were generally positive in their responses, especially in regards to school safety and learning challenges for their children. School principals will be reviewing the results for the purpose of integrating results in their specific buildings.

### Parker Bridge Presentation

Director of Student Services Carolyn Wilson presented the results of the Parker Middle School Bridge Program Review. A copy of that presentation is located [here](#). The grant-funded review was authored by Dr. Melissa Orkin after spending multiple days at the school, sitting in classes, reviewing curriculum, and observing teaching practices. Orkin found that the program contains structural and essential foundational elements of a language-based program. She also made recommendations regarding continued assessment, integrated program, and use of

## Kudos and Accolades

- Congratulations to the boys soccer, swimming, golf, football and volleyball on wins this week.
- Thanks to Guidance Director Lynna Williams and the Guidance Staff for holding a successful Senior Parent Information Night.
- To Director of Student Services Carolyn Wilson for her four years of service to the Reading Public Schools. Carolyn will be leaving this Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, to pursue a career opportunity as a school attorney. We wish her the best of luck in her new endeavor.

graphic organizers. Based on the findings of the report, Wilson presented a plan of action that included finding and implementing an assessment tool based on student benchmarks and exploring the recommended Language Live curriculum to determine if it is a fit for Reading Public Schools.

Wilson also indicated that there would be continued support and continuing education of instructors including continued work with Landmark School and attendance at the International Dyslexia Conference in Connecticut later this year. There is also a plan to include increased instructional support time in the 2019-2020 school year. A more comprehensive program description will also be created for the website to help aid in communication with parents.

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## Interim Director of Student Services Announced

We are pleased to announce that Sharon Stewart has been appointed as the Interim Director of Student Services for the Reading Public Schools for the remainder of the 2018-19 school year. Sharon retired in 2016 as the Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services for the Tritown School Union (Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield)) where she was in that role for 16 years. Sharon is very familiar with our school district, having served as a mentor for current Director of Student Services Carolyn Wilson when she first started in Reading.

Sharon will be working in the district three days a week in her role as Interim Director. She will be coming in a few days over the next two weeks to transition in the role and will begin officially the week of October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mrs. Stewart's role will be focused primarily on special education. During this year, we will be reassigning some of the non-special education duties and responsibilities that normally would be assigned to the Director to other Central Office Administrators.

A copy of Mrs. Stewart's resume is [here](#). Please welcome Sharon Stewart to the Reading Public Schools!

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## Six Pointers for Rookie Teachers

“Teaching is one of the only professions in which new hires bear the full responsibilities of the profession beginning on their first day on the job,” say New Jersey educators Mark Wise and Beth Pandolpho in this *ASCD Inservice* article. Here are their suggestions on how new teachers can avoid “siren calls” that might lure them to ineffective practices:

- *First things first* – avoiding the compulsion to “cover” everything in the curriculum. Like a movie director, teachers must make choices on which elements will move the story (learning) forward and which need to be cut. When planning lessons, teachers need to put in the essential elements (the “big rocks”) first, making it easier to make on-the-fly decisions about what to abandon or shorten.

## Superintendent's Office

### Hours this Week

*All are welcome*

9/26 Barrows  
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

9/27 Superintendent's  
Office  
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

10/1 RISE  
7:45 – 8:45 a.m.

10/3 Killam  
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

- *Choose the right format or strategy* – avoiding faddish practices that don't fit the situation. Teachers can have students sit in rows, groups, a circle, or a fishbowl. They can lecture, stage a debate, have students think/pair/share, or rotate through stations. And they have many options with technology. The question is not what's coolest, but what is best for the learning objective.

- *Circulate with a purpose* – avoiding the tendency to walk around monitoring compliance. The right questions in the teacher's mind: *What am I looking for? What am I listening for? What is the evidence? What will I do if I don't see it? Is this a time for an all-class mini-discussion?* All those questions lead back to the planning objective: How can I make students' thinking visible quickly and efficiently so I know if they are "getting it?"

- *Check the understanding of the whole class* – not calling on only the students who raise their hands. Teachers should use systems that accurately assess all students' learning in real time so as to reveal misconceptions and errors and make good decisions on immediate next steps.

- *Produce mental sweat* – not doing the heavy lifting for students. "We want our students to succeed," say Wise and Pandolpho, "but when we over-scaffold, even with the best intentions, we are not doing our students any favors." It's not enough to teach students how to "do school;" to be prepared for college and life, students need to work hard, make mistakes, get feedback, fix problems, and become autonomous learners.

- *Allow time for reflection* – avoiding the pressure to "move on." Especially in middle and high schools, students traipse from class to class with little time to consolidate what they're taking in. They need time and space to jot answers to big-picture learning questions, followed by small-group discussions: *What new information did I learn? How does this connect to what I already know? What questions do I still have?*

"Tips for New Teachers: Avoiding the Siren Calls" by Mark Wise and Beth Pandolpho in *ASCD Inservice*, August 16, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2BhiJ6g>; Wise can be reached at [Mark.Wise@ww-p.org](mailto:Mark.Wise@ww-p.org). Reprinted from Marshall Memo 753.

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## Information from DESE

1. **New resources for educators *and* families about standards-aligned teaching and learning.** We're excited to share two new resources designed to support standards-aligned teaching and learning:
  - **Family-friendly guides to the standards** for each grade level: These guides, available in English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, and Chinese (simplified characters), are designed to help schools and families work together to

support students' progress toward mastering the recently revised English language arts/literacy, math, and science and technology/engineering standards. The guides were developed with support from the Massachusetts Parent-Teacher Association, and they will be expanded to include the 2018 history and social science standards in 2019.

**Standards Navigator:** Educators, students, families, and others can use the Standards Navigator to explore the Massachusetts learning standards and find related resources such as student work exemplars, quick reference guides, and definitions of terms. We'll update the navigator with new content and features related to history and social science over the course of the school year.

**2. Did You Know?: Online courses available for early childhood educators about social emotional learning and approaches to play and learning.**

Early childhood educators are invited to register for two different facilitated courses: the 10-hour online version of the introductory course on the [Massachusetts Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten Social and Emotional Learning and Approaches to Play and Learning \(SEL/APL\)](#) or a four-hour online course on family engagement in social emotional learning. The Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) developed both courses in partnership with the Department of Early Education and Care and DESE. The Department is sponsoring multiple presentations of these courses for the coming year using the Blackboard learning platform. Each class is limited to 20 participants. Educators who complete the full 10-hour course earn 10 professional development points (PDPs) or 1 continuing education unit (CEU). For more information about the courses, contact Jane Haltiwanger at [jhaltiwanger@doe.mass.edu](mailto:jhaltiwanger@doe.mass.edu). To register for a course, please email the instructors below.

This fall, the introduction to the SEL/APL standards course will be offered from Sept. 24-Oct. 28 by [Caroline Blackman](#) and from Oct. 15-Nov. 16 by [Dotti McDevitt](#). This winter, the introduction to the SEL/APL standards course will be offered by [Jody Figuerido](#) from Jan. 14-Feb. 17 and [Ms. Blackman](#) from Jan. 6-Feb. 10. [Dotti McDevitt](#) will lead the family engagement in SEL class from Jan. 7-Feb. 1. The spring schedule is still being developed.

**3. FYI: Licensure video series**

The [Massachusetts Educator Licensure Series](#) is a new series of informational videos designed to help current and aspiring Massachusetts educators navigate the licensure process. The series consists of 11 videos that provide an overview of teacher licensure in the Commonwealth, including how to obtain Provisional, Initial and Professional licenses and what the process is for out-of-state applicants.

## Quote of the Week . . .



“Things may not go the way you planned, but that doesn't mean you lose hope. Stay positive and stay focused.”

Unknown

# 6TH ANNUAL READING MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL THE MATTRESS FUNDRAISER

Every Purchase  
Benefits the Band  
Program!



Twin From \$249 | Full From \$289 | Queen From \$299 | King /CA-King From \$499

- ✓ All Sizes Available!
- ✓ Firm, Pillow-top, Orthopedic, Latex & Gel Memory Foam Sets
- ✓ All Mattresses are BRAND NEW with Full Factory Warranties!
- ✓ Adjustable Beds, Luxury Pillows & Mattress Protectors!
- ✓ Name Brands like Simmons Beautyrest
- ✓ Layaway and Delivery Available
- ✓ Cash | Check | Credit Card

Beautyrest



Adjustable Beds

Pillows

f CustomFundraisingSolutionsBoston  
e jsaacs@customfundraisingsolutions.com

Twitter CFSBoston  
Beds4Reading

**When:** Sunday, September 23

**Time:** 10am - 5pm

**Where:** Coodlidge Middle School Cafeteria

**Event Link:** fb: CustomFundraisingSolutionsBoston: "Events"



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Reading  
Coalition  
Against  
Substance  
Abuse

LET'S

CELEBRATE

## 12th Annual Coalition Meeting

September 27, 2018 || 7 pm

Reading Memorial High School  
62 Oakland Rd. Reading, MA

[www.reading.k12.ma.us/community/rcasa](http://www.reading.k12.ma.us/community/rcasa)

Join RCASA to celebrate our accomplishments. Our keynote speaker this year will be Sherri VandeAkker, Ph.D.



## WHAT I WISH I KNEW...

When Someone You  
Love Suffers From A  
Substance Use  
Disorder

Sherri VandenAkker, Ph.D., is a member of the Executive Board of the Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse (RCASA) and a member of the Reading School Committee. She directed and co-produced the multiple award-winning documentary *My Name Was Bette: The Life and Death of an Alcoholic*, a film that chronicles her mother's death from alcoholism and examines how the disease impacts women. Sherri is a tenured professor at the Springfield College School of Professional and Continuing Studies where she teaches research, writing, and literature courses to adult learners and a part-time faculty member at the University of Massachusetts Amherst University Without Walls program where she teaches a course that explores the impact of technology on society. She is also a passionate nature photographer.



## Disney Tweet of the Week



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

-- Laverne

Spot signs of teen risk behavior

# Hidden in plain sight

Our 3-day Open House for PARENTS & CAREGIVERS will feature a teen's bedroom to test parents' awareness of common household items that can be substance abuse warning signs. The display is designed to encourage honest and candid discussion of the topics of underage drinking and substance misuse. Staff and volunteers will guide participants through the exhibit and answer questions. This free event is sponsored by the Burbank YMCA, RCASA and the Reading Police.

READING POLICE DEPARTMENT, 1ST FLOOR COMMUNITY ROOM  
15 UNION STREET READING, MA

Stop by during any of the dates/times below...

Monday Sept 24 2018 6PM-8PM	Tuesday Sept 25 2018 8AM-11AM 3PM-5PM	Wednesday Sept 26 2018 8AM-11AM
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THIS EXHIBIT IS FOR ADULTS ONLY

the YMCA Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse

Email [jdeangelis@ci.reading.ma.us](mailto:jdeangelis@ci.reading.ma.us)  
[www.reading.k12.ma.us/community/rcasa](http://www.reading.k12.ma.us/community/rcasa)

## Reading Public School Happenings

### Friday Night Football

Last Friday, the RMHS Football Team played in its second home game of the year against Lexington. As always, the RMHS band plays a major role in football game festivities. Below is the band participating in the pregame events. Reading beat Lexington, 19-14 to improve to 2-1 for the season.



## Important Websites

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



## **Classroom Activities**

Students in Grade 1 classes at Barrows are busy learning new and exciting skills.





## Contact Us

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

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



## Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts go out to Central Office Administrative Assistant **Lori Miller** who lost a loved one recently.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
  - ✓ Michelle Mitropoulos, BCBA, District
  - ✓ Sharon Stewart, Interim Director of Student Services, District
  - ✓ Janina Gauvin, Special Education Paraeducator, Coolidge
  - ✓ Rita Blanchard, Instructional Interventionist – Math, Joshua Eaton
  - ✓ Jennifer Guthrie, Instructional Interventionist – Math, Joshua Eaton
  - ✓ Theresa Curley, Extended Day, Birch Meadow
- **We have posted** a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

Grade 7/8 ELA Long-Term Substitute Teacher, Coolidge Middle School
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<a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=600">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=600</a>
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Regular Education Tutor, 36.5 hours biweekly, Birch Meadow Elementary School
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<a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=599">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=599</a>
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Cafeteria Worker
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<a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=601">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=601</a>
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Interested candidates may also submit a letter of interest stating position to Kristin Morello, School Nutrition Director at <a href="mailto:Kristin.Morello@reading.k12.ma.us">Kristin.Morello@reading.k12.ma.us</a> or 62 Oakland Road, Reading, MA 01867 or fax to 781-942-9141
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1.0 FTE Special Education Connections Program Teacher (One-year), Coolidge Middle School <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=602">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=602</a>
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Regular Education Tutor, 38 hours biweekly, Killam Elementary School (repost) <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=603">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=603</a>
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- **Running in Memory of Patrick Schettini**-Aaron Geller, nephew of former Reading Superintendent, Patrick A. Schettini, Jr., will be running the New York City Marathon in November in honor of Pat's life and for the Project Purple charity, which donates all money to helping research and find a cure for Pancreatic Cancer. Aaron states the following:

*"This year I will be running the 2018 NYC Marathon in honor of my dear Uncle Pat who suddenly was diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer and passed away on December*



26, 2009. *My Uncle Pat was the kindest, most selfless person I have ever known. He was the Superintendent of Schools, he had a law school degree and passed the bar, he served on many Boards throughout town, but with all his responsibilities and hectic schedule, what stands out the most in my mind, is his undying love for me and my family and how he never missed a family or school event! My dear Uncle was more like a father figure to me and instilled in me his incredible values as a person. I hope he knew how much I admired him. He taught me many valuable lessons that have shaped me into the person I am today. I hope through me I can carry on his legacy, as this terrible disease took him too young and there was so much more he had to give. I think of him often as I go through my life and what he taught me, and I hope what he instilled in me earns me the same respect that I watched others have for him. I am honored to raise money for a such a great charity to help fight this terrible disease that took away my uncle, my mentor and my friend."*

If you are interested in supporting this cause, a donation page has been created, which can be accessed [here](#).

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## Blazing Trails...

**"Massachusetts Principal Liz Garden to Focus on Students' Passions."** Massachusetts elementary-school principal Liz Garden says she will seek to "capitalize on kids' passions" to spur academic growth at her new school. Garden says her top priorities for the year will be earning the staff's trust and getting to know students. [Read More](#)

**"Setting the Tone for a Mindful School."** What do mindful behaviors, like attention to breathing, have to do with feeling safe, loved and ready to learn? Research suggests that if you change the way you breathe, you can change the way you feel. Try short mindfulness activities with students throughout the day to help them calm down, relieve stress and decrease misbehavior. [Read More](#)

**"#BestYearEver: Kick-Starting the Year with Passion."** School leaders can set the tone for a successful year by making aesthetic improvements to the school and hanging motivational posters, asserts Robyn Harris, Alaska's 2018 Principal of the Year. In this blog post, Harris also suggests meeting students at the school bus and inviting parents to a "Parent University." [Read More](#)

**"The Purpose, Planning, and Personal Connections That Will Sustain You All Year."** A veteran educator has four practices she applies to organize her classroom for the rest of the school year. From lists of facts that foster student relationships to daily routines to reminders of why teaching is important, a little bit of planning before the first day of school can go a long way and sustain enthusiasm all year long. [Read More](#)

**"If Students Aren't Trying on International Tests, Can We Still Compare Countries' Results?"** Some students who take the Program for International Student Assessment may not be trying their best -- potentially skewing the results, according to a study by researchers from Pennsylvania State University. Researchers mined keystroke data from PISA exams and found that in many cases, students skip questions or quit the exam early. [Read More](#)

**Have a Great Week**