

Pathways

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

December 6, 2019

Volume 11, Number 10

Upcoming Dates

- December 7 (10:00 a.m.)
 REF Festival of Trees at the Parker Middle School
- December 8 -- (12:00 p.m.)
 REF Festival of Trees at the Parker Middle School
- December 10 (6:00 p.m.)
 Parker Grade 6 & 7 Winter
 Concert; (7:00 p.m.) SEPAC
 Meeting in the RMHS Library
- December 11 Grade 6 8
 Early Release
- December 12 (6:00 p.m.)
 School Committee Meeting in the Schettini Library;
 (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Choral
 Songfest in the Endslow PAC
- December 14 (8:00 a.m.) RMHS PSST Craft Faire @ RMHS
- December 18 (7:00 p.m.) RMHS Winter Concert
- December 19 (7:00 p.m.)
 School Committee Meeting in the Schettini Library

Reading Public Schools Seek Participants To Be A Part of The Portrait of the Graduate Design Team



The Reading Public Schools is seeking members of different sectors of our community to participate on the Reading Public Schools Portrait of A Graduate Design Team. The purpose of this team is to develop a vision of what types of skills and dispositions our students will need when they graduate from Reading Memorial High School. The questions that we will answer with community input are as follows:

- What are the hopes, aspirations, and dreams that our community has for our young people?
- What are the skills and habits of mind that our children need for success in this rapidly changing and complex world?
- What are the implications for the learning experiences we provide in our school systems?

From this work we will develop a proposed portrait of the graduate, which with School Committee approval, will become the basis for our future program planning in our school district.

The Portrait of a Graduate Design Team will consist of representation from the following sectors:

- Clergy
- Business
- Higher Ed
- Social and Health Services
- Student

Kudos and Accolades

- Kudos to the Parker and Coolidge Bands and Chorus for outstanding performances at their annual winter concerts.
- Kudos to the RMHS
 Marching Band for
 participating in the annual

 Tree Lighting celebration.
- Educators
- Community Member
- Parent
- School Committee Member
- Town Official
- High School Principal
- Middle School Principal
- Elementary Principal
- Superintendent
- Other District Administrators

The Design Team will be co-chaired by RMHS Principal Kate Boynton and Superintendent of School John Doherty. The time commitment will be evening meetings from January, 2020-October, 2020.

If you are Interested in Becoming a Member of the Portrait Of The Graduate Design Team please contact Principal Kate Boynton and Superintendent John Doherty by email **no later than Monday, December 9th** with a short biography and why you would like to be on this team.

Reading and Stoneham Rotary Clubs Host Annual Thanksgiving Football Luncheon

On Monday, November 25th, the Reading Rotary Clubs of Reading and Stoneham hosted the 44th annual Thanksgiving Football Luncheon at the St. Agnes Parish Center. The luncheon was well attended with several town, school, and community leaders, as well as, coaches, players, and cheerleaders from each school.

A special thanks to the Rotary Clubs for hosting this event and to the players and coaches for an outstanding job sharing their remarks during the program.



RMHS Athletic Director Tom Zaya

Superintendent's Office Half-Hours this Week

All are welcome

12/9 8:00 a.m. Barrows

12/12 2:45 p.m. RMHS



RMHS Captains Colin Comerford, Chris Chiulli, and Jeremy Rosh with Head Coach John Fiore

SEPAC Meeting on December 10th

There will be a Special Education Advisory Council (SEPAC) Meeting on Tuesday, December 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the RMHS Schettini Library. A representative from the DESE (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) is scheduled to present at this meeting about the new Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) parent information plan.

If you have any questions, please contact Director of Student Services Dr. Jennifer Stys at Jennifer.stys@reading.k12.ma.us or Reading SEPAC Board Member Laura Noonan at Inoonan.sepac@gmail.com

LIFTS Trauma IV Course Open For Registration

We are happy to announce that we have successfully scheduled Lesley Trauma IV here in Reading.

The Impact of Trauma on Learning: Action Research and Seminar

Students demonstrate their understanding of the attributes of trauma-sensitivity by working together to design and conduct research that assesses the outcomes of efforts to improve trauma-sensitivity in classrooms, schools, or other learning environments.

This is the fourth and final class that you need to complete to earn your graduate certificate in Trauma and Learning. *Trauma I-III are pre-requisites*.

Trauma IV Monday's 3:30PM-6:30PM Dates and Locations:

Starts Monday January 27th at Parker Middle School- Multi-Purpose Room

The rest of the dates will be at Reading Memorial High School in the Distance Learning Room on the 4th floor.

- Monday February 10th
- Monday February 24th
- Monday March 9th
- Monday March 23rd
- SNOW DAY- Monday March 30th

If you are interested in attending. Please send completed registration form and check for \$500 made out to Lesley University, to Lauren Sabella at Reading Memorial High School. Or you can email the completed registration form to Lauren.Sabella@Reading.K12.MA.US and indicate that you will pay Lesley Directly by credit card. This class is eligible for tuition reimbursement if that is a part of your Reading Public School contract. Please send complete tuition reimbursement form if applicable. For out of district tuition reimbursement inquiries please contact your district administrator.

Acceptance: A Parenting Challenge

By: Dr. Robert Brooks

At a presentation I attended at the beginning of my graduate school years, a speaker remarked, "Parents must learn to accept their children for who they are and not what they want them to be." My initial thought was, "Of course we should accept our children for who they are. How difficult a task is that?"

How naive I was. As I began to engage in clinical work, I soon learned that acceptance of who our children are often represented a formidable task, made even more difficult when children exhibited behaviors that parents viewed as problematic or not in accord with parental values.

Several years later when I became a father myself, first with Rich and then with Doug, I experienced first hand the challenges of acceptance. An essential ingredient of acceptance is unconditional love, that is, loving our children even when they behave in ways that are questionable or when they follow interests and a path in life that are not necessarily in keeping with our dreams for them.

In understanding what is involved with acceptance, I want to emphasize that it should not be interpreted to mean that we allow our kids to do whatever they want or that we do not discipline them. Discipline is an important part of parenting, but we must remember that discipline involves teaching, not humiliation or intimidation.

Whether we realize it or not, even when our children are still in the womb, we already have dreams and expectations of what we would like them to be. As most of us discover, many children do not live up to these dreams and expectations. This is not an indication that we have failed in our parenting role. There are many variables, including one's inborn temperament, that determine our children's likes and dislikes and their vulnerabilities and strengths.

Research has taught us that given their inborn temperaments some children are predisposed to being more hopeful, optimistic, and socially aware than their peers. Some will have an easier time learning in school while others will struggle. Some will be adept at reading, others at art. The problem arises when the expectations parents have for their

Quote of the Week . . .



"Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

children are so fixed and rigid that they cannot adjust to the unique qualities and passions that each child possesses.

The Impact of "Goodness-of-Fit"

In the field of child development there is an important concept that has been labeled "goodness-of-fit." It represents the fit between the temperament, expectations, and dreams of parents with who their child is. It implies that for the parent-child relationship to flourish, it is the parents who must adapt their expectations and behaviors to meet their child's psychological make-up rather than the child accommodating to the parents' style.

In the absence of this goodness-of-fit, unconditional love is diminished, overshadowed by anger, frustration, and disappointment. If children look into the eyes of their parents and all they perceive is disappointment, it will become increasingly difficult for them to feel accepted, and their capacity for hope and resilience will be compromised. However, if parents can adjust their expectations, if they can honor and accept their children for who they are, a strong foundation for love and happiness is more easily established.

I wish to illustrate this point and the importance of goodness-of-fit by describing my therapy with two families. One I reported in greater detail in my book *Raising Resilient Children*, which I co-authored with my colleague Sam Goldstein. It involves George, a 13-year-old who was shy, had few friends, and was burdened by significant learning problems. In contrast, his 16-year-old sister Linda was outgoing, had many friends, was an A student, and a star athlete. The childhood experiences of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. White, paralleled those of Linda. As children (and now as adults), the parents were very sociable, excellent students, and accomplished athletes.

The Whites were forthright in noting that it was a pleasure to be with Linda but that they were frequently disappointed with George. Mr. White shared the following belief in parent counseling: "If George wanted to, he could turn his life around. He's lazy and always has been." George was very aware of his parents' feelings. In an individual session, he poignantly and perceptively told me, "My parents love Linda. I think she makes them feel like good parents. I sometimes think they wish I was never born."

Whenever I conduct an evaluation of a child or teenager, I always ask parents, "What is it that your child does well?" It's a question that invites parents to begin to focus on a child's strengths or what I call their "islands of competence."

I was not prepared for the Whites' response to my question. They glanced at each other and Mr. White replied, "We're somewhat embarrassed to tell you. We just don't think it's the kind of activity that a 13-year-old boy should be spending much of his time doing."

I asked, "What is that?"

Mr. White responded, "He likes to garden and take care of plants. That would be okay if he did well in school and was involved in other activities. How can a 13-year-old be so interested in plants?"

When I asked George in an individual meeting what he enjoyed doing, he corroborated what his parents had told me. He described with an obvious sense of joy his love of gardening and growing plants. He voiced sadness that his parents showed little interest in

Disney Quote 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."

(Gargoyle to Quasimodo)

his favorite activity. In essence, George's parents failed to honor the one activity that brought their son a sense of pleasure and accomplishment, which contributed to his sadness and anger.

It is beyond the scope of this article to detail my therapeutic interventions with the White family. Not surprisingly, a main task, which took time to achieve, was to help the parents develop more realistic expectations for George and to display a more genuine interest in his strengths. They came to realize the extent to which their love for George (and even for Linda) was conditional. Basically, their message to George was, "We would love you if you were more like your sister." Once the Whites began to convey appreciation for George's interests and strengths, their relationship with him improved as did his emotional wellbeing.

The second example is Paul, an 8-year-old, who was referred to me given his high level of anxiety and struggles in school. His parents Mr. and Mrs. Norwell described Paul as being an anxious child from birth. With evident emotion Mr. Norwell expressed that when Paul was born he thought of all the fun they would have playing different sports together. Unfortunately from Mr. Norwell's perspective, Paul showed little, if any, interest in watching or participating in any sporting events.

Mr. Norwell expressed sadness that what he had anticipated would be a fun and rewarding way of interacting with his son had basically been closed off. He added that he was struggling with what alternative activities they might do together. I asked the Norwells what Paul enjoyed doing, and they quickly agreed that he loved to draw and paint and that he showed some talent in this activity. As they spoke about Paul's artistic ability, Mr. Norwell noted that drawing and painting were some of his least favorite activities.

In an empathic way I discussed with them the concept of goodness-of-fit and the ways in which it was important for parents to adjust within reason to their child's interests in order to secure a more positive, loving relationship.

The parents listened closely and both agreed that a top priority was to nurture a very positive, loving relationship with Paul. Soon after our meeting Mr. Norwell suggested to Paul that the two of them enroll in an art class together. Paul was delighted by this suggestion. Mr. Norwell called me after their first class and told me how wonderful it was to observe Paul's joy as they were drawing together. He continued, "I think I can even get use to doing some of this art stuff." He had indeed reinforced a goodness-of-fit approach with his son that would have a lifelong impact.

Tom Brady: Accepting Ben

I thought of George and Paul and their parents when I read a recent article posted on *Insider.com* written by Randi Mazzella with the intriguing title "Tom Brady's son doesn't like sports, and every parent can learn from how the quarterback has reacted." As many of my readers know I am an avid Boston/New England sports fan. Even outside New England most regard Brady as the GOAT (Greatest of All Time) quarterback. And his son doesn't like sports!

Mazzella's piece cited an interview that Brady did for *Men's Health* authored by Ben Court. The Court interview first focused on Brady's workout routine and what some consider his unusual diet and then the topic switched to his role as a father. Brady said that he had a lot in common with his 12-year-old son Jack, who loves sports. However, his 9-

Important Websites

RPS District Website www.reading.k12.ma.us

Interface Health Services

https://interface.williamjame s.edu/community/reading year-old son Benjamin showed no interest in sports, "which caught the six-time Super Bowl winner by surprise."

Brady observed, "It was hard for me. I was like, 'What do you mean? He's a boy; he should just do all these things that I do."

Mazzella wrote, "But as Brady learned, just because a parent is a force in a particular area doesn't mean they will share that passion with their offspring. It may make it difficult to connect with or understand a child. But it's important for parents to make sure they don't make a child feel insecure about their differences."

Mazzella quoted Dr. Michele Borba, a well-known author and parenting expert. "You never want your kid to think 'I'm a disappointment to my parents because of who I am or because I am not like them."

Tom credited his wife Gisele for reminding him that Ben had different interests than Tom, conveying the message that parents could not force their interests and passions on their children.

And similar to Mr. Norwell's insight about his son Paul, Tom discovered, "The reality is that Benny just likes different things. And it's great because now I just have to do what he wants to do. When we do that, we have the best time. He's like 'OMG, Dad, you're so funny.' He loves joking, and I joke back."

"The best time" described by Brady is more likely to occur when parents make a concerted effort to achieve a goodness-of-fit with their children and display acceptance and unconditional love. It can be very challenging for parents to modify the dreams and expectations they hold for their children. However, the benefits of doing so, of having our children feel genuinely loved and our experiencing "the best time" with them, are well worth the effort.

Superintendent Office Hours Continue This Week

Starting this week, Superintendent of Schools John Doherty will begin to hold office hours at the different schools. Superintendent Office Hours will be scheduled for 30 minutes and are open to all members of the community and staff. The purpose of office hours is for staff and community members to discuss any topics related to the Reading Public Schools with the Superintendent. We will try to schedule two office hours per week.

The next few week's office hours are as follows:

Thanksgiving Week: No Office Hours

12/9 8:00 a.m. Barrows 12/12 2:45 p.m. RMHS

No appointment is necessary. If you are attending an office hour, please go to the Main Office of the school that is holding the office hour.

If you cannot make one of the advertised office hour times and you would like to schedule an appointment with Dr. Doherty, feel free to call the Reading Public Schools Administration Offices at 781-944-5800 or contact Linda Engelson at linda.engelson@reading.k12.ma.us.

Contact Us

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

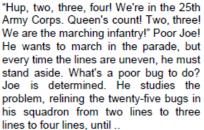
Reading Public Schools Book of the Month

Reading Public Schools Book of the Month

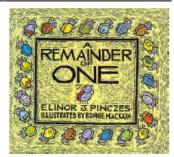
A Remainder of One

by Elinor J. Pinczes

Book of the Month is a showcase of quality literature that integrates themes of Science. Mathematics, Technology, Engineering, History, Art, and more into an engaging and interesting text with rich reading and writing opportunities. Reading Public Schools Curriculum Coordinators, Heather Leonard (STEM) and Allison Straker (Humanities), curate these titles and resources.



Source: https://www.goodreade.com/





Reading Public Schools

Heather Leonard, STEM Curriculum Coordinator 781-670-2256 Heather leonard@reading k12.ma.us Twitter: @STEMReading

Allison Straker, Humanities Curriculum Coordinator 781-670-2256 Allson.straker@reading.k12.ma.us Twitter: @strakerREADS After reading, consider these discussion starters or activities:

- Which page was your favorite and why?
- They made 5 bug lines. Can they make any other amount of bug lines with 25 without a remainder of one? What if the number of bugs was 26? What about 50 bugs?
- . Can you think of any numbers that will always have a remainder?
- How do you think Joe was feeling during the book? What makes you think that?
- · Can you think of any other characters who persevered like Joe?

Consider using this book as a chance to introduce some rich vocabulary terms:

remainder division infantry regal

RECOMMENDED

If you enjoyed this book, check out some of these titles:

- ★ One Hundred Hungry Ants by Elinor J. Pinczes
- * My Full Moon Is Square by Elinor J. Pinczes
- ★ Pattern Bugs by Trudy Harris
- * Balancing Act by Ellen Stoll Walsh

Reading Education Foundation Festival of Trees on December 7 and 8

Don't miss the Reading Education Foundation's (REF) 18th annual Festival of Trees, Saturday and Sunday, December 7 and 8, at the Parker Middle School in Reading. This signature fundraising event is a magical and memorable community holiday tradition for adults and children of all ages. Proceeds from this event go towards teacher grants in Reading public schools. Visit www.readingef.org to order raffle tickets in advance, to donate a tree, and to learn more! The performance schedule is below.



Festival of Trees SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SATURDAY 12/7

- 11:-00 Reading Community Concert Band PARKER AUDITORIUM
- 1:00 Ben Mini & Julia Mullen CAFÉ
- 2:00 Parker Middle School Performances
 PARKER AUDITORIUM
- 3:00 RMHS Select Chorus CAFÉ
- 3:30 RMHS Jazz Band PARKER AUDITORIUM
- 4:00 RMHS Small Ensembles PARKER AUDITORIUM
- 4:30 Taylor Hilliard CAFÉ

EVENING ACTIVITIES

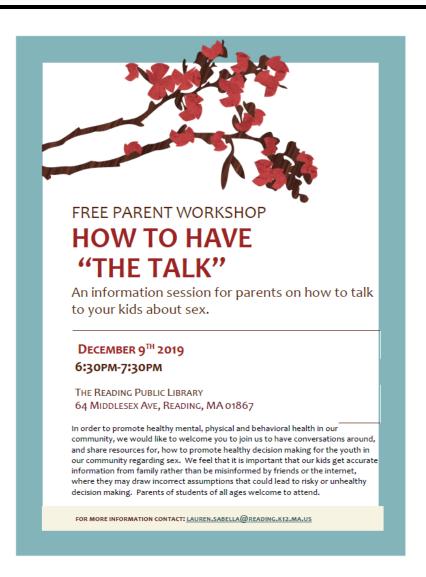
- 5:00 Make a Snowman Game PARKER AUDITORIUM
- 5:45 Stacking Game PARKER AUDITORIUM
- 6:30 Sing-a-long CAFÉ
- 7:00 Story Time: Polar Express CAFÉ

SUNDAY 12/8

- 10:30 Coolidge Middle School Wind Chimes & Small Ensembles CAFÉ
- 11:00 CBTween/Ben Mini & Cate Mangione PARKER AUDITORIUM
- 12:00 RMHS Color Guard
- 12:30 RMHS Jazz Band CAFÉ
- 1:30 Caleb Cascio CAFÉ
- 2:30 Claire Benjamin CAFÉ
- 4:00 Holiday Tree Raffle Closes
- 4:30 Holiday Tree raffle drawings

Plus cookie decorating, a scavenger hunt and more...





Reading Public School Happenings

RMHS High Five For This Week

Below is this week's RMHS High Five.

Sean Melanson, Class of 2020

- Favorite Book: The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald & The Shawshank Redemption by Stephen King
- Favorite Quote: "Winners never quit, and quitters never win"- Vince Lombardi
- Favorite Subjects: Honors Film and Literature and WWII
- Activities/Clubs/Sports/Employment: Cross Country (captain) Indoor Track & Field, AWOD, Rocket Ambassador
- Plans for after RMHS: Sean plans to pursue a Master of Business degree.



Coolidge Band and Chorus Concert

This past week, Coolidge held its annual winter holiday band and chorus concert. Below are some pictures from the event. A special thanks goes out to the music teachers and the students for an amazing job.







Parker Students Hear About Social Media from RMHS Students

Recently, students from RMHS came to Parker to discuss the pros and cons of social media use among middle school students. The presentation was very well received by the Parker student body.



Stepping Stones...

- Congratulations to Wood End teacher Jackie Pelusi on the birth of her son Anthony Ralph IV on November 23rd weighing 8 lbs.
- Our thoughts and prayers go out to RMHS custodian Jim Morley who lost a loved on recently.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
 - ✓ Kristen Charest, Nurse Substitute, District
 - ✓ Laurie Ward, Substitute, District
 - ✓ Gail Horn, Home/Hospital Tutor, District
 - ✓ Ann Glynn, Regular Education Paraeducator, Joshua Eaton
 - ✓ Todd Sundstrom, Boys Basketball Coach, RMHS
 - ✓ Kathryn Mahoney, Girls Basketball Coach, RMHS
 - ✓ Kara Melillo, Girls Basketball Coach, RMHS
 - ✓ Kristie Middleton, Food Service, RMHS
- 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 Long-term Substitute Grade 5 Teacher, Killam Elementary School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=864

Home Service Educator (Repost)

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=865

1.0 FTE Long Term Substitute Special Education Teacher, Birch Meadow Elementary School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=866

Long Term Substitute Special Education Program Paraeducator, 61.5 hours biweekly, Reading Memorial High School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=867

0.6 FTE Long Term Substitute French Teacher, Reading Memorial High School

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=869

Payroll and Personnel Assistant

https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=868

Please see the links below for new Town job postings:

https://www.readingma.gov/sites/readingma/files/uploads/2019_dpw _nov._laborer-highway.pdf

https://www.readingma.gov/sites/readingma/files/uploads/2019_sr._a dmin_assistant_-_hr-benefits.pdf

Blazing Trails...

"Grades Versus Comments: Research on Student Feedback." Are comments on student work superior to grades? It depends. In this Phi Delta Kappan article, Tom Guskey explains the argument. "Across the decades, battles have raged over whether teachers should put grades, comments, or both on assessments of student learning. Opinions on this issue vary widely among teachers, school leaders, and even grading and assessment consultants. Some are adamant that assessments, especially formative ones, must never be graded and should include comments only. Others point out that, in some schools, the results of formative assessments are included as part of the reporting process, and thus grades are needed." Read More

"Massachusetts Teens Push for Ban of Flavored E-Cigarettes, Tobacco Products." A group of teenagers in Boston has lobbied for the ban of flavored tobacco and e-cigarette products, supporting a bill that has passed the Massachusetts House of Representatives. "While everybody was out in the hallway, all aspects of the industry pointing fingers at each other and blaming each other, these kids were fighting for their generation," said state Sen. John Keenan, sponsor of the legislation awaiting Senate approval. Read More

"A Man's Journey From Cleaning Schools to Teaching in Them." Kevin Knibbs decided he wanted to become a teacher after working nearly a decade as a school custodian. In this EdWeek article, he made his way from custodian to aide to teacher. Read More

"Are American Kids Happy in School? New Data Tells a Surprising Story." Do kids like school? The only way to know is to ask them, and that's the aim of surveys conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, NAEP, a test known as "the nation's report card" because it is seen as the most consistent nationally representative measure of U.S. student achievement since the 1990s. Along with actual exam questions, surveys are attached to assess student attitudes about different parts of their educational experience. On the reading test, for example, kids might be asked how often they read for fun. In this Washington Post article, Indiana University mathematics education professor Sarah Lubienski looks at some of the data from the recently released 2017 test results about how happy students are at school. Some of the results may surprise you. Read More

"UN Turns to Higher Ed with Global Qualifications." The UN has begun focusing on higher education as a part of its 2030 goal of "equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university." UNESCO hopes the plan will provide a guide to inspire governments and institutions with a global system of qualification recognition. Read More

Have a Great Week!