

Randolph Public Schools
"Building Tomorrow, Today"

RPS



Office of the Superintendent

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**MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
MARCH 2018**

"The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth." John F. Kennedy

Dear Randolph Public Schools Parents and Community,

We are delighted to welcome back our students from their Winter Recess. Whether you traveled with your family or stayed local, I hope it was an enjoyable, relaxing time. Students and staff have transitioned to being back and I encourage you to continue communicating with your child's/children's teacher and school. Our collective effort is needed to ensure accurate and transparent communication. We continue to evaluate and strengthen our supports for students academic and social emotional needs. Throughout the coming months, in collaboration with local and regional law enforcement, we will conduct already-scheduled drills and more trainings for staff and students on our emergency procedures. Our emergency plans are fluid documents and are routinely reviewed in addition to our structures to identify gaps. The safety of our students and staff is paramount and we all must be more observant.

Thoughts around being socially and emotionally supported:

<https://casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning-and-positive-behavioral-interventions-and-supports/>

Family Engagement

- The first-time ever Vocabulary Bowl was held at RCMS on February 13. It was a huge success! We look forward to this year's 4th graders being ready to participate as 5th graders next year. We are currently creating surveys to solicit feedback on our technology and other services within the district including school climate.

New Administrators

Please join us in welcoming our recently hired Administrators!

- **Director of Language Acquisition (English Learners)** Ms. Hana Walsh worked in Lynn Public Schools as an EL Teacher and then as EL Department Chair at Lynn Classical High School before being named a Lynn Public Schools Program Support Specialist working at the District level for the past 3+ years. Ms. Walsh is fluent in English, French, and Czech, and has conversational fluency in

**RANDOLPH PUBLIC
SCHOOLS GOALS**

**GOAL 1: Enhance the
Teaching and Learning
Process**

Increase academic achievement of all students through aligned assessments, effective instruction and standard-based curriculum that is challenging and engaging.

**GOAL 2: Improve
Accountability Structures**

Improve data systems that will support student learning, staff development and resource management.

**GOAL 3: Increase the
Quality of Engagement**

Increase academic success for all students through quality family and community partnerships.

**GOAL 4: Human Capital
Management**

Maintain, enhance and support a quality workforce that is diverse, highly skilled and professional.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Randolph Public Schools (RPS) do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ethnic identity, sex, gender identity, disability, handicap, age, religion, sexual orientation or homelessness in admission to or participation in its programs and activities. RPS does not tolerate any form of discrimination, intimidation, threat, bullying, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others by interfering with their ability or freedom to learn and work.

Spanish. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Economics from McGill University in Montreal before later earning an MBA from York University in Toronto. Ms. Walsh then earned her Master's degree in Teaching English Language Learners from Salem State University in Massachusetts.

- **Director of Technology** Ms. Laura Sullivan has been a teacher, Department Head, and Instructional Coach here in the Randolph Public Schools since 2004. Ms. Sullivan was previously a Director of Technology at Sacred Heart Academy in Hamden, CT and earned her bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Southern Connecticut State University before earning her Master's degree from the University of Notre Dame.
- **Interim Director of Finance** Ms. Tanya Holland earned her Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Bridgewater State University after graduating from Randolph High School. Ms. Holland has worked for the Town of Randolph since 2002 first as an Assistant Town Accountant before joining the school department as Finance Manager in 2003.



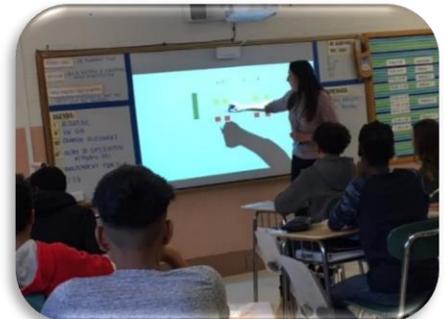
Kindergarten Information Night: 6:00 PM - Tuesday, March 27th at Donovan ES.

Each year we conduct this opportunity to share and engage potential kindergarten students and their parents. They meet staff from across the district, and complete registration forms and other documents.

Student Initiative: One of our Randolph High School students, Sade Ratcliff, organized and led an excellent discussion called *Diverse Voices in the Classroom* on February 28. She coordinated a panel of speakers that included a range of professionals.

EL Department Update:

- The new Director of Language Acquisition, Ms. Hana Walsh, will oversee the English Learners (EL) Department as well as the World Language Department. Ms. Walsh brings 13 years of teaching and administrative experience.
- EL offices are being relocated to be closer and provide more support to the Family Resource Center and Student Registration.
- EL processes are being streamlined to ensure that EL students are tested, placed and receive language development services as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- Ten (10) RPS ESL teachers will attend the Massachusetts Educators of English Language Learners (**MATSOL**) Conference in May 2018. They will receive professional development focused on providing English Language Development, as well as network and learn from their colleagues across the state.



STEM Career Pathway Capacity Grants

- Randolph High School and our four elementary schools will receive STEM Career Pathway Capacity Grants to offer high-quality science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs from Project Lead The Way (PLTW). PLTW is a nonprofit organization that provides a transformative learning experience for K-12 students and teachers through pathways in computer science, engineering and biomedical science. More than 10,500 schools across the country offer PLTW programs to millions of students.

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We have currently been implementing a PLTW grant at RCMS, and are extremely pleased with the result it has had on student engagement and learning. For more information on Project Lead The Way, visit pltw.org.

Our schools are five of 73 schools across the commonwealth to receive the grant, which is supported by the Administration of Massachusetts, Gov. Charlie Baker and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, the One8 Foundation, and Mass STEM Hub. The targeted funds will be used to start, and strengthen its PLTW program with PLTW [Launch, Computer Science, and Engineering]. It will also support teacher professional development and the purchase of materials and equipment that will be used in the hands-on, activity-, project-, and problem-based courses.

Technology Department

Over the February break, the Technology Department worked with Signet Corporation to prepare additional security cameras that will be deployed in RCMS and the four elementary schools. The department is also working to ensure that all schools are ready for the computer-based MCAS testing in April. Each computer available for student use in the district is being updated with the last version of the software that is utilized for MCAS testing. An additional 120 laptops are being prepared for testing.

Athletic Department

1. The boys' basketball team qualified for the state tournament for the sixth time out of the last seven seasons. The first-round game is Thursday, March 1st at Scituate High school, 6:30 PM.
2. The head varsity football coach search is down to the final two candidates. An announcement of the new head coach is forthcoming.
3. The Blue Devils have placed eleven student-athletes on the South Shore League winter sports all-star teams.
4. There were 54 student-athletes whom made the honor roll for the second term; they are recognized as "scholar-athletes."
5. The middle school's boys' and girls' basketball teams had successful seasons; the boys were 11-0 and the girls were 9-2.

Lunch with Fifth Graders

I recently had lunch with 5th graders from the Lyons ES (Feb. 13) and the Young ES (Feb. 27). Students at both schools had some insightful comments. They shared some positive thoughts about specific teachers and how these teachers motivate them to do well in class and to be "nice and kind" to other people. I was most intrigued by the rationale presented by one student to increase recess time. Paraphrasing, recess is not just about playing a game, it's about learning how to interact with other people. We need more time learning how to compete and being a good sport when we lose. I was impressed as it was made clear to me that our young people are paying attention to the world around them and we, adults, need to be mindful and value their points.



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FROM THE CLASSROOM

Rigorous Discourse: A Classroom Practice

This is a critical area and I am leaving it in from the last Parent Note. Over the last couple of years our teachers have been participating in training on how to infuse Rigorous Discourse into all classrooms. RPS defines Rigorous Discourse as conversations that occur in small or large groups and consistently involve all students in a discussion around the lesson's topic. Students use academic language to discuss an idea, support their ideas with evidence from a text and their own background knowledge.

Student Practices

- All students take part in deep academic conversations and sustained writing that is purposeful and focused on course content.
- All students clarify, support ideas with evidence, paraphrase, build on and/or challenge and synthesize knowledge.
- All students self-assess the quality of their interactions in the process.

Teacher Practices

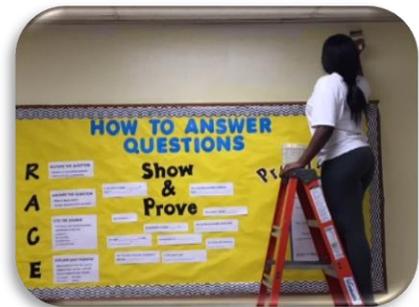
- Teacher plans for and uses higher order questions and Accountable Talk strategies to motivate all students to:
 - 1) Enter conversations and writing assignments using text
 - 2) Plan for and integrate background knowledge as an entry point
 - 3) Generate questions that are intentional and purposeful to support academic outcomes
 - 4) Model oral rigorous discourse to inform student writing
- Teacher gives timely, quality and actionable feedback to students on the clarity of their thinking during rigorous discourse
- Teacher establishes routines and norms for rigorous discourse and constantly models and holds students accountable to them

Reference:

1. *Deeper Learning Means Educational Equity in Urban Schools* (January 28, 2013) (<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/deeper-learning-educational-equity-urban-school-elena-aguilar>)

Calendar Highlights:

- 3/7: RPS Chorus Night – 7:00 PM – RHS Auditorium
- 3/9: ½ Day for Students – Staff Professional Development
- 3/27: Kindergarten Information Night – 6:00 PM – Donovan ES
- 3/30: NO School – Good Friday Holiday
<http://www.randolph.k12.ma.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=5692385&pageId=5742709>



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Resources (Articles, videos)

Resources: Cultivating school environments: <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/hot-topics/social-emotional-learning>

Soft Skills: <https://www.oxbridgeacademy.edu.za/blog/5-reasons-soft-skills-important-ever/>

Power of Words: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNhYbJbqg-Y>

Social Emotional Support: CASEL

<https://casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning-and-positive-behavioral-interventions-and-supports/>

Reminder - Vocabulary: Parent Toolkit:

Helping to Build Your Child's Vocabulary

"Parent Toolkit" expert and University of Michigan Education Professor Nell Duke has shared several tips/activities you can use at home to expand your child's vocabulary.

<http://www.parenttoolkit.com/index.cfm?objectid=97AA2240-F7CE-11E3-921A0050569A5318>

Five Minutes to Spare!

Making it easy to support your child's development; see the video links below on how you can support your child's overall growth in a few spare minutes each day.

<http://www.parenttoolkit.com/index.cfm?objectid=6AF1ACD0-50EE-11E5-8F900050569A5318&targetObj=D761C470-50F0-11E5-8F900050569A5318>

Links for Families:

Kindergarten – Grade 3: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents-11-languages#english>

Grades K – 12: <http://www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2583&navItemNumber=3363>

RPS in the news:

- http://www.bostonherald.com/sports/high_school/2017/11/in_randolph_brother_sister_tandem_holding_d_own_offensive_line
- <http://randolph.wickedlocal.com/news/20171026/randolph-schools-enter-new-era-after-losing-underperforming-label>
- <http://randolph.wickedlocal.com/news/20171109/message-from-randolph-super-milestone-reached-more-progress-ahead>
- <http://randolph.wickedlocal.com/news/20171031/randolph-schools-enter-new-era-after-losing-underperforming-label>

Please access our website: <http://www.randolph.k12.ma.us/> for updates and more school-related information.

As always, thank you for your support and for entrusting us with your most prized possession, your children.

With Randolph pride,



Thomas Anderson

Superintendent

<http://www.randolph.k12.ma.us/>

<https://youtu.be/8a34Er1xr88>



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