



Pathways

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

May 26, 2019

Volume 10, Number 32

Upcoming Dates

- May 27 – Memorial Day – Schools and Offices Closed
- May 28 – (5:00 p.m.) RMHS Senior Boat Cruise and All-Night Party
- May 29 – (7:00 p.m.) Reading Scholarship Foundation Night in the Endslo PAC
- May 30 – (6:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the RMHS Library; (7:00 p.m.) Baccalaureate Service for the Class of 2019 at St. Athanasius
- May 31 – (7:30 a.m.) RMHS Senior's Class Day
- June 2 – (1:00 p.m.) RMHS Graduation in the Hawkes Field House
- June 3 – (8:00 a.m.) RMHS Underclassmen Awards; (7:00 p.m.) Coolidge Band Concert in the Endslo PAC
- June 4 – (6:00 p.m.) Parker Grade 6 Spring Concert; (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Acting Showcase in the Endslo PAC; (7:45 p.m.) Parker Grade 7 Spring Concert
- June 5 – Grade 6 – 11 Early Release Day
- June 6 – (7:00 p.m.) Parker Grade 8 Spring Concert
- June 10 – (1:00 p.m.) Move-Up Day; (6:30 p.m.) RMHS Future Freshman 2 in the Hawkes Field House
- June 11 – (7:00 p.m.) Coolidge Choral Spring Concert in the Endslo PAC; SEPAC Meeting in RMHS Library
- June 14 – (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Improvosaurus

In Flanders Field

In Remembrance of Those Who Died

"In Flanders Fields" by John McCrae is a well-known, and much revered, poem concerning the many lives lost in Flanders, Belgium during World War I. The narrator states that in Flanders, the poppies are blowing in rows between the rows of crosses marking the graves of fallen soldiers. This is a poem of remembrance, a call for those living not to forget the dead who are buried in a foreign land. It demands that the living remember why the fallen died, so that they did not die in vain. On this Memorial Day, let us remember those who died while in active military service for our country.

In Flanders Fields
BY JOHN MCCRAE

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

- June 17 – Last Day of School – 11:00 a.m. dismissal for students; full day for staff
- June 20 – (6:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in RMHS Library

RMHS Senior Wins Prestigious Holocaust Essay Contest

RMHS Senior, Tali Shorr's essay "I Stood Up" was chosen for First Prize from over 200 other entries for the Israel Arbeiter Holocaust Essay Contest. Israel Arbeiter was a Holocaust Survivor and Civil Rights Activist who lost many family members in the Holocaust. You can read more about Israel 'Izzy' Abreiter [here](#) and about the rising tide of anti-Semitism [here](#).

This year's theme of the Jewish Community Relation Council's Community Holocaust Commemoration of Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) at Faneuil Hall was: "Who Will Tell Our Story?" directly addressing the reality that Holocaust Survivors are aging, and there will come a time when they can no longer bear witness to their own stories. In relation to this theme, students from Greater Boston in grades 6 – 12 were invited to write a 400-800 word essay reflecting on the following:

"The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) reports a 57% increase of incidents of hatred such as anti-Semitism, racism, and prejudice (intolerance of others unlike themselves) in the last 2 years. This is the largest increase since the ADL began tracking these incidents in 1979.

What responsibilities do you have as a 'witness' when you listen to a survivor or see an act of hatred today? What do you think it means to be a witness?"

Tali wrote from her heart about her experience in Reading when she found a Swastika on the floor of her classroom and "stood up" to report it and enable others to understand how it made her feel to find it in her school. She wrote about her revelation as she met with her Principal and Guidance Counselor: "As we talked, I realized that I was speaking about the Jewish people in a way that was very personal. For example, instead of saying 'Six Million were killed in the Holocaust,' I said, 'Six Million of us.' Although I wasn't there personally, I felt connected to the tragedy in a way that I had never before. I became a witness."

Tali attended many public meetings, sharing her experience, explaining how "unsafe" seeing the swastika made her feel: "I began attending numerous meetings and speaking out publicly. Slowly, I became more comfortable speaking up. My experience allowed me to form relationships with important adults in town, who took my concerns seriously. Because I stood up, tangible change happened in my community."

Tali was honored by the Jewish Community Relations Council on Sunday, May 5, 2019, with a seat on the podium alongside Janet Singer Applefield, a Holocaust Survivor and her daughter, many leaders of the Jewish Community, Mayor Martin Walsh, the Consul General of Germany to New England, and the Consul General of Israel to New England. She earned her seat at that table through her powerful words: "At this point, I'm less concerned with telling people not to draw swastikas than with urging others to speak out against acts of hate, and teaching them about the hurtful and destructive effects swastikas have on people. My whole experience has brought me so much closer to my Jewish identity, culture, and community."

Kudos and Accolades

- Congratulations to boys and girls lacrosse, baseball, softball, girls track, boys and girls tennis for wins recently.
- Congratulations to the girls tennis and girls lacrosse teams for qualifying for the MIAA Post Season Tournament.

"I stood up. I stood up for myself, my people, my community. From now on, I will not hesitate to continue fighting for what I believe in." Tali will also be honored in Washington, D.C. at the Holocaust Memorial Museum this Fall.

We are so proud of Tali and her peers who are standing up against hate in our community and beyond.



Jack Arbeiter (son of Israel Arbeiter), who presented the first place essay contest award to Tali Shorr

Reading Food Pantry Sponsoring Summer Lunch Program

Families of the Reading Schools, Reading, MA

Third Annual Summer Lunch Program

Summer is fast approaching bringing with it lots of warm, sunny days and outdoor fun.

We are so pleased to announce that the Reading Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the Reading Food Pantry are again providing free, high quality, nutritious and nonperishable food to supplement your pantry during the weeks that school is not in session this summer.

This is a free program that serves the families of those students who have participated in the National School Lunch Program during the academic year.

Here's how to participate:

1. Register your child(ren) with us by answering the following two questions:
 - A. Your last name.
 - B. Number of students in your family.
2. Send this information to the Reading Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society on line at st.agnes.reading.svdvp@gmail.com by June 15, 2019.
3. Pick up your bags of groceries weekly during the summer at the Old South United Methodist Church, 6 Salem Street, Reading MA.
 - A. Drive into the parking lot from the 6 Salem Street entrance.

Superintendent's Office
Half-Hours this Week

All are welcome

*There are no office half
hours this week.*

- B. Give your last name and number of children in school to the volunteer in the parking lot.
- C. Receive the bag(s) of groceries into your car.
- D. Continue through to the exit of the parking lot on Main Street.

You will be able to pick up your free groceries from 5:00 pm until 6:30 pm every WEDNESDAY evening weekly during the summer beginning on June 19, 2019 and ending on August 22, 2019.

VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE: Although we are very sensitive to friends with food allergies, we are not prepared to modify the contents of the bags to meet everyone's personal needs. Just as you would shop in a store, we ask you to select the items for your family; and if there is something that you cannot use, please pass it on to someone else or deposit it into the Reading Food Pantry collection bin at your local grocery store.

If you are returning to the Summer Food Program, we are happy to see you again. If you are new to the program, we welcome you and look forward to seeing you this summer.

With all best wishes for a healthy and happy summer,

Alicia Gallagher, Coordinator of Summer Lunch Program

Pushing Back on Eight Outmoded Beliefs

In this article in *Leaderboard: Michigan Association of School Boards*, Kim Marshall suggests updates to erroneous beliefs that persist among some educators and stakeholders:

- *Intelligence and talent are fixed at birth.* The "innate ability paradigm" about proficiency at math, art, or dancing pops up all the time – for example, "She's just not a science person." The best antidote is Carol Dweck's book, *Mindset*, which suggests replacing a *fixed* mindset with a *growth* mindset: that although we are born with certain levels of intellectual, athletic, and artistic ability, we can upgrade them through a combination of hard work, strategy, and coaching. Shifting to a growth mindset has a remarkable impact on learning and the ability to deal with challenging situations.

- *Poverty is destiny.* "There's no question that growing up poor has an impact on children," says Marshall, "and intergenerational poverty is especially damaging." What's tragic is when schools make things worse by teaching in ways that handicap students who enter with disadvantages – for example, calling only on students who raise their hands or giving homework that requires an Internet connection. But some schools are turning this dynamic around and closing gaps; Education Trust's website showcases a number of these beat-the-odds schools and what they are doing: https://edtrust.org/dispelling_the_myth/.

- *Great teachers are born, not made.* "Yes, a few teachers have extraordinary talent from day one," says Marshall, "but the vast majority grow and develop over time, supported by colleagues, master teachers, professional development, curriculum materials, school leaders, and a burgeoning knowledge base about what works in classrooms." Even the legendary Jaime Escalante, whose inner-city California students aced the AP Calculus exam, depended on seven years of hard work with feeder-grade colleagues and the support of a strong principal.

- *Principals are first and foremost managers.* H.S.P.S. (hyperactive superficial principal syndrome) is the fate of all too many school leaders as discipline referrals, cafeteria duty, buses, meetings, and e-mail devour their time. But some principals have figured out how to get into classrooms, orchestrate productive teacher teamwork, and create a culture of purpose, collaboration, and trust. “Superintendents and heads of school play a crucial role,” says Marshall, “ensuring that principals have enough staff, buffering them from unnecessary meetings and demands, and coaching them on the core elements of their jobs.”

- *Teacher evaluation makes no difference.* There’s widespread cynicism about the compliance-driven traditional model, which rarely improves teaching and consumes huge amounts of administrators’ time. The good news is that a growing number of schools have moved to a better approach: short, frequent, unannounced classroom visits, each followed by a face-to-face discussion focusing on one “leverage point,” then a short narrative summary, with the year’s interactions captured in a detailed rubric analysis with teacher input. This approach has at least twelve benefits: administrators know what’s really going on in classrooms; they can intervene early when there are problems; they get daily insights on students’ learning; they develop greater empathy for what teachers are dealing with; they provide ongoing coaching, and are themselves coached by teachers; they motivate colleagues to reflect on their practice and bring their A game every day; they compare lesson execution with curriculum unit plans and assessment of student work; they cross-pollinate effective ideas from classroom to classroom; they walk the talk, demonstrating genuine interest in teaching and learning; they provide accurate and insightful evaluations; they keep and attract quality staff; and they build trust and credibility with teachers, parents, and other stakeholders.

- *Student feedback can’t be taken seriously.* It’s common for college professors to get survey feedback from their students, but can elementary and secondary teachers learn anything from their students? Actually, yes: studies have shown that in anonymous questionnaires, K-12 students paint a more-accurate picture of classroom performance than principals’ evaluations and test scores. “Student perceptions have great potential in providing insights on what’s working (and what isn’t) in classrooms,” says Marshall, “—professional development from frontline customers.” But this will happen only if surveys are implemented thoughtfully and focus on coaching teaching practice versus high-stakes evaluation.

- *Tests don’t enhance learning.* Fierce attacks on standardized testing may be blinding us to the benefits of assessments closer to the classroom, says Marshall. Effective teachers check for understanding and fix learning problems in real time; leverage peer instruction after tests; shift students from fixed to growth mindset about difficulties and failures; and use test data to compare notes with colleagues and improve instruction.

- *Teachers can’t be held accountable for student learning.* This would seem to be the conclusion from the debacle of using test scores to evaluate teachers. “It turns out that scientific-looking value-added formulae are inaccurate and unreliable at the individual teacher level,” says Marshall, “leading to 15 lawsuits from teachers who were done wrong by the data.” And accountability for “student learning objectives” in non-tested subjects has

Quote of the Week . . .



"Live every moment, love every day, because before you know it, precious time slips away."

-REO Speedwagon

been undermined by widespread gaming. But there are ways to make student learning part of teacher-administrator conversations without these problems: (a) during classroom visits, looking over students' shoulders and quietly asking them what they're learning; (b) chatting with teachers afterward about exit tickets and student work; (c) administrators dropping in on teacher team meetings as they plan assessments and discuss student work; (d) looking at student survey data with teachers; and (e) teacher teams presenting before-and-after assessment results at the end of the school year to document their collective value-add to student learning.

"Pushing Back on Outmoded Beliefs" by Kim Marshall in *Leaderboard: Michigan Association of School Boards*, Spring 2019, published simultaneously online by Teaching Channel, https://marshallmemo.com/articles/LB_May2019_KimMarshall.pdf. Reprinted from Marshall Memo 787.



Reading 375 May 31 - June 15

Celebrations of our town's 375th anniversary include:

Opening Night - May 31 Reading Common 7PM
Jumbotron, live music, special events, and discounts
at downtown businesses and restaurants

Town-Wide Art Show

Dog Parade

Fee, app-based Scavenger Hunt

PorchFest

Free Concerts

Baseball

Food Events

Fireworks

Hot Air Ballon Rides

So much more

**For Full Details
Visit READING375.COM**

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Disney Quote of the Week



“Our greatest natural resource is the minds of our children.”

– Walt Disney

Reading Public School Happenings

RMHS Holds Senior Awards Ceremony

Last Tuesday evening, RMHS held its annual Awards. The awards featured the presentation of Presidential Silver and Gold Education Certificates, National Merit Commended Students, Core Value Awards, Assistant Principal and Principal Awards, Century Club Certificates and Scholastic Awards.



Coolidge Honors Memorial Day

Last Thursday, Coolidge Middle School held its annual Memorial Day Assembly. As part of the ceremony students place United States Flags on the lawn in front of the school.



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>



Coolidge Celebrates Greek Day

On Friday, Coolidge held its annual Greek Day festivities which featured academic and Olympic competitions. Below are some pictures from the Opening Ceremony. Thanks to Grade 6 Social Studies Teachers Ann Jacobsmeier and Mike Bernard for coordinating the event.





Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts and prayers go out to Joshua Eaton teacher **Dara Tye** who lost a loved one recently.
- Our thoughts and prayers go out to Coolidge Food Service employee **Brenda Hobart** who lost a loved one recently.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
 - ✓ Jennifer Hillery, Substitute, District
 - ✓ Cynthia Walsh, Substitute, District
 - ✓ Victoria Angelesco, Substitute, District
 - ✓ Emily Brooks, Substitute, District
- **We have posted** a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

Special Education Program Paraeducator, 58 hour biweekly, Joshua Eaton Elementary School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=732

Cafeteria Manager, Coolidge Middle School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=733

1.0 FTE Special Education Math Teacher, Parker Middle School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=734

1.0 FTE Grade 7 Math Teacher, Parker Middle School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=735

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

Blazing Trails...

"Here's What Teens Say They Need." Educators are trained to provide students with the help they need to thrive both academically and socially. We even have the firsthand knowledge and experience of having been teenagers ourselves. It's important, however, to recognize that our experiences may be, and most likely are, very different from what our students experience today. For that reason, we must ask students about their experiences and use their perspectives to inform our approach to teaching and leading. Math Teacher Jody A. Marberry recently interviewed over 40 teens in grades 6 through 12 and asked them, "What do you need from schools to feel supported both academically and socially?" Their responses, both honest and illuminating, are here in this ASCD Express post. [Read More](#)

"Give Teens More Downtime and Support with Time Management." Research, and teens themselves, say that young people are overscheduled and sleep deprived. Students need more time to relax, reflect, and grow up, argues researcher Paul Franz. While schools may not be able to give all those things to students directly, balancing schedules and reducing workloads can help in this ASCD Express article. [Read More](#)

"Mindfulness Won't Save Us. Fixing the System Will." Assessment experts Tom Guskey and Sue Brookhart look at a century of research and extract three practices for making grades more accurate. Teacher Christina Torres on why using mindfulness as a panacea distracts from the important work of fixing systemic inequities in this ASCD resource. [Read More](#)

"What Is Lesson Study?" Lesson study helps personalize professional development for teachers, writes Adrienne Baytops Paul, an elementary-school math teacher. Paul shares four steps to adopting this peer-generated professional-development approach, which encourages collaboration and allows educators to view lessons from the perspective of their colleagues and students. [Read More](#)

"Chinese Language Connects U.S. Students to a Global Future, say U.S. Education Experts." The Confucius Institute Headquarters, the College Board and Asia Society recently held the 12th annual National Chinese Language Conference in California, with the theme, Connecting to a Global Future. Language learning is the way to learn the histories and cultures of the world, said Anthony Jackson, vice president of education at Asia Society, said and "that is the basis for good judgement as we go forward in the future. [Read More](#)

Have a Great Week!