



# Pathways

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

October 28, 2018

Volume 6, Number 9

## Upcoming Dates

- October 29 – 30 – Challenge Day @ Coolidge
- October 30 – (7:00 p.m.) Incoming Kindergarten Parent Meeting in the Killam Cafeteria
- October 31 – November 1 – Challenge Day @ Parker
- November 1 – (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in RMHS Library
- November 2 - (9:00 a.m.) Joshua Eaton Veterans Day Assembly
- November 6 – Election Day – Teacher In-Service Day; No School for Students/Offices Open
- November 9 & 10 – (7:30 p.m.) RMHS Drama presents Mamma Mia in the Endslo PAC
- November 11 – Veterans Day; (3:00 p.m.) RMHS Drama presents Mamma Mia in the Endslo PAC
- November 12 – Veterans Day Holiday Celebrated – No School and Offices Closed
- November 15 – (7:30 p.m.) Town Meeting in the Endslo PAC
- November 16 – Teacher In-Service day; No School for Students; (7:30 p.m.) RMHS Drama presents Mamma Mia in the Endslo PAC
- November 17 - (7:30 p.m.) RMHS Drama presents Mamma Mia in the Endslo PAC
- November 18 - (3:00 p.m.) RMHS Drama presents Mamma Mia in the Endslo PAC

## After swastika incidents, Reading residents rally against anti-Semitism



PAT GREENHOUSE/GLOBE STAFF

**“How is the death of 6 million of my people a joke?” student Tali Shorr asked the crowd at Sunday’s rally.**

By **Cristela Guerra** for **Boston Globe**

READING — More than once, 17-year-old Tali Shorr said she was told she should learn how to take a joke. The “jokes” were swastikas that have appeared around the town of Reading over the past year and a half.

On Sunday, hundreds gathered for a rally against anti-Semitism on the Town Common, where Shorr spoke about her experience as a Jewish student confronting the Nazi symbol.

“How is the death of 6 million of my people a joke?”

“It’s not to me,” said Shorr, a senior at Reading Memorial High School.

- November 19 – (7:30 p.m.) Town Meeting in the Endslo PAC
- November 21 – (11:00 a.m.) Grades PreK – 12 Early Release
- November 22 – Happy Thanksgiving; (10:15 a.m.) Football vs. Stoneham
- November 24 – Thanksgiving Break – Schools and Offices Closed
- November 26 – (7:30 p.m.) Town Meeting in the Endslo PAC
- November 29 – (7:30 p.m.) Town meeting in the Endslo PAC
- December 1 – (10:00 a.m.) REF Festival of Trees @ the Parker Middle School
- December 2 – (10:00 a.m.) REF Festival of Trees @ the Parker Middle School
- December 4 – (6:30 p.m.) RMHS Sophomore Guidance Night in the Endslo PAC
- December 5 – (6:00 p.m.) Coolidge Winter Concert in the Endslo PAC
- December 6 – (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the RMHS Library; (7:00 p.m.) Parker Grade 8 & Jazz Band Winter Concert @ Parker
- December 8 – (10:00 a.m.) RMHS Drama Dickens Marketplace

“Hearing these kinds of things said just makes me feel like I don’t have any support in my community, makes me feel unsafe in my community at school, and it also makes me feel kind of scared,” she said.

City and state leaders, School Committee members, local clergy, members of the Anti-Defamation League, and residents came together on a cold Sunday to stand in solidarity with their Jewish neighbors after members of Reading’s Select Board voted unanimously at their Oct. 16 meeting to sponsor the rally, along with the community organization Reading Embraces Diversity.

“My Italian friends, fathers, and grandfathers; my Irish friends, fathers, and grandfathers; my black friends, fathers, and grandfathers fought to defeat Nazism,” said Barry Berman, 60, vice chair of the Select Board, who grew up in New York City. “It wasn’t just an affront to Jews. It was an affront to every single American citizen who believes in freedom and democracy and love.”

The most recent anti-Semitic vandalism in Reading occurred two weeks ago, when two swastikas were drawn on the legs of a table in a science lab at the high school, according to school officials. In June, the words “Gas the Jews” were found written on a brick inside a vestibule in the lobby of Walter S. Parker Middle School. And last October, the Nazi symbol was drawn on furniture in the town library.

No arrests have been made in connection with any of those incidents, or others that have occurred in the town.

“We have a problem here in Reading, and I don’t think it has been properly addressed,” said Ilene Bornstein, 73, a retired teacher and 40-year resident of Reading. “It just gets you right in the gut.”

A friend with her held a sign that said: “There are 6 million reasons why I am here today,” referencing the number of Jews killed during the Holocaust.

More than once, Bornstein wiped back tears as she listened to Dr. Anna Ornstein, 91, a child psychiatrist, tell of her experience in the 1930s. She was taken to the Auschwitz concentration camp.

“When I told my grandchildren that their great-grandfather was on house arrest they wanted to know, ‘Well, what did he do?’ ” said Ornstein, who has spoken at local schools many times about her life. “I said to them he had committed the worst crime of the 20th-century: He was born a Jew.”

Berman, who moved to Reading about a decade ago, said he remembers the day his second-grade son came home crying, because children in the schoolyard talked about hating Jews.

## Kudos and Accolades

- Congratulations to the, field hockey, swim, volleyball and football on wins this week.
- Congratulations to the swim team for clinching the Middlesex League Liberty Division title with an undefeated season.
- Congratulations to the RMHS Football team with an exciting 35-21 win over Peabody in the first round of the MIAA Football Playoffs. Reading has now advanced to the semi-finals and will be playing at Lincoln Sudbury on Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m.



**Dr. Anna Ornstein Speaks at Rally**

“And when he told them, ‘I’m Jewish,’ they were surprised,” Berman said. “And they said, ‘Well, we didn’t mean you. We don’t hate you. We just hate Jews.’”

That kind of behavior is learned, Berman said, and can be unlearned.

Officials are trying to do this in Reading’s schools, he said. The ADL has provided training, some lessons have focused on the swastika’s meaning, and information on how not to be a passive bystander has been presented.

“We do not tolerate hateful words or actions, bigotry, or any other form of racist behavior in our classrooms, schools, or on our grounds,” said Elaine Webb, chair of the School Committee. “There is simply no place for it in a free society committed to equal rights for all.”

Rebecca Liberman said her parents pulled her out of a middle school in Minnesota when they discovered swastikas were being drawn in lockers. Now 53, Liberman is a Reading resident, the parent of a high school student and two older children who graduated from Reading’s public schools. A first-generation American, her father escaped from Nazi Germany with his family in the 1930s.



## Superintendent's Office

### Hours this Week

*All are welcome*

10/29 Superintendent's  
Office  
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

10/31 Killam  
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

11/5 Coolidge  
7:15 – 8:15 a.m.

11/6 Barrows  
7:45 – 8:45 a.m.

“Not addressing the hate, not calling it out, not telling people, that does not work,” Liberman said. “Ignoring these incidents and hoping they will go away sends a message that this behavior is tolerated, but standing up and being counted, saying ‘This is unacceptable’ — that sends a stronger message.”

## RMHS Marching Band Takes First Place in Billerica

On Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, the RMHS Marching Band, under the direction of Joseph Mulligan, took first place gold overall in the New England School Band Association (NESBA) competition that was held in Billerica. In addition, the band received an award for best percussion group. Below are pictures of the seniors, as well as the percussion group practicing with a rainbow in the background.

The band will be hosting the New England competition on October 27<sup>th</sup> at Reading Memorial High School. Congratulations to Mr. Mulligan, the staff, and the students on a very successful season!



RMHS Band Seniors



RMHS Percussionists

## Upcoming Youth Mental Health First Aid Courses

Erica McNamara, Executive Director of the Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse, will be offering training courses for both Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid. Details are below.

### Upcoming training courses

#### Youth Mental Health First Aid Course Scheduled for **Thurs Nov 8th** from 8am-4pm

Sometimes first aid isn't a bandage or CPR. Sometimes, first aid is YOU. A young person you know could be experiencing a mental health or substance use problem. Learn an action plan to help. **Anyone 18+ can take the Youth Mental Health First Aid course, but it is recommended for those who regularly have contact with young people ages 12-18.**

Course Instructor: Erica McNamara, MPH

Course location: Reading Police Department

Course fee: \$0 for Reading employees/residents, \$30 for out of town participants.

To register, visit

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07efs55t44695374d4&llr=edx5l4bab>

#### Adult Mental Health First Aid Course Scheduled for **Fri. Nov. 9th** from 8am-4pm

An adult you know could be experiencing a mental health or substance use problem. Learn an action plan to help. You are more likely to encounter someone in an emotional or mental crisis than someone having a heart attack. Learn how to help a friend, family member, coworker or neighbor in need. **This course is for adults 18+ that want to learn how to support other adults.** Get trained in Mental Health First Aid.

Course Instructor: Erica McNamara, MPH

Course location: Reading Police Department

Course fee: \$0 for Reading employees/residents, \$30 for out of town participants

To register, visit

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07efs5moa57544ffed&oseq=&c=&ch>

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## Dealing with Harassment and Disrespect in Middle and High Schools

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, Richard Weissbourd (Harvard Graduate School of Education) reports that sexual harassment continues to be a major issue in U.S. middle and high schools, with well over half of girls experiencing some combination of catcalling, being insulted with sexualized words, leering, groping, online harassment, and threats. Many remain silent, accepting that it's just a fact of life. "And the problem is not just girls being harassed by boys," says Weissbourd; "boys are also sexually harassed by girls, and students of varying gender and sexual identities are disproportionately harassed." All this leaves scars that can last a lifetime – fear and shame that undermine school success, relationships, and life chances. It also corrodes "men's capacity to have meaningful relationships with both females and males, to be ethical, and to be fully human."

What can schools do? Weissbourd believes the following steps are inexpensive and don't run the risk of overburdening educators who are already being asked to take on a wide range of responsibilities (plus, taking these actions may end up saving time by preventing incidents):

- *Conduct a harassment audit.* Questions include when and where staff members intervene to stop harassment, what kind of training has taken place, and whether every student has an adult he or she is comfortable talking to if harassed. Weissbourd recommends conducting staff and student surveys once or twice a year with a committee monitoring the data and following up.
- *Train and support staff.* It's essential that educators feel prepared to intervene effectively to address disrespectful language and harassment and are open to and willing to

## Quote of the Week . . .



“When you face difficult times, know that challenges are not sent to destroy you. They're sent to promote, increase and strengthen you.”

-Unknown

follow up with student disclosures. “Unfortunately,” says Weissbourd, “many school adults appear to lack the confidence and skills to have these conversations.” People need training and practice, including role-playing in a safe environment. This will be an uphill battle, he acknowledges: “Powerful social forces throughout history and across cultures have encouraged males to degrade females and driven students to harass gay, lesbian, and transgender students. But passivity not only condones such comments, it can also diminish young people’s respect for us as adults and role models.”

- *Do more than telling students, “Be respectful.”* They need to know specifically what crosses the line. A case in point: 62 percent of respondents to a survey of 18-25-year-old women said they found catcalling offensive, scary, and angering – but one-third of male respondents thought girls would be “flattered” by being catcalled. Many teens aren’t clear on what constitutes sexual assault, and a majority have never talked to an adult about consent in sexual encounters. In classrooms, advisories, and private conversations, these issues need to be addressed.

- *Talk to teens about what to do if they are harassed.* Students need to discuss, think through, and role-play how to handle such situations in the moment and how to follow through with educators and other adults – and if necessary, law enforcement.

- *Mobilize student leaders.* Students often know the “leverage points that can bring about change,” says Weissbourd, “and they are often keenly sensitive to tone.” They can discern the difference between joking banter and using sexualized words as weapons. Older students can be part of the effort to educate and sensitize incoming students.

- *Encourage boys to think about the nature of honor and courage and promote empathy.* Bluster and bravado are behind a lot of boasting, bullying, and disrespectful talk. Adults need to talk to boys about the real nature of courage and honor. All young people also need guidance dealing with the way women are portrayed in sexualized images in the media and the Web, and in provocative, distorted, and confusing Internet pornography.

- *Encourage standing up to problematic behavior.* “Learning to be an ‘upstander’ is a vital part of becoming an ethical, courageous person,” says Weissbourd. But standing up to harassment and bullying can be risky, so students need to brainstorm strategies and role-play realistic situations.

“Let’s Take a Stand Against Sexual Harassment in Schools” by Richard Weissbourd in *Educational Leadership*, October 2018 (Vol. 76, #2, p. 52-57), <https://bit.ly/2ywVAYN>; Weissbourd can be reached at [richard\\_weissbourd@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:richard_weissbourd@gse.harvard.edu). Reprinted from Marshall Memo 758

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## Adopt A Family Program Begins

The 2018 Adopt-a-Family program is available to Reading families who might benefit from extra help during the holidays. The program offers food baskets for the Thanksgiving and Christmas/Holiday, and gifts for children 18 or younger. It is coordinated by The Reading Rotary Club and ReadingCares, with support from Reading Elder/Human Services and Reading DPW.

Recipient applicants must be Reading families who can provide proof of need, with at least one child 18 or younger. The families are assigned numbers in order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. They can choose to receive a Thanksgiving Food Basket, a Holiday Food Basket, and/or gifts their children. We ask the families to provide detailed Wish Lists for each child so that Donors can be confident in their contributions.

Donor applicants can be individuals, families, work or social groups, scout troops and school groups. Donors can choose to donate a Thanksgiving Food Basket, A Holiday Food Basket, and /or gifts for children. They are provided with suggestions for food baskets as well as personal Wish Lists if they elect to provide gifts for children.



### Disney Tweet of the Week



"What I really wanted was to prove that I could do things right, so that when I looked in the mirror, I'd see someone worthwhile."

– Mulan

Attached are documents for applying to become either a Recipient or a Donor for 2018. These can be completed and delivered or mailed to Reading Town Hall, 16 Lowell Street, Reading MA 01867 by October 31<sup>st</sup>. Applications can also be accessed through Reading Town Hall or downloaded at <https://www.readingma.gov/elder-and-human-services/pages/adopt-a-family-holiday-program>.

Please contact us if you have any questions. We can be reached at 781 942 6680 or [ReadingAAF@gmail.com](mailto:ReadingAAF@gmail.com). Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Reading Rotary Club & ReadingCares

[ReadingAAF@gmail.com](mailto:ReadingAAF@gmail.com)  
781 942-6680

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## Reading Public School Happenings

### **Band Day a Success**

Last Friday evening, the RMHS band and the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students from both the Coolidge and Parker Middle School bands participated in band day which included marching during the RMHS football game. The day was a success. Thanks goes to RMHS Band Director Joseph Mulligan, Parker Music Teacher Andrew Norton, and Coolidge Music Teacher Cheryl Webster for a successful evening.



### **Volleyball Team Wins Middlesex League Title**

Congratulations to the RMHS Volleyball Team, under the direction of Michelle Hopkinson, who won the Middlesex League Liberty Division Championship. Currently, the team is 14-2 in the league and 15-4 overall. They have qualified for the state tournament and will begin this upcoming week. Congratulations to the team on a job well done!

## 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/>



RMHS Volleyball Team

### **RMHS Drama Club Gives a Sneak Peek to Elementary Students**

This past week, the RMHS Drama Club went to each elementary school to give a sneak peek to students of their upcoming production, *Mama Mia*, which will be held on November 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, and 18<sup>th</sup>. In the photo below, students are doing a performance at Barrows.





## 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...

- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
  - ✓ Heather Lewis, Lego League Coach, Killam
  - ✓ Donna Lauria, Extended Day, Killam
- **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 Special Education Program Teacher, Coolidge Middle School (repost) <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=609">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=609</a>
Special Education Paraeducator, 61.5 hours biweekly, RMHS <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=610">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=610</a>
Special Education Program Paraeducator, 60 hours biweekly, Coolidge Middle School <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=611">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=611</a>
1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher, Joshua Eaton Elementary School <a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=612">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=612</a>

## Blazing Trails...

**"Barnstable Public Schools District Uses Assessment to Measure SEL."** A Massachusetts school district is using the Devereux Students Strengths Assessment to measure students' social and emotional learning competencies. Gina Hurley, director of student services, says educators can use the assessment results to identify students who need additional SEL support. [Read More](#)

**"5 tips for successful SEL implementation."** Principals value SEL but need greater support to effectively implement school-wide SEL programming, according to a 2017 survey by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). While change doesn't happen overnight, a well-planned initiative can make a difference. One principal provides a framework for ushering in and sustaining a thriving SEL initiative. [Read More](#)

**"Study: Specialized Teacher Training Yields More Success For Kids With ASD."** Training public school teachers specifically to work with students who have autism makes a big difference, new research suggests, helping kids on the spectrum excel in mainstream classes. A new study looking at elementary schools in districts across the country finds that providing teachers with just a little bit of extra knowledge about how to work with children with the developmental disorder can yield significant results. [Read More](#)

**"Massachusetts Principal Focuses on Collaboration."** Scituate, Massachusetts elementary-school principal Rebecca Kelly says she'll use collaboration and engagement in her new position to build relationships with students, faculty, staff and parents. In this Q&A, Kelly says the biggest challenge for educators is to provide educational balance for students and prepare them "for jobs that may not even exist yet." [Read More](#)

**"Preparing Students for the Future of Work in a Global Society."** Educators can help prepare students for the future by demonstrating how important it is to "investigate the world," asserts Charle LaMonica, director of World View, a public service program at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. In this commentary, LaMonica shares how students benefited from a teacher's trip to the Dominican Republic in partnership with the Global Youth Leadership Institute. [Read More](#)

**Have a Great Week**