

DECEMBER 2019

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THE DISTRICT NEWSLETTER FOR REETHS-PUFFER SCHOOLS



ROCKET CITY NEWS

Our Kids Are Watching

“Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.”

Benjamin Franklin



The “silly season” is almost upon us. No... not the Holiday season; election season. A process that helps make us the best country in the world; and a process that can also bring out the worst, and most divisive aspects of our communities and society.

Unfortunately, in many ways, the divisive path of politics and how we interact has found its way into everyday relations. This divisiveness can cause a conundrum for some. It causes us to get stuck sometimes; do I say something, or not? How do I say it? Do I have all the facts? Will I make the situation better? Does anyone

care? Should I care? Is it worth it? Would I be proud of my choices and words if they were plastered on a billboard?

Perhaps the last paragraph should have said “As a society, we used to get appropriately stuck sometimes.” We used to filter our thoughts, actions, and words. However, in an atmosphere of increased fear, decreased trust, 24-hour news and social media, and the perceived right to say anything to anyone without self-censor, it is little surprise that people wonder where all the civility has gone.

To reach our potential as a school, community, state, and country, there must be room for continuous improvement by seeking perspective, being positive, discussing reasonably, working together, and focusing on solutions. The consequences of moving away from a civil and considerate society are most profoundly impacting our youth. We tell our kids to “Be NICE,” and as adults, we often model anything but politeness, decorum, and respect. Margaret Wheatley once said “You can’t hate someone whose

story you know.” Knowing someone’s story takes time. Do we have the time? Do we make the time? Can we afford not to make the time? When people use the word “bullying,” it is almost always used in the context of students and school. Our kids are watching us, the adults. What is our responsibility to model and demonstrate kindness, compassion and empathy? It is so easy to be nasty and cruel sitting at a keyboard, never seeing what impact the nastiness and vulgarity might be having on the recipients of such an approach. If you don’t believe me, just take a look through MLive comments on controversial topics or Facebook posts. It was said decades ago that “small minds discuss people; average minds discuss events; great minds discuss ideas.” “Discuss” implies two way communication. I get it; we’re humans. As humans we have a voice and we get to have an opinion. And... so does the other person. If I have to win, does that mean the other person has to lose? Is there a chance that, in most ways, we are closer to being on the same page than we realize? If so, why all the negativity? Why all the vitriol? Why all the hate?

I read the news, watch the news, and interpret the news. I’m sure you do as well. While we might not be able to make “Washington” or “Lansing” always “civil,” let’s focus on making our own little corner of the world, Rocket City, a civil, thoughtful, compassionate, empathetic corner where OUR kids learn from people who model common understanding and thoughtful consideration of others.

Yours in education,

Steven L. Edwards

Steve Edwards
Superintendent of Schools

REETHS-PUFFER SCHOOLS 2019-2020 SCHOOL CALENDAR

| | |
|-------------|--|
| December 6 | K-4 AM Only K-4 Records Day PM End of 1st Tri-Reporting |
| December 11 | K-4 Conferences (School is in Session) 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. |
| December 12 | K-4 AM Only K-4 Conferences, 12:45 to 3:45 and 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. |
| December 20 | K-12 AM Only |
| December 23 | K-12 No School – Christmas Recess Begins |
| January 6 | School Resumes |
| January 17 | 5-12 AM Only 5-12 Records Day PM End of 2nd Marking Period |
| January 20 | K-12 AM Only - Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Afternoon PD for Staff |
| February 13 | K-12 AM Only |
| February 14 | K-12 No School – Mid-Winter Break |
| February 17 | K-12 No School – Mid-Winter Break |
| March 6 | K-4 AM Only K-4 Records Day PM End of 2nd Tri-Reporting |
| March 11 | K-4 Conferences, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. (School is in Session) |
| March 12 | K-4 AM Only K-4 Conferences, 12:45 to 3:45 and 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. |
| March 20 | K-12 AM Only – Afternoon PD for staff |
| March 27 | 5-12 AM Only 5-12 Records Day PM End of 3rd Marking Period |
| March 31 | 5-12 Conferences (School is in Session) Grades 5-6 – 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Grades 7-8 – 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Grades 9-12 – 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. |
| April 1 | 5-8 Conferences (School is in Session) Grades 5-6 – 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Grades 7-8 – 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. |
| April 2 | K-12 AM Only |
| April 3 | K-12 No School |
| April 6-10 | K-12 No School – Spring Break |
| April 13 | School Resumes |
| May 22 | K-12 AM Only |
| May 25 | K-12 No School – Memorial Day |
| June 9 | K-12 AM Only K-12 Records Day PM |
| June 10 | K-12 AM Only K-12 Records Day PM Last day of School for all students |



Reeths-Puffer Bond Refunding

On October 21, 2019, the Board of Education of Reeths-Puffer approved the Refunding of Bonds in the amount of \$21,215,000. This will save taxpayers an estimated \$2,500,000!

The District has worked hard since the closure of the Consumers Energy B.C. Cobb plant to refund qualified existing debt whenever possible to bring down the mills assessed to the taxpayers. Steve Edwards, Rob Renes and Tracey French worked closely with Stifel, PFM Financial Advisors and Thrun Law Firm to strategically find the best time and rate to maximize the savings.

Reeths-Puffer's 2019 Refunding Bonds were sold at a federally taxable interest rate of 2.54% with a final maturity of 2029 (a repayment term of approximately 10 years). We will ensure as always, that the District is a great steward of taxpayer's money as we continue to look for ways to invest in our facilities.

ROCKET CITY NEWS

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Parents of Reeths-Puffer school children are hereby notified that the school often publishes for public view the names and/or pictures of Reeths-Puffer students. The purpose varies and may involve honor rolls, attendance lists, special awards, athletic rosters, etc. If, for any reason, you do not wish your child's name or picture to be published, please contact your school office immediately. This notice is in compliance with the Rights and Privacy Act, P. L. 93.380.

Kindergarteners Take Pride in their Playground

Pride beamed from the faces of many Central Kindergarten students. On a Thursday in September, teachers, some students, and their families met on the playground with one goal in mind: to make it a better place!

The cleanup lasted one hour and the results were incredible! It's truly amazing how much can happen in such a short time. The transformation has not stopped there. The Kindergarten playground now boasts a compost station for all of their lunch and snack waste and will soon feature a recycled music/water wall.

A sensory garden will be added this spring.





R-P Students Welcome Marty

Mrs. Sandee's multiage classroom was chosen to pilot a programmable robot for a company called Robotical out of Scotland. First and second grade students write computer codes using SCRATCH to tell "Marty" what to do. During math class for example, students were tasked with getting Marty to kick a ball 30 inches. Students love making Marty dance and shuffle. He provides a great early experience with computer coding and robotics.

Marty is now on loan to Mrs. Marks' fourth grade students who are making him an obstacle course. Marty is so lovable that Mrs. Sandee's students decided to keep him permanently. He'll be at Central Elementary now to enhance learning for any class that wishes to put him to work.



Schools Around the World

Second grade students spent the beginning of the year learning about schools around the world. They focused their learning around the question, "What is school and why is school important?" One type of school that students researched were tent schools in Haiti which were created after a powerful earthquake hit Port-au-Prince. As a culminating event to their unit of study, students had the opportunity to visit with a family from Haiti. The Petit family spoke to Central Elementary second graders to share what life is like in Haiti and to give students a better understanding of what school is like in Port-au-Prince. This gave students a real life connection to their weeks of learning.

Students completed the unit by comparing and contrasting Central Elementary to the schools in Haiti.



Twin Lake Students Practice Mindfulness and Movement

Students at Twin Lake Elementary are not new to the practice of mindfulness. They have been practicing for years through the guidance of their classroom teacher, Mrs. Symons, and Mrs. Fowler. Developmental Kindergarten through fourth grade students have been trained to understand the parts of their brain, how to identify their emotions/needs, and how to use tools such as breathing and movement to regulate those emotions. This year, they are excited to have new tools throughout the building to support their social and emotional needs!

The “Mindfulness and Movement Room,” formally known as the Motor Room, went through a revamp last summer to better meet the needs of learners. In the past, the Motor Room focused on giving students an extra opportunity to work on large motor skills, fine motor skills, and to burn off some energy. Teachers noticed, although the kids needed the movement, they were having a hard time calming down after visiting the Motor Room. This led Mrs. Fowler, occupational therapist and mindfulness guru at Reeths-Puffer, and Mrs. Symons, mindfulness guru and speech therapist at Twin Lake Elementary, to redesign what is now the “Mindfulness and Movement Room.”

In addition to the “Mindfulness and Movement Room,” Twin Lake students, parents, and teachers worked together to raise money through a hat day and pajama day to purchase “Classroom Calming Kits.” Each classroom is now equipped with a kit that students can use for regulating their bodies.

In the classroom calm down area, students are able to pick a tool they feel would best help to regulate their minds and bodies. The tools include a sequin pet, an oil jar, a breathing ball, an I-spy book, noise canceling headphones, coloring materials, and thinking putty. This kit is a wonderful tool for students to use if they are feeling sad because they miss someone, feeling angry because something didn't go the way they planned, feeling frustrated over a difficult math assignment, or any other time they just need a minute to calm their body. Teachers and students at R-P truly understand the importance of social-emotional education, and we are excited to see our kids continue to grow in this area, as well as academically.



Kindergarteners from Mrs. Greene's class take a trip to the Mindfulness and Movement Room every Friday to practice belly breathing, feather breaths, pinwheel breaths, and yoga to regulate their bodies. This is just one of the many ways they practice mindfulness throughout the week!



The new room has intertwined mindfulness and movement, allowing students to participate in the movement they need while also giving them the tools to identify their needs and regulate their bodies. If you were to walk into the “Mindfulness and Movement Room,” you would notice slides, trampolines, and balancing equipment as well as yoga posters, breathing posters, glitter boards, and mindfulness jars. Next to each station, students can find a poster explaining the directions for the station and ways to increase or decrease their energy.





Physical Education is in full swing!

Twin Lake students in first through fourth grades have been putting lots of time and effort into developing their skills in the sport of soccer, volleyball, and basketball. With the instruction from their teacher Joel Olsen, students have learned how to trap a soccer ball, bump a volleyball, and dribble a basketball with proper form. Not only have students developed their sport skills, but they have also been working on improving their locomotor skills such as skipping and galloping. This is a daily routine for students as they continue to work on improving their overall physical coordination and fitness.



FAMILY READING EVENT

On Friday, October 11, Twin Lake Elementary hosted a Family Reading Event where parents were invited in to classrooms for an up-close and personal, first-hand experience with their children and their teachers. Each grade level teacher presented a lesson offering strategies for reading aloud with children. Our guests got to hear both a fiction, as well as a non-fiction presentation and families received book marks that listed the strategies that were presented.



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Twin Lake Walk-a-Thon

Cold weather and rain couldn't keep this community away from Twin Lake's Third Annual Walk-a-Thon! So many R-P TLE families showed up - they are tough! The rain let up as soon as the walk began and held off until everyone started to leave. Volunteers offered snacks and water along the way. Many in the community opened their doors to run out and toss a donation in the bucket. We're so thankful for their generosity and sense of community! Even Rowdy the Rocket showed up - Go Rockets!

The celebration continued with hot dogs, silly-stringing the principal, and pontoon boat rides. Twin Lake teachers even jumped off the pontoon boat. It was a bit chilly but the perfect way to end the afternoon. Thank you to R-P Twin Lake families and friends for raising over \$8,000 and helping us purchase a hoop house for our school. Thank you for being such a caring and supportive community!



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Hoop House Goes Up at TL Elementary

On Saturday, October 19th, community members came together to install a Hoop House at R-P Twin Lake Elementary. Funding for the Hoop House came from the Twin Lake Walk- A-Thon, which was hosted by the Twin Lake PTO. It was a great day of collaboration between students, teachers, and families. Students were able to get hands on with the building aspect of the project by piecing together the frame, screwing support brackets, and attaching the plastic covering to the frame. The Hoop House will be a great asset to Twin Lake Elementary pertaining to the new ELA/Science curriculum. Teachers will be able to utilize the gardening area for many project based learning opportunities.



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Curriculum Corner



Nate Smith
Director of Instruction
and Learning

Culture for Reading... “What if...?”

As we go through our year of learning, there will be moments that challenge us and make us think differently.

Just this week I had a person say to me, “We can land a person on the moon and we can find vaccinations to get rid of Measles. How can we get every student to

be curious and desire to be a lifelong reader?” At first, I started to think about the obvious answers, such as we can expect kids to read more at home and support them with skills to help them read. Next, I started to think about factors that impact learning, such as having basic needs, like hunger, safety, sleep, a sense of belonging or even technology use met. Finally, I came to another thought that could help with this question, “What if...?” our students practiced reading in a way that is connected to their world. “What if...?” they say, “I don’t like to read,” and have

to read anyway but through online articles, driven by things they are interested in as a person or if they read with someone and have a conversation around the topic. “What if.. .?” a student can show they are able to read and understand when the topic is relevant to their interests. As I started to think the “What if...?” thoughts, I realized we can do this as a community.

When you think about literacy in Rocket City and the graduates of R-P desiring to be lifelong learners, lifelong readers and people who can maximize their potential in the world, think about the individual person. What are their interests? What are they curious about right now? What do they desire to do in this world? If we start with these questions for our students, the reading part seems doable. “What if. . .?”



What are We Doing on Half Day Fridays with No Kids, Besides Missing Them?

During the 2019-20 school year, there are a few half day Fridays. These half days are part of our ongoing professional development with staff at Reeths-Puffer Schools. While we are required to provide professional development, there is a lot of student centered work going on at R-P. These PD sessions are a time to discuss innovation in our classrooms, student needs and ways to support engagement strategies in the classrooms.

This year we are modeling the “Rocket Way” as professional learners. We have created an adult learning environment that starts with work on school culture at the building level. This collaborative time is led by Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) teams at each building and allows the school to look at student needs and areas for improvement. The school staff leave with ideas and plans of action to foster a collaborative Positive School Culture.

After the hour of PBIS with a focus on building culture, staff attend one of 32 small groups, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs),

designed around student needs and areas of improvement we have identified for the 2019-2020 school year. The small groups are designed in the same way classroom small groups are set up. They have facilitators and teachers share their ideas and evidence of learning from their classrooms to foster growth and curiosity District-wide. The team leaves with ideas to try in their own classrooms and then can reflect the impact on students. This process continues, each time the groups meet, to create an adult learning environment that is collaborative, supports best practices in all classrooms, and fosters a culture of creative curriculum.

The following is a small sampling of what our PLCs are focuses on. At the High School level, we have groups implementing a literacy strategy which involves giving students reading choices with daily articles around current events and having daily writing opportunities to craft responses to their reading. This style of teaching allows students to understand their voice in a classroom environment and exposes them to various reading texts around a common interest or event. The strategy also supports forming opinions with facts and resources, as well as exposure to content that may create a curiosity in their life.



We have a group of teachers continuing to implement a Project Based Learning (PBL) model in their classrooms. PBL, as many call it, enables students to learn in ways connected to the world beyond them. It applies their learning to real world problems, allows students to acquire skills with feedback, and participate in projects that involve and impact our community. The goal of this instructional practice is to connect our classroom practices to our community and improve the community in which we live.

We have groups of Kindergarten through fourth grade teachers focusing on early literacy instruction. They are using the Literacy Essential Practices to make sure students are connected to their teacher through small group instruction matched to their learning needs. These teams will continue to foster a literacy rich culture with small group instruction around a Skill Block or All Block classroom structure.

There are two different book studies taking place. One is focusing on developing Resilient Learners and overcoming obstacles in the classroom. The other is focusing on the reason for Mathematics and having a number sense approach to math. Both of these book studies involve application strategies for increased academic risk-taking and engagement in the classroom.

This is a small representation of 32 groups who meet to improve learning environments for our students. As we learn and grow, we will create



environments that allow all of our students to maximize their potential far beyond Reeths-Puffer. We continue to create a culture that uses information to make our learning decisions, foster processes that emphasize creative curriculum, and promote positive approaches to learning.

The Literacy Essentials

At Rocket City, we use research and best practices to guide our instruction in the classroom and to make changes that allow us to maximize our students' potential.



A shift in learning practices, a journey we will continue together as a community school, has been implementing the K-12 Literacy Essential Practices. The Literacy Essential Practices consist of 10 best practices schools can implement to increase their capacity to improve reading. As a District, we have already started to implement a few of the practices in our buildings K-12.

Many of you are aware that our State passed a third grade reading law which requires all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade. This law has challenged

us to develop Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIPs) for any student who is not reading at grade level in grades K-3. The law has also reinforced the urgency we feel to leave readers with a lifelong curiosity that will maximize their potential beyond Rocket City. This practice is just one of many strategic plans to increase effective reading practices for our students. Between the law and the support of Essential Practices, we have a clear mission around literacy here at Rocket City.

Work through the Essential Practices is continuing to create common goals in our buildings with defined support from the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District coaches. This gives us a common language, as a community, to foster a literacy rich culture.

As a community member, you can ask Reeths-Puffer students how they are collaborating around literacy and how reading applies to their lives.

If you are curious and would like more information about the Essential Practices in Literacy please visit the following site. <https://literacyessentials.org/>



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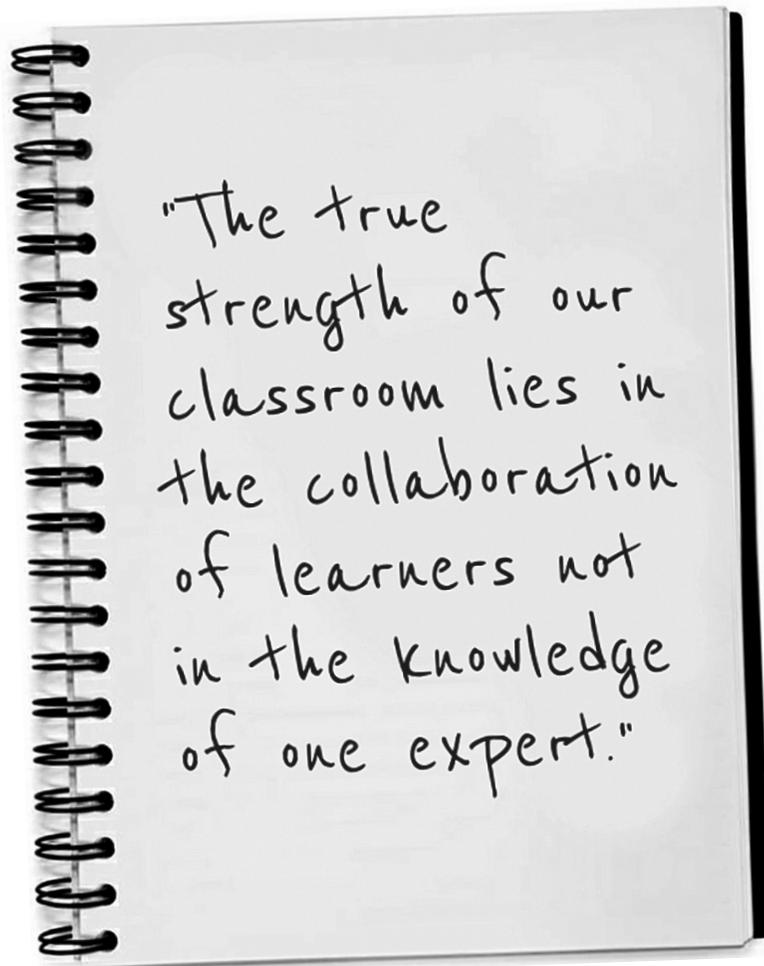
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You Are Your Child's First Teacher



Dear Community,

I recently had the unique opportunity to have all five of my children together in West Michigan; all Reeths-Puffer Rockets, ages 29, 27, 22, 20 and 17. After spending several days with them, discussing health, politics, spirituality, education, money, relationships, and love, I was reminded of the immeasurable role that Reeths-Puffer has played and continues to play in their lives as they develop who they are, what they stand for and how they are going about becoming followers of their own hearts. Spending time with them, all together, gave me the opportunity to reflect on how all our children are influenced by the family, classroom teachers, and the environment.

You are your child's first teacher. In America today, there are over 74 million children under the age of 18, being taught by their families. Whether they are Millennial's (children born between 1980-1994) or Gen Z's (children born between 1995-2019), no matter their social class or the color of their skin, it is commonly understood that children thrive best when surrounded by emotionally intelligent people that make them feel safe, loved, heard and respected. Through genuine eye contact and body language, nurturing responses, affection, deliberate listening, and respectful verbal language, a family's words and actions should reflect their values and provide children with an atmosphere that fosters creative exploration, demonstrates respect for children's thoughts, encourages open communication, and supports loving relationships. Regardless of modern-day challenges, an emotionally supportive family is the most effective tool our society has in terms of developing humans that are confident, empathetic and capable of becoming the best version of themselves.

Secondarily, the classroom teachers are much more than just partners within education. At Reeths-Puffer, and specifically the Pennsylvania Elementary campus, teachers are the guides that lead the children through the journey of learning about themselves and the world they live in. They are the scribes who listen, record and display meaningful experiences. They are advocates for your children and work closely with colleagues and parents to foster an inviting, stimulating, community-based learning environment that promotes communication, collaboration and exploration through play and intentional learning opportunities. They are an extension of your family and are the gentle caretakers of all that matters to you, a job that many Reeths-Puffer teachers take very seriously.

The third teacher, the environment, should give children the opportunity to work with others in the co-construction of knowledge. Learning spaces should reflect the belief that children deserve the very best, and that their aesthetic senses need to be nurtured. The Pennsylvania Elementary campus has recently taken a closer look at their environment and has made changes that reflect a more thoughtfully designed collective learning space that encourages children to talk, question, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, problem-solve, and be mindful. We believe that children thrive in environments that are suited to their interests and developmental stages. Our school is viewed as a place that is welcoming and authentic, nurturing a sense of community. It embraces nature and is filled with purposeful materials that can be used in a variety of ways. Finally, it reflects our values toward children, their learning processes, and the relationships that are vital to them.

On behalf of the children in this community, I propose that we all take a moment to evaluate our family interactions, our teaching practices and our learning environments and ask ourselves, what can we do to further expand the potential of the children we care for?

Most Sincerely,
Jami Young

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RPEL Family Garden

Mrs. Boes' Third grade students took advantage of the beautiful weather to do some fall harvesting! They dug over 200 potatoes! Many students were not aware that potatoes came from the ground. It was neat to see what our planting from community day produced! Everyone went home with a bag of potatoes to share with their family!



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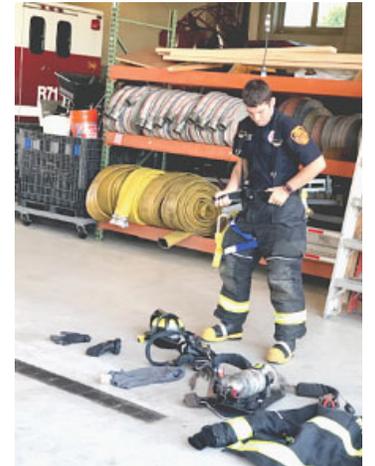
Tools of the Trade



Buon Appetito! RPEL's first graders continued their ELA study of tools with a trip to downtown Muskegon. Shawn and Jeff Church offered to teach students how to make pasta at their restaurant, Nipote's Italian Kitchen. Students learned how to make gnocchi using a variety of cooking tools. After completing the process, they were able to sit and enjoy their delectable creation!

After a short walk away to the Fire Station, the fire crew introduced many tools used by first responders. Students were even able to tour the firehouse and a couple of groups were able to watch as some of the fire fighters were called away to duty.

Back at RPEL, student groups chose something magnificent to create for their classrooms and needed to determine which tools would help them. Group members collaborated, persevered when things became hard, and used initiative to act on what needed to be done. First graders definitely learned how different tools make different tasks easier!



RPEL Harvest Trips

Reeths-Puffer Elementary DK and kindergarten students went to Heritage Farms and Weesies Farms to explore wildlife and agriculture. At Weesies, students learned about “Spookley” and how it is “ok to be different.” Spookley the Square Pumpkin was founded to promote anti-bullying. Students were able to learn about anti-bullying by reading a story, participating in a scavenger hunt, and exploring a pumpkin patch full of unique pumpkins. The Weesies family has been a wonderful community partner for the past eight years and continues to promote kindness in our community. Back at school, students were engaged in many kindness activities throughout the month of October which promote the “Rocket Way.”

At Heritage Farms, Kindergarten students learned how to make apple cider from an apple cider “expert.” They learned where apples come from, went on a hayride to learn about the Bison and other animals that have lived on the farm, completed a corn maze in the shape of Michigan, played checkers on a giant outdoor checkerboard, and slid down a “gopher hole.” Heritage Farms went above and beyond to teach students about the history of the farm and the changes in the land over the years. Staff were very proud of the way students demonstrated the “Rocket Way,” and how well our little rockets behaved on the trip.



WEESIES TRIP



WEESIES TRIP



HERITAGE FARMS



THE LAND AT HERITAGE



THE ANIMALS



THE MICHIGAN CORN MAZE



Greetings RPI Families,

Students and staff at RPI had a wonderful start to the school year! The focus in this edition of the Rocket City News is to celebrate all the accomplishments and unique learning experiences our teachers are working so hard to provide our students. We encourage you to follow our Facebook page as we are posting several times per week to share pictures of lessons and celebrations in “real-time.”

We have received a lot of positive feedback on sharing on Facebook, and how it is helping parents stay connected with what happens at school. Below are some of the highlights of this year so far:

RESPECT. PRIDE. INTEGRITY.

The Rocket Way! - Positive Behavior Initiative

With the help of Reeths-Puffer Intermediate Parent Connect, Mrs. B’s Pancake House, G&L, Rocket Pizza, Yodels, Buffalo Wild Wings, and other community partners, we have been able to really celebrate our students who demonstrate “The Rocket Way!” Students have the opportunity to earn “Rocket Tickets” in the classrooms, hallways, and cafeteria for demonstrating Respect. Pride. Integrity. When students earn these tickets, their names go into a bucket. We then randomly draw for free lunches/snacks donated from our local businesses as a reward for our kids. With the number



of ‘Rocket Tickets’ students have acquired, we have been able to recognize them over 3,000 times already! Other students have been able to earn ‘Rocket Slips’ for going above and beyond expectations by helping out a fellow Rocket! Examples that we have celebrated this year are: turning in a lost cell phone, finding money on the ground and

giving it to the office for someone to claim, helping a fellow Rocket who is new to the District and having a hard time making friends, and more. For them, with the help of Parent Connect, they have been celebrated in their classes by reading the slip, giving them a water bottle or t-shirt, and posting to our social media feeds...this is our ‘Recognize a Rocket Friday!’ If you would like to help build this program, please let Mr. Panozzo or Mrs. Whitaker know. Here are some pictures from our Facebook!

The examples on these two pages are just a snapshot of the amazing work that happens at RPI every day! Thank you for allowing us to have an impact on your sons and daughters! Together, #RPIShines!

With Rocket Pride,
Mr. Scott Panozzo, RPI Principal



The Noah Project



Mrs. Meekhof started “Novels with Noah.” This is a community project where her students read to shelter dogs at Noah Project. Studies have found there are many benefits for children when reading to dogs. It reduces anxiety and improves motivation. This is a great experience and we are fortunate for several more opportunities yet this year! Thank you, Mrs. Meekhof

Project Based Learning



Research shows that today's students learn best when they collaborate with one another and focus their work around solving a problem. Business owners state these skills are among the most important they are seeking in their people. Students say they get more enjoyment and truly understand certain topics better when they get to be experts in a specific area. That said, we have quite a few teachers in our building and across the District who have worked hard with our partners at the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District to develop projects that focus on problem solving, collaboration, creativity and outside the box thinking through the Project Based Learning lens. Here is a list of some of the projects we have finished or are just getting started with this year:

Operation Parachute, Time Travelers, What's Your Story?, Indigenous Americans, How Can Stories Help us Understand Human Rights?, Native American Museums, Pathogen Transmission and, Magic Tree House Narrative/Population Unit. We are excited to see where the rest of the school year takes us.



Ready to help change a life?

BECOME A FOSTER PARENT TO A YOUTH WHO IS WORKING TO TRANSFORM THEIR LIFE.

Working together, our community can give kids a fresh start.

BETHANY.
CHRISTIAN SERVICES

175 West Apple Avenue
Muskegon, MI 49440
Bethany.org/Muskegon



Light up the Wait

One parent's concern, along with a solution, creates a win for everyone. Seeing students waiting in the dark for their school bus is nerve wracking. Not seeing the students waiting in the dark is an accident waiting to happen. Thanks to a parent's suggestion, we now have blinking green lights for students to wear on their backpacks while waiting in the dark for their bus. Second grade students in Mrs. Mason's classroom packaged the blinking green lights that were distributed to every bus rider and every walker in the District. Parents, thank you for helping us "light up the wait" and keep students safe!



\$50,000 SCHOLARSHIP GIVEAWAY!



50th Anniversary Scholarships

IN 2019 - GLP & ASSOCIATES WILL BE CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS OF EDUCATING EDUCATORS AND HELPING PEOPLE CHANGE THEIR LIVES.

To honor and give back to those who have supported us for half of a century, we wanted to do something EXTRA special. **Nominate a student in your school or classroom that needs our help to earn money for their college education.**

We will be giving out a total of \$50,000 in scholarships, & we need YOU to help us find the special students who deserve it.

The process is simple, throughout the year GLP will be choosing special students to receive a scholarship.

To nominate candidates, please email your name, school, the name & grade of your nominee, along with a paragraph about them to either:

- Email: info@glpwins.com
- Or go to glpfinancialgroup.com, under What We Do, select "Foundation". Select the button under the 50th Anniversary Scholarships and then click "Nominate A Student"

Muskegon Office:
3375 Merriam St. Suite 202.
Muskegon Heights, MI 49444

Kathy Arends
(231) 457-4193
kjarends@glpwins.com

Yoga Time!

The RPI yoga group got to travel to the Muskegon Winter Sports Complex and learn from Dan from Rootdown Yoga·Juice·Greens. What a cool experience. A little birdie told us that this is first of several traveling yoga classes. Thanks to our community partners!





SeaPerch Competition

On April 13, 2019, Reeths-Puffer students competed in the ninth annual SeaPerch Underwater ROV competition held at the Canham Natatorium on the campus of the University of Michigan. Three R-P teams competed: high school open division, high school stock division, and middle school stock division. Students worked to prepare for the competition by designing and engineering ROVs from PVC, soldering electrical boards and motors for

propulsion, learned about buoyancy and hydrodynamics. R-P students excelled with their ROVs, and were awarded two of the three International spots from Michigan. On June 1st, these students travelled to the University of Maryland, where they competed against students from all over the world. R-P Robotics students definitely represented their school well during this event. Students would like to thank their sponsors, including: Reeths-Puffer Schools, Northern Machine Tool, Norton Pines Athletics, Lakewinds Chiropractic, Hometown Pharmacy, Marks Orthodontics, Walker Family Foundation, and A&C Machine and Tool Co.



NORTHSIDE LACROSSE INDOOR SKILLS & PRACTICE

WHEN
Every Sunday
Beginning Jan 12

WHERE
RP Intermediate Gym
1500 N Getty St

WHO
K – 8th grades

FOR MORE INFO VISIT US ON FACEBOOK
@NORTHSIDELACROSSECLUB
OR EMAIL
NORTSIDELACROSSECLUB@GMAIL.COM

OPEN TO ANYONE

Northside is open to any youth player in the Muskegon area. Registration opens Dec 8th and closes Feb 2nd

EQUIPMENT

The first 3 weeks only a stick is needed. On Feb 4th players at the 2nd – 8th levels need full gear. Players at the K-1st level only need a stick

INDOOR BY EXPERIENCE

Jan 12, 19, 26

Beginner/1 year
10:00 to 12:00

2 years or more
1:00 to 3:00

TEAM PRACTICE

Sundays
Feb 2nd – March 29th

K-4th grade 10:00 to 11:30

5th-6th grade 11:30 to 1:00

7th-8th grade 1:00 to 2:30

Systems of Care – Clinician Services

A new member was added to the My Alliance Systems of Care team for Reeths-Puffer Schools.

Tyler Companion, MSW joined the team in January, serving in his second year as a clinician. Tyler previously served as a foster care worker for Ottawa County DHHS. He completed his undergraduate studies at Ferris State University and graduated with his MSW from Michigan State University. Originally from the Ludington area, Tyler now lives in Grand Rapids.

As a clinician of the school based team at HealthWest, Tyler has a specific focus for Reeths Puffer - breaking down barriers, advocating for mental health needs, and empowering students through evidence informed practice. Tyler is able to conduct individual assessments, individual therapy, group therapy, crisis intervention, mental health education, and coordination of care. With this mental health integration, students and families have endless opportunities to

develop skills, resources, and tools to serve their needs now and in future endeavors.

Tyler's passion for working with children started at a young age and has never ceased to grow. He has always known that he wanted to work with children to provide them with a helping hand. He loves to learn, teach, and help kids reach their full potential!

My Alliance Systems of Care collaborates with several Muskegon County school districts to integrate mental health services. Services started at Reeths-Puffer in 2017, located at R-P Elementary and R-P Intermediate. This year, services have been expanded to all R-P schools.

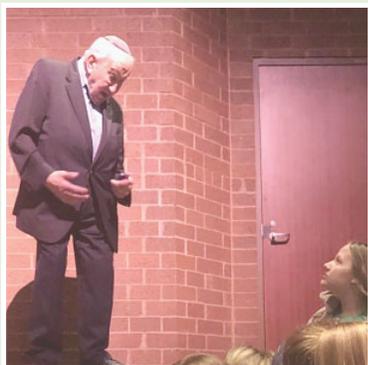
Contact Information:
Tyler Companion, MSW, Clinician
Email: Tyler.Companion@healthwest.net

Mr. Martin Lowenberg: Hate Hurts and Love Heals



The Rocket City community welcomed Mr. Lowenberg, holocaust survivor, for an evening community presentation on October 29 and a presentation for over 1,000 students from RPI, RPMS, and RPHS the following morning. Mr. Lowenberg is a Michigan native who lost his parents and younger twin brothers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. He spent several years moving between several work camps until

finally being liberated in 1945. Mr. Lowenberg was able to articulate a message of hope, perseverance, and strength of the human spirit. Now 91 years old, Martin Lowenberg continues his life mission to educate others about the atrocities of the Holocaust, and to stand against intolerance. Mr. Lowenberg described his experiences to remind us that hate hurts and love heals. The goal of the learning experience was for each person in the audience to gain perspective to reflect on grit, empathy, and hope. The event was hosted & facilitated by Mrs. Mitchelson (RPMS Counselor) and “Calling All Colors,” a student group that focuses on the topic of diversity in our school and world. The Treble Makers also performed a song at the end of the event. All of our students did a great job facilitating the event. Thank you Mr. Lowenberg for sharing your story and positive attitude in order to make Rocket City kinder, stronger, and more resilient.



Middle School Leadership

A group of students spent part of a week growing their leadership skills and developing a project that will have a positive impact on the RPMS community at the same time. Students do all the hard work from identifying and prioritizing needs within the building to brainstorming solutions and a plan for implementation. The adult leaders were very impressed with how aware students were about the needs of the student body. Their awareness and compassion about the variety of needs is certain to lead to a successful project outcome. Staff can't wait to see the impact their project will have at RPMS and how these students will use the leadership skills they practiced and reflected on this week.

Students “Rise UP” In Middle School Variety Show

The theme of the RPMS Fall Variety show was “RISE UP” and our students and community did not disappoint. Our students have a wide array of talents and unique skills and we wanted to provide a safe and welcoming venue that allowed them to display those talents. Performances included singing, dancing, drumming, poetry, kazoo playing, and motivational speaking. Each performers' willingness to be vulnerable and put their talents on display allowed everyone an evening to celebrate the diverse abilities that make RPMS students great. Great job students and R-P community!



Reading, Writing, Arithmetic AND TEAMWORK, LEADERSHIP, and PROBLEM SOLVING

The staff at RPMS recently explored a list of attributes reported by The National Association of Colleges and Employers as being the most sought after in job candidates. In addition to teaching skills specific to our content areas such as social studies and math, we continue to seek opportunities to embed leadership, teamwork, communication, and problem solving into all we do. Complex work engages and prepares our students. In any classroom, daily, you might see students collaborating in teams, having discussions, and thinking through a variety of complex and open ended problems. You may even see students with a Chromebook in front of them, collaborating virtually with teammates on a shared google document. Technology allows collaboration to look very different. Adolescence is a critical age for students to develop and refine these skills and it is so rewarding to watch students grow.



| ATTRIBUTE EMPLOYERS SEEK (Top 6) | % OF RESPONDENTS |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Leadership | 80.1% |
| Ability to work in a team | 78.9% |
| Communication skills (written) | 70.2% |
| Problem-solving skills | 70.2% |
| Communication skills (verbal) | 68.9% |
| Strong work ethic | 68.9% |

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (2016)



Student Leadership and Growth Mindset Combine For Big Impact

At RPMS, we believe that learning requires stumbling, trying, failing, and problem solving. As a strategic part of our plan to teach students how our brain works and how our beliefs about mistakes can shape our learning, a group of high school leaders partnered with a group of middle school students to teach the entire school about a growth mindset. Students with a growth mindset (rather than fixed) view setbacks as opportunities to learn, connect effort to growth in skills, and find feedback to be useful rather than threatening. Knowing that new pathways in our brains only developed by doing hard things, changes the way we look at challenges. The process of learning requires us to be okay with gaining skills and “rough draft” thinking instead of thinking skills and knowledge are something we are born with. A growth mindset is part of our school culture and our student leaders did a great job guiding our students through an opportunity to learn and reflect on their own mindsets.





Children's Theatre

The High School Children's Theatre (CT) cast traveled to one of our elementary schools for their annual writing contest called Story Time. Three full days of working with over 800 kids on how to write a creative story takes a lot of energy and creativity. This is the perfect recipe for our CT cast to work with! The elementary Rockets will craft a story and the winners will have their name called off and get to sit in Mr. Klairter's directors' chair as the CT cast acts out their story. A wonderful tradition continues

Induction into NHS



In its 61st year of existence, RPHS inducted 34 new members in the National Honor Society (NHS). These talented students were inducted based on their demonstration of the four tenets of National Honor Society Membership throughout their high school experience to date. The tenets are: Service, Scholarship, Character and Leadership. We are proud of these students and look for more good things from them throughout the 2019-2020 school year.

Reeths-Puffer athletic schedules can be found at rphsathletics.com

GO ROCKETS!



Under the direction of Mr. Sean Harris and Mr. Brian Olian, the RPHS Marching Band brought home another state championship at Ford Field in downtown Detroit. The band was flawless in their performance of "Table Manners," the title to their show. Our Marching Band has had a strong history of excellence and success. In the last 20 years, accomplishments have included 10 BOA (Bands of America) Regional Class AA Championships, a BOA Regional Grand Championship in 2008, A BOA Grand National Championship in Class AA in 1999, 12 Flight 2 State Championships and 3 Flight 3 State Championships (now 4!).



Boar's Head FEAST

On even years at RPHS, the choir program presents The Boar's Head Feast. This renaissance choir concert features singing, dancing, and merriment from the Reeths-Puffer High School Choirs in full renaissance garb. Guests of the King were seated on stage, and served the King's favorite appetizers and desserts for a royally good time! Audiences were treated to an array of musical selections that generated numerous opportunities to applaud outstanding vocal prowess. An excellent performance to say the least!



A Powerful Message...

Tom Coverly, a comedian and motivational speaker, best-known for his anti-bullying talks based on his own experience, came to the Reeths-Puffer High School campus to share his message of hope, compassion and resiliency to the student body.

Tom's encouraging stories gave rise to the belief that students have the power to change their circumstances. His voice resonated with students when he told them they are perfect and beautiful in their own way. He challenged students to tell the people they love in their lives, that they love them! His message was powerful and well received by our students.



Reeths-Puffer Schools
991 West Giles Road
Muskegon, MI 49445

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Steve Edwards
Superintendent of Schools
edwardst@reeths-puffer.org
719-3101

Rob Renes
Assistant Superintendent
renesr@reeths-puffer.org
719-3108

Nate Smith
Director of Instruction and Learning
smithnate@reeths-puffer.org
719-3120

Tracey French
Finance Director
frencht@reeths-puffer.org
719-3110

Scott Green
Special Education Director
greens@reeths-puffer.org
719-3143

Adam Ingalls
Maintenance Supervisor
ingallsa@reeths-puffer.org
744-4736 x2400

Dan Beckeman
Principal, High School
beckmad@reeths-puffer.org
719-3107

Tony Schmitt
Athletic Director
schmittt@reeths-puffer.org
744-1647 x3774

Jennifer Anderson
Principal, Middle School
andersonj@reeths-puffer.org
719-3128

Scott Panozzo
Principal, Intermediate School
panozzos@reeths-puffer.org
719-3119

Cody Hamilton
Principal, Central Elementary
hamiltonc@reeths-puffer.org
719-3103

Paul Klimsza
Principal, Reeths-Puffer Elementary
klimszap@reeths-puffer.org
719-3133

Dawn Schmitt
Principal, Twin Lake Elementary
schmittd@reeths-puffer.org
719-3190 x2225

Molly Sieplinga
Site Director,
McMillan Early Childhood Center
mollysieplinga@wlace.org
766-3443 x2605

Jami Young
Site Director, Pennsylvania Elementary
719-3159
youngj@reeths-puffer.org

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We are thrilled with the new Reeths-Puffer Schools' app. Access sports scores, cafeteria menus, news updates, even emergency notifications. Download the app today!



It's everything R-P,
in your pocket.

Documents · Events · Staff Directory · Alerts



| | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| BOARD MEETINGS: | January 13, 2020 | April 20, 2020 |
| | February 10, 2020 | May 18, 2020 |
| | December 16, 2019 | June 15, 2020 |
| | March 16, 2020 | |

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kellyk@reeths-puffer.org

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weessiesm@reeths-puffer.org

Susan Blackburn, Secretary
blackburns@reeths-puffer.org

Doug Brown, Treasurer
brownd@reeths-puffer.org

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hernandezs@reeths-puffer.org

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brooksc@reeths-puffer.org

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bakermathesp@reeths-puffer.org

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