



# Pathways

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

January 27, 2018

Volume 6, Number 19

## Upcoming Dates

- January 28 - Second Semester Begins; (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in RMHS Library - FY2020 Budget Vote
- January 31 - (6:30 p.m.) RMHS Guidance Sophomore Parent Night in the Endslo PAC
- February 7 - (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the RMHS Library
- February 8 - (6:00 p.m.) Joshua Eaton Spelling Bee; (7:30 p.m.) RMHS Drama Production - Selfie in the Endslo PAC
- February 9 - (7:30 p.m.) RMHS Drama Production - Selfie in the Endslo PAC
- February 12 - (6:30 p.m.) RMHS Future Freshman Night in the Endslo PAC
- February 13 - Grade 6 - 12 Early Release

## School Committee To Vote on FY20 Budget on Monday

This Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, the Reading School Committee is planning on voting on the FY20 Superintendent's Recommended Budget. A complete overview of the budget and its details can be found at the following link on the RPS Website.

<https://www.reading.k12.ma.us/test/budget-information/fy20-budget-information/>

The meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the RMHS Library.

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## RMHS Art Students Participate in the Memory Project

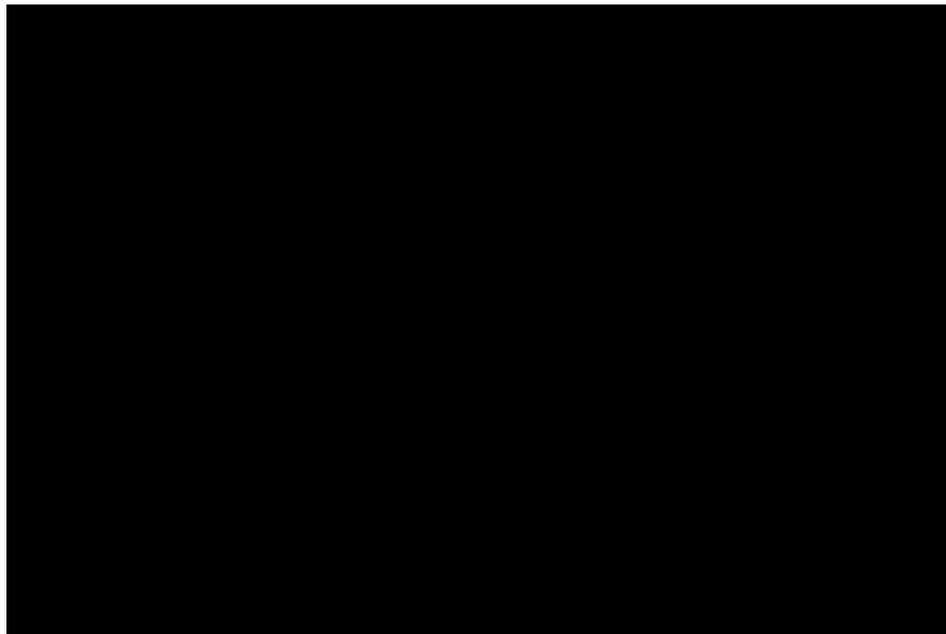
AP Art Students and Art Club students in RMHS Art Teacher Sue Gilbert's classes have been working on the Annual Memory Project, a non-profit organization. The project involves art teachers, artists and students in creating portraits for refugee children throughout the world. This semester the art club and AP art students worked with refugee children from Rohingya, Myanmar.

The Rohingya ethnic minority has been called the "most unwanted" group of people on Earth. You may have seen them in the news last year when they fled genocide in Myanmar, where the military was murdering them and burning their villages to the ground. Now they live in the world's largest refugee settlement in Bangladesh, where they are slowly learning to smile again. Nearly a million fled genocide in Myanmar last year and are currently sheltering in a huge refugee settlement in Bangladesh. Most of these families have little more than a few cooking pans and a handful of clothes. For these children, who have rarely seen photos of themselves, the portraits will be gifts they could never have previously imagined.

Below is a video that describes the project and a picture of RMHS students who are working on the project.

## Kudos and Accolades

- Kudos to the swim, gymnastics, girls & boys hockey & girls basketball teams for posting a win recently.
- Congratulations to girls hockey player Kat Paradis and boys hockey player Michael Tobin who both recorded their 100<sup>th</sup> career points.



<https://vimeo.com/260280717>



RMHS Art Students Working on Memory Project

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## Killam Teacher to Run for Dana Farber in Boston Marathon

Dear Families, Friends, and Colleagues,

I hope everyone had a wonderful Holiday season! As we embark on 2019, I am asking for your gracious support as I prepare for my second Boston Marathon. Given all the incredible generosity from so many of you during last year's fundraising, I decided that one year wasn't enough! Most importantly, I have the great fortune of once again running in honor of my former student, Kyle Koster.

## Superintendent's Office

### Hours this Week

*All are welcome*

- 1/28 Joshua Eaton  
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- 1/30 Birch Meadow  
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.
- 2/05 Barrows  
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- 2/06 Superintendent's  
Office  
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

I joined the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge team in 2017 in honor of Kyle, who at the young age of 8 was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL). Kyle spent much of the 2016-2017 school year receiving home tutoring (with me as his tutor of course!) as he underwent treatment. This was truly a blessing for me to spend the time I got to with Kyle and witness his development first hand. A rare opportunity that most people do not get to experience. Fortunately, Kyle's body responded well to treatment and by the 2017-2018 school year he was cancer free and in the maintenance stage of treatment!

As I reflect on the past year, 2018 was very exciting for team #kylestrong! Collectively, we raised \$17,219.40, as part of the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge Team, to benefit the Claudia Adams Barr Program for innovative cancer research. I am also grateful to share that after two years, Kyle has officially finished treatment and continues to be cancer free!

Looking forward to 2019, new sets of challenges lay ahead for Kyle as he is working hard to begin participating in sports again! The road is long, but he is one tough kid. I am hopeful and excited to see what opportunities and blessings the new year has to offer Kyle and team #kylestrong. The work we do now is to make sure that no other little boy or little girl is sidelined from the essence of being a kid. Please consider donating to such a powerful cause.

To make a donation and to learn more about the Claudia Adams Barr Program for Innovative Cancer Research, you can visit my fundraising page:

<http://danafarber.jimmyfund.org/goto/katesplaine>.

Thank you,

Kate Splaine

Killam Teacher

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## The Importance of Self-Care for Administrators

*School leaders benefit from setting up and maintaining a system of support to help them meet the many challenges of the job.*

By **Jessica Cabeen** for **Edutopia**

“The moment you want to retreat is the exact moment you have to reach in.”

As an administrator, I use this mantra when the work feels too difficult or the feedback seems too tough, to remind myself that the challenge is also a moment of opportunity. For some school leaders, it is counterintuitive to think that they might need to ask for help. But in order to thrive, it's vital that school leaders reach out and create pathways for support. How do they seek support?

## **FIND CONNECTION**

Who are your supporters? Who can you trust to discuss challenges and solicit advice? Cultivating these relationships is important for any school leader. Online collaboration may be useful, and finding the right platform is critical. Voxer, a walkie-talkie app, allows me to ask questions of other educators and respond to their inquiries. I use Twitter and Facebook groups to find other leaders who are experiencing challenges similar to mine.

Don't forget about opportunities for support in real life. Connecting with colleagues in your district or surrounding communities offers you an opportunity to discuss your situations and scenarios with someone who understands your context. About three years ago, I was struggling to figure out how to get it all done at school and at home. I contacted two other principals within my district whom I had admired throughout my career, to find out how they balanced school leadership and parenting. What started as a dinner to help me with immediate problems became a monthly event where we share our experiences.

## **READ TO LEARN**

Reading up on best practices and tips from others can help administrators gain perspective.

Making a commitment to a regular practice of reading gives a fresh viewpoint on ways to make your school better.

Share your resources with your staff. In the weekly newsletter I send to my staff, I include a quote from what I'm reading. This has opened a door for staff to have conversations about what I posted or offer other reading suggestions of their own.

Share with your students. Each week I post a #BookSnap—a short quote or image from a book that is usually shared on Twitter or Snapchat—outside my office. It's exciting to see students' reactions—to my social media skills as well as to the book.

## **BUILD ROUTINES**

Work stress often means stress outside of work as well. Recalibrating throughout the year is critical to stay focused and connected.

When was the last time you exercised? Read a book for fun? Went to the movies? Spent time with a friend? If the answers are distant memories, you may be in need of a self-care tune-up.

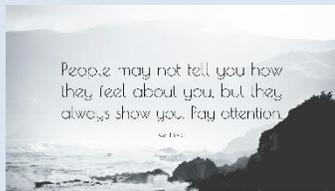
Build time in your calendar to commit to your passions. Attendance at school events, field trips, and board meetings may pull us out of balance, so it's important to be intentional about our routines. Make time for exercise and family interactions. Good health is essential to the ability to do our job and must be a priority.

## **REFLECT AND REFRAME**

In those dark moments of doubt where you question your choice to become a school leader, step outside of your circumstances to see the bigger picture. Reframing a challenge is a useful way to gain perspective.

Each morning, I use daily journaling. On one side of a page, I write, "Grateful For," and list my items of gratitude. On the other side I write, "Looking Forward To," and reframe items I might otherwise avoid. For example, instead of writing, "yet another parent conference," I write, "looking forward to creating a stronger connection with a parent through

## Quote of the Week . . .



“People may not always tell you how they feel about you, but they will always show you.”

-Keri Hilson

relationship-building at parent conference.” This daily reflection takes two to three minutes to complete and creates a sense of purpose for the day and gratitude for what can be accomplished.

### **BE MINDFUL**

As the adage goes, “Be mindful, even when your mind is full.” Incorporate simple mindful strategies into your day for shelter from the day-to-day stress.

Take a breath. The next time a stress-inducing email shows up in your inbox, take a physical inventory. Are your teeth clenched? Did you hold your breath? Are your shoulders tight? Making sure our physical response to stress doesn’t impact our emotional response to a situation is critical.

If you’ve been in a meeting or working on a project for some time, take a moment to stand up, take a deep breath, and stretch. Adding a quick walk for fresh air gives you new ideas for the challenges ahead.

At the moment we feel most challenged as administrators, it’s important to pause and remember the value of caring for ourselves as well as our students, staff, and schools.

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## Relicensure Information from DESE

TO: Educators with Professional Licenses  
FROM: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
RE: Information on License Renewal

Many educators throughout the Commonwealth hold Professional Level licenses that are due to be renewed in June 2019.

Please be advised that requirements for renewal of license changed in 2017. The basic requirements for licensure renewal are as follows:

A total of 150 PDPs are required for renewal of a primary license.

- At least 15 PDPs must be in the content of your area of licensure
- At least 15 PDPs must be in pedagogy (professional skills and knowledge)
- At least 15 PDPs must be related to Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)
- At least 15 PDPs related to training in strategies for effective schooling for students with disabilities and the instruction of students with diverse learning styles
- The remaining 90 PDPs is left to the discretion of the educator and school district.  
80% of these must align with school, district or individual educator plan goals.

In order to renew you must obtain the signature and approval of your Supervisor. Please note that you may renew online through ELAR. The cost of renewing a primary license is \$100.

## Disney Quote of the Week



Additional licenses may be renewed. Each additional license requires a total of 30 PDPs (15 must be in content)

Once you apply online for renewal, approval should be immediately forthcoming. You have the option of applying in writing; however, approval of written applications is a slower process

**Please note that even though your license is renewed you are subject to being audited for 5 years.** Therefore, it is important that you keep a record of your PDPs as well as copy of you Supervisor's signature on either your IPDP or Educator Plan as these materials will be required for review by DESE if you are audited.

The following links provide some additional resources related to the renewal process:

- License Renewal Guidelines: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/licensure/academic-prek12/guidelines-recert-ma-educators.pdf>
- Guidelines for Reviewing, Approving and Endorsing Individual Professional Development Plans: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/01guideline/default.html>
- Renewal Regulations: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr44.html>



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

We are pleased to host this free workshop to parents and caregivers. Please click on this [link](#) to sign up for this workshop.

Join us, February 4<sup>th</sup> from 7:00-8:30

### Talking to our Kids About Inclusion

A Workshop with Theresa Wiggins of Village Parenting

Wondering what you can do in response to the vandalism happening in our community? This workshop will explore having conversations with our children about inclusion. Come find out why having these conversations is important and leave with some practical ideas of how you can do it. Whether you are new to this topic or have made this a practice for a while, there is something for everyone.



As the founder of Village Parenting, Theresa Wiggins is a parent educator and mindfulness teacher. She believes that the best way to raise our youth is to do it together. Theresa and her husband are raising three kids and live here in Reading.



## 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>

## Reading Public School Happenings

### RMHS High Five For This Week

Below are the RMHS High Fives for this week.

#### **John Hardy, Class of 2019**



John Hardy was recognized at the end of his junior year as the winner of the Responsibility Award for his class. And, it is his sense of responsibility that characterizes his work in the classroom, in student government, and in the community. John is a high-achieving student who cites Honors Accounting with Ms. Lynch and Honors Psychology with Ms. Fedele as his current favorite classes. John is a member of Class Office for the third year, this year serving as one of the Social Chairs for the Class of 2019. Class advisers who have worked with John over the years, recognize him as a dependable presence who works consistently and without fanfare for the good of his class. John's involvement in school doesn't end with Class Office. He is the President of the Spanish Club, and a current member of the National Honor Society. He was also a Leo Club member for two years. John takes on substantial responsibility in his after-school hours. He has earned the spot of Checkout Assistant Manager at Market Basket, where he works up to 25 hours a week during the school year. During the last two summers John has served as a volunteer at Mass General Hospital, where he has spent time assisting in the cancer ward and serving as a patient escort. We wish John the very best as he pursues his plan to attend college and study business.

#### **Martin Luther King Day Celebration**

Last Monday, the Reading Human Relations Advisory Committee presented the Annual Martin Luther King Day Celebration in the RMHS Endslow Performing Arts Center. The event, titled, *Raising Voices to Silence Hate*, featured the Friends of Reading METCO Chorus, led by METCO Director Jason Cross, the Reading Community Concert Band, student remarks, and the RMHS Singers. Below are some pictures of the event.

## 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)



*METCO Chorus*



*RMHS Singers*

## Coolidge Geography Bee

Last week, Coolidge Middle School held its annual Geography Bee sponsored by the National Geographic Society. Ten finalists from Grades 7 and 8 participated in the final round. Congratulations to 8th grader Mikayla Gigliotti who won the bee in an exciting sudden death elimination round that took 12 questions. Mikayla will now take a test to see if she will qualify for the state finals in April. Also, special thanks to Coolidge teachers Mary Ann Cuscuna, Ann Jacobsmeier, Mike Maday and Mike Bernard for coordinating the event. Below are some pictures of the event.



First Place winner Mikayla Gigliotti and Second Place Winner Christian Alfieri with Superintendent of Schools John Doherty

### **Coolidge Presents “Freaky Friday”**

During Martin Luther King Weekend, Coolidge students performed the musical, *Freaky Friday*. The students did an amazing job! Below is a picture of the cast from the show.



### **Middle School Staff and Students Hear Presentation on Anxiety**

Lynn Lyons worked with Parker and Coolidge staff and students this week on managing anxiety. She is a licensed social worker and NH psychotherapist who works with children and their families as well as runs workshops for teachers and other therapists internationally. She co-authored the book *Anxious Kids, Anxious Parents* which is an excellent resource for families. The presentations were funded out of the School Climate Transformation Grant. Below are some pictures of the event.



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## Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts go out to RMHS teacher **Amy Dymont** who lost a loved one recently.
- Our thoughts go out to Joshua Eaton Paraeducator **Peg McDermott** who lost a family member recently.
- Our thoughts go out to RMHS Paraeducator **Vanessa Fisher** who lost a family member recently.
- Our thoughts go out to Computer Technician **Scott Mullen** who lost a family member recently.
- Congratulations to Birch Meadow School Psychologist **Anna Jervinis** on the birth of her daughter Sophia Katina on January 10th weighing 6 lbs., 14 oz. and 19 inches long.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:

✓ Michelle Bortone, Regular Education Tutor, Joshua Eaton

- **We have posted** a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

RCASA Outreach Coordinator
<a href="https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=663">https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=663</a>
<b>Town Job Postings</b>
Administrative Assistant – Public Works Dispatch
<a href="https://www.readingma.gov/sites/readingma/files/uploads/2019_aa_pw_dispatch.pdf">https://www.readingma.gov/sites/readingma/files/uploads/2019_aa_pw_dispatch.pdf</a>

#### **Town Job Postings**

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## Blazing Trails...

**"Education Week's 10 Big Ideas of 2019: The 10 Education Issues Everybody Should Be Talking About."** What issues have the potential to define-or redefine-education? Is there a next "big thing" that could shift the K-12 experience or conversation? These were the questions Education Week set out to answer in this second annual "10 Big Ideas in Education" report. Accompanied by compelling illustrations and perspectives from leading researchers, advocates, and practitioners, the essays in this report might make you uncomfortable, or seem improbable. What do these ideas have in common? They share a sense of urgency. [Read More](#)

**"Why Competency-Based Education Is Exciting and Where It May Stumble."** A push by some states to shift to competency-based education is raising questions about how teachers can effectively manage classrooms where students are at different stages of learning. Ethan Hutt, assistant professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership at the University of Maryland, says the model presents some risks, including the potential to rely too heavily on standardized tests. [Read More](#)

**"Massachusetts School Set to Enroll International Students."** Mount Everett Regional School in Massachusetts already has global education programs in place is preparing to launch an initiative that would allow international students to pay tuition to attend the school. The goal is to start with about six students and double that number over several years. [Read More](#)

**"The Arts and Creativity in Schools."** The arts-and creativity more generally-are making a comeback in education. The December 2018/January 2019 issue of ASCD's Educational Leadership (EL) magazine examines the role of arts and creativity in fostering perception and problem solving, empowering students, and boosting learning. [Read More](#)

**"Lessons From 10 Schools Worldwide That Dramatically Improved."** Author and educator Dave Faulkner shares lessons learned from 10 schools worldwide that have made impressive gains in student achievement. Faulkner outlines the keys to successful turnarounds, including passion and the humility to listen and focus. [Read More](#)

**Have a Great Week!**