



ROCKET CITY NEWS

The Good Old Days Weren't Always Good



Nostesia:

The ability and willingness to remember the nostalgic best of the past while forgetting the worst. It's a word coined by author Jamie Vollmer when discussing society with terms like "these kids today" or "these schools today."

Every district and every community has that person, or groups of people, who long

for the good old days. Today, it is typically manifested in statements like, "All those kids need to get their faces out of their devices." Or, "Parents don't hold their kids accountable anymore."

EVERY generation has written about the demise of society resulting from unruly and disrespectful kids. Even Socrates wrote about how kids were lazy and disrespectful:

"Our earth is degenerate in these latter days; there are signs that the world is speedily coming to an end; bribery and corruption are common; children no longer obey their parents."

Socrates died in 399 BC.

Here's what I see from kids: A huge majority of our kids are respectful, responsible, and accountable. They care more about their environment than generations past. They volunteer more, engage in causes more, and deeply consider their future and the futures of their classmates. They question more (even if it sounds like disagreement) and communicate more (even if it is on social media). Teen pregnancy is at historic lows. Teen violence is at historic lows. Drug and alcohol use continue to trend downward. Kids



are growing up in a different time with different resources. They live in a world that has more people on Facebook than were on the face of the planet at the start of the Industrial Revolution. Approximately one-tenth of all the people who have ever lived are currently living. To expect our kids to be "us" when we were their age is an unrealistic expectation. And in some ways, it's a step in the wrong direction.

Our kids are pretty remarkable; so next time the phrase "kids today are" forms in your thoughts, I hope it will be followed by "amazing," or "engaged," or "philanthropic." Or maybe this one: "our future."

It's okay to remember the past fondly, but remember that not everything was better:

1. At one time, we thought asbestos was a great material and used it prolifically as insulations in buildings, such as schools. Now, it takes a team of people who look like they're coming to capture ET to remove it.
2. Lead based paint was also used in schools and on children's toys.
3. Wearing a seat belt was an anomaly more than the norm.
4. Mulletts? I'll just leave it at that.

To borrow a line from Billy Joel, the good old days weren't always good and tomorrow's not as bad as it seems.

Yours in education,

Steven L Edwards

Steve Edwards
Superintendent of Schools

REETHS-PUFFER SCHOOLS 2018-2019 SCHOOL CALENDAR

| | |
|-------------|---|
| December 21 | K-12 AM Only |
| December 24 | K-12 No School – Christmas Recess Begins |
| January 7 | School Resumes |
| January 16 | 9-12 AM Only – High School Exams |
| January 17 | 9-12 AM Only – High School Exams |
| January 18 | 5-12 AM Only – High School Exams 5-12 Records Day PM End of 2nd Marking Period |
| January 21 | K-12 AM Only - Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Afternoon PD for Staff |
| February 15 | K-12 No School – Mid-Winter Break |
| February 18 | K-12 No School – Mid-Winter Break |
| March 1 | K-4 AM Only K-4 Records Day PM End of 2nd Tri-Reporting |
| March 6 | K-4 Conferences, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. (School is in Session) |
| March 7 | K-4 AM Only K-4 Conferences, 12:45 to 3:45 and 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. |
| March 15 | K-12 AM Only – Afternoon PD for staff |
| March 22 | 5-12 AM Only 5-12 Records Day PM End of 3rd Marking Period |
| March 26 | 5-12 Conferences (School is in Session) 5-6 – 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. 7-8 – 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. 9-12 – 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. |
| March 27 | 5-8 Conferences (School is in Session) 5-6 – 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. 7-8 – 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. |
| March 28 | K-12 AM Only |
| March 29 | K-12 No School |
| April 1-5 | K-12 No School – Spring Break |
| April 8 | School Resumes |
| April 19 | K-12 AM Only – Good Friday |
| May 24 | K-12 AM Only |
| May 27 | K-12 No School – Memorial Day |
| June 10 | 9-12 AM Only – High School Exams |
| June 11 | K-12 AM Only – High School Exams K-12 Records Day PM |
| June 12 | K-12 AM Only – High School Exams K-12 Records Day PM Last day of School for all students |

Reeths-Puffer Schools Completes Annual Audit and Achieves Excellence

Reeths-Puffer Schools recently completed its audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018. Brenda Jacobs, partner at Brickley DeLong, presented to the Board of Education on Monday, October 22. She shared the outcome of the audit, which included:

- An unmodified audit opinion, the highest level available
- Successful completion of the Single Audit of Federal grant programs
- No findings (errors) in the audit process
- Continued low-risk audit status for the District

Once again, the District finance team, led by Jason Helsen, has prepared a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, or CAFR. The CAFR goes well above and beyond the required information disclosures of Michigan school districts and provides a more in-depth look at the Reeths-Puffer Schools' community and financial indicators. The emphasis on financial transparency and the open sharing of information has been led by the Board of Education and is a principle of the District's strategic plan. This is the fifth year that the District has gone above and beyond to prepare the CAFR.

For four straight years, the District has been awarded the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting (COE) by the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO). Sponsored by VALIC, the COE award confirms the school business office's commitment to financial accountability and transparency. Recognition through the COE program can help strengthen a district's presentation for bond issuance statements and promotes high quality financial reporting.

The District plans to once again submit the 2018 report for the award, and hopes to receive it for the fifth straight year. The most recent information available shows that only 22 Michigan school districts gain this honor annually, putting Reeths-Puffer Schools in the top 2.6% in the State.

Holiday Happenings

| | |
|-------------|---|
| December 11 | Middle School Holiday Band Concert, 7:00 p.m., Rocket Centre |
| December 14 | High School Choirs Holiday Pops Concert, 7:00 p.m. Rocket Centre |
| December 19 | Candlelight Carols Concert (all choirs), 7:00 p.m., Rocket Centre |

ROCKET CITY NEWS

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Fun Learning at Central Elementary

Students and staff are loving the new Early Literacy (EL) Education Curriculum currently being implemented Kindergarten through second grade. Kindergarten students have been building their literacy and citizenship skills by engaging in a study of toys and play. Components of the toy module include exploring the norms and behaviors for sharing, interacting with peers through structured conversations, and engaging in the guided discovery of toys. These activities have encouraged students to consider perspective, understand their own preferences and the preferences of others, and learn how to effectively interview. Parents recently joined the fun by helping students to further articulate their toy preferences and explain how they like to play with them.



The PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) Committee at Central Elementary is structuring both weekly and monthly “Rocket Way” celebrations to recognize and reward the many students who are consistently exhibiting the District-wide behavior expectations of Respect, Pride, and Integrity. The Rocket Way winners for the month of October painted gourds with the principal and displayed them in the library to add a splash of festive fall decor.

Central Elementary Students Lend a Hand



When the first and second graders in Mrs. Sandee's class learned that the Monarch butterfly population has declined 90% in the past 20 years, they decided to take action. Students installed a Monarch Way Station in the Central Elementary courtyard. The Way Station will provide all basic needs for each stage of the Monarch life cycle.





Laketon Bethel Church

Laketon Bethel is a safe and accepting place to explore your relationship with Jesus. Families will appreciate engaging worship services with a safe, loving nursery provided.

Two types of Service every Sunday Morning
9:00 am – Classic Service
11:00 am – Alternative Service



We are excited to announce that Mike Lyons, former principal of Central Elementary has joined our staff as Director of Children & Youth Ministries. Come check out the exciting changes underway.

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Magnificent Creativity



Central first grade students have been building their literacy and citizenship skills by engaging in a study of tools and work. They've learned how the "habits of character" of initiative, collaboration, perseverance, and responsibility help them innovate, accomplish, and achieve. A final project for their first literacy unit required students to make a 'magnificent thing' that solved a real-world problem. Students collaborated with RPMS students to make their magnificent thing come to life on 3D printers.

School Breakfast

How are mornings in your house? The alarm doesn't go off...crazy...the kids don't want to get up...crazy...the dog wants out...crazy...the bus is waiting and there's no time to eat breakfast.

Breakfast is served at school! Breakfast will help energize your child's day and provide them with a healthy start. School breakfast is affordable. If you qualify for free and reduced price lunches, you also qualify for the breakfast program, with no additional paperwork.

Children who eat breakfast are more likely to behave better in school and show improvement in math, reading and standardized testing. Eating breakfast is important for establishing healthy habits for later in life. School breakfast provides daily servings of fruit, whole grains, and milk, plus roughly a quarter of the recommended calories needed for lasting energy.

So help your child start the day right with school breakfast!

Elementary & Intermediate regular priced breakfast \$1.20 and lunch \$2.60. Reduced price breakfast .30¢ and lunch .40¢.

Breakfast hours are as follows:
Intermediate 7:20-7:40
RPEL, Central, Twin Lake 8:15-8:35

Middle school & high school regular priced breakfast \$1.45 and lunch \$2.95. Reduced price breakfast .30¢ and lunch .40¢.

Breakfast hours are as follows:
Middle school 7:15-7:35
High school 7:15-7:40

All students bringing a lunch from home who take a milk will be charged \$0.40. We offer breakfast and lunch so we are not allowed to participate in the special milk program.

Fill out an application for free/reduced meals at www.lunchapp.com
Deposit money into your child's account at www.SendMoneyToSchool.com

Please contact the food service office (231-744-1647, ex.3715 or 3716) if you have any questions regarding school meals, free/reduced meal applications or deposits.

Thank-you,
Connie Falbe
Food Service Supervisor
falbec@reeths-puffer.org

Looking for some good news? Then look for Go Rocket City on Facebook!



Like the Go Rocket City Facebook page today and stay in the loop on all things Reeths-Puffer. From Teacher Feature to Adopt a Classroom to Rocket City Radio, Go Rocket City's Facebook page is the place to be. Follow the fun today!

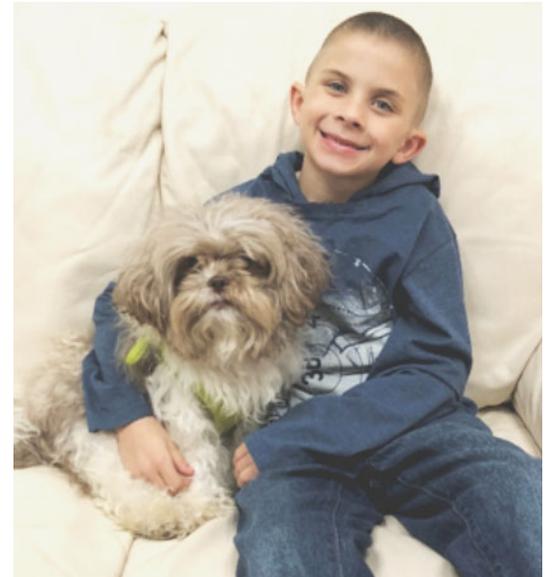




Reeths-Puffer Elementary welcomes Buddy to the Team!

Last year, first graders wrote opinion letters for a class assignment. A large number of students wrote to Mr. Klimsza and Mrs. Benner asking for a school pet, specifically a dog. They thought a dog would be helpful for students when they felt sad, were upset or just to play with. Their arguments were very compelling. It turns out, there is a great deal of research that supports their request! Pets excel in therapy and are a viable remedy to depression and trauma. Studies show a decrease in both blood pressure and stress levels during therapy dog visits. Visits with dogs increases overall emotional well-being. There is also ample research supporting the use of therapy dogs in school reading programs.

If anyone at RPEL wishes to not interact with Buddy, please inform the office staff. Buddy's veterinarian paperwork and Alliance of Therapy Dog certification are available in the office upon request.



Heritage Farm



Weesies Trip

Trips to Remember

October is anti-bullying month and on October 26, Kindergarten and Early Kindergarten (DK) students went to Heritage Farms and Weesies Brothers to explore Spookley the Square Pumpkin. Spookley was created to promote anti-bullying; you see, Spookley is a square pumpkin who lives in a round pumpkin patch. Things were difficult in the beginning until everyone learned that what makes you different is what makes you special. DK students learned 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 seven years and continues to promote kindness in our community. DK students have engaged in many kindness activities throughout the month of October, which promotes the "Rocket Way."

At Heritage Farms, Kindergarten students learned how to make apple cider from a real apple cider "expert." They learned where apples come from, went on a hayride, completed a corn maze, jumped on an outdoor trampoline, and slid down a "gopher hole." Students also received a guided hayride where they learned facts about the land and animals that live on the farm. Heritage Farms went above and beyond to teach students about the history of the farm. Staff was very proud of the way all students demonstrated the "Rocket Way," and look forward to many more trips to Heritage Farms.

What is Harvest **Corn?**



Since the beginning of the school year, the second grade classes at RPEL have been working to answer this question. Students noticed and wondered about harvest corn and then combined science experiments and writing to figure out their wonderings. Students started by wondering if it is real, then saw that it grew green and white “things” after sitting in water for several days. As a team, students experimented to see where the growth was coming from and learned vocabulary like kernel and cob.

Next came experiments to see what harvest corn needed in order to grow. Students were very excited about this unit and loved learning something new!



Students identify tools that the early settlers used for farming.

The **BIG** Lesson



Students showing their 3-D Fur Trading Fort model.

During the week of October 22, RPEL third graders from Mrs. Matz’s class enjoyed “The BIG Lesson” experience at the Lakeshore Museum Center. Students learned all about the history of Michigan and the Great Lakes Region.

After a special behind the scenes tour, students dug deep into Michigan’s past stretching back to millions and millions of years ago. Students went on a hands-on fossil dig and explored real evidence of the organisms and the environments in which they once lived. Next, students moved forward in time to learn about Michigan’s first people. They met West Michigan American Indian Deb Gutowski and also walked

to the Old Indian Cemetery. On their third day, students explored the time of the fur trade. Students were able to hunt for furs throughout the museum and got a feel for some real life trading experiences. Lastly, students learned about the first pioneers of Michigan. Students made the connection that daily life for the early settlers was much more difficult than the lives we live today.

Each and every day of learning brought something new and exciting! Mrs. Matz’s students definitely gained knowledge and memories to last a lifetime.



Students finding fossils during a fossil dig activity.

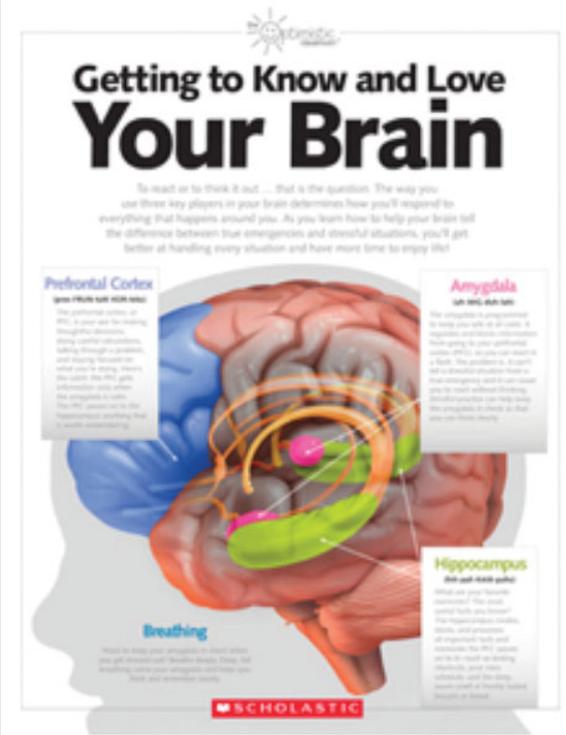


3...2...1... Blastoff!

On October 17, RPEL's Rocket Readers take home book program took off! Many families came to the Title I sponsored evening to learn about the Rocket Readers program and take home their new book bag. This exciting event was only the launching point for our all-school program. The following week, each RPEL student received their own book bag to keep and transport

books back and forth to school. Through Title I funds and Scholastic Dollars, carts filled with excellent, new books were prepared for each grade level. Students are encouraged to make good choices among the many fiction and nonfiction titles in each grade level cart. Our goal is to encourage the students' engagement in the Ten Essential Literacy Practices for every child, in every classroom, every day! The Rocket Readers program will promote Essential #1 by fostering motivation and engagement through book choice, Essential #7 by fostering vocabulary

knowledge, Essential #8 by providing abundant reading material and most importantly, Essential #10 by providing a bridge between school and home. Thank you to the many volunteers who supported this project. You are helping RPEL's students to soar!



Stop. Breathe. Think.

This is the core message being taught in several classrooms at Twin Lake Elementary through the use of the MindUP Curriculum®. By teaching kids to take a moment and be mindful before they react, empowers them with the knowledge that they can choose to be in control of their thoughts and their actions. When you teach a child to be mindful, you teach them to pay attention to something on purpose without judgment.

This knowledge can help them find a little space between an upsetting situation and their reaction to said situation so they can move from the reactive part of their brain (the amygdala) to the thinking part of their brain (the prefrontal cortex). Twin Lake students, no matter their age, are excited to learn how their brain works. The knowledge that they are able to control their reactions and grow their brains in positive ways is very powerful and resonates with them.

Weesies Study Trip

Some of Rocket City's Developmental Kindergarten classes enjoyed a trip to Weesies Garden Center in Montague to enjoy the Spookley the Pumpkin experience. Spookley is a square pumpkin that often gets teased and made fun of because he is different and not round like the other pumpkins. However, a great storm comes and puts all the other pumpkins in danger. Luckily, being different often has great importance, as discovered by all the round pumpkins when they are saved by Spookley! The Spookley message ties in well with our new 'Rocket Way' initiative, and teaching our youngest learners about Respect, Pride and Integrity. The DK students enjoyed a ride on the Pumpkin Express out to the pumpkin patch where they were able to hand pick their very own pumpkin to take home. They also went on a Timber Trails Adventure Ride through the woods to search for Spookley and his other farm friends. This great study trip was topped off with a thorough run through Spookley's playground. Thank you to Weesies Garden Center in Montague for hosting Mrs. Monaweck's and Mrs. Medema's classes!



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Beautiful, Brand New Recess Shed



Exciting news! R-P Twin Lake Elementary has a beautiful, brand new RECESS SHED. The community worked together to raise funds at this year's Twin Lake Walk-a-thon. It was cloudy and the path had many puddles, but they were able to raise enough money to purchase a playground shed full of toys. The kids are loving it. Thank you to our special community for the support!



The Red Bandana Kids

The Man in the Red Bandana, a story of honor, compassion and bravery was so inspiring and touching that R-P Twin Lake Elementary fourth grade learners were eager to do something themselves. After watching a video about 9/11, which highlighted the story of Welles Remy Crowther, there was silence. Kids were amazed. Kids were sad. Kids were inspired. The Red Bandana Kids were born!

While the Red Bandana Kids was the brainchild of adults, the path that it may take isn't precisely planned. It's open to the fourth graders to determine what kind of difference they can make. For now, there will be 5 fourth grade students each week, who will be called the "Red Bandana Kids." They will have certain responsibilities that will be in service of others. They will be TLE's greeters in the morning. They'll help in the lunchroom and on the playground. They will help the littlest ones in the classroom. They will also recognize other fourth grade learners who are following the Rocket Way by writing out Rocket Slips. The slips will then be used to determine the next round of Red Bandana Kids.

The goal is for TLE's fourth graders to focus on the positive and look for opportunities to help others. The excitement to serve is contagious and everyone looks forward to seeing where the kids decide to take this initiative.

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- The opportunity to work directly with your adopted class on projects, field trips, assignments and more.

Head to GoRocketCity.org today and adopt a class - or two!



McMillan Early Childhood Center kicks off Conscious Discipline!

“If we can’t reach them—we can’t teach them”

McMillan Early Childhood Center educators are implementing Conscious Discipline into their classrooms for the first time this year. Teachers spent two days in August at a workshop learning how to implement this with fidelity throughout the school day. In addition, at our monthly curriculum meetings, we focus on different Conscious Discipline concepts and ways to implement these strategies/interventions into our classrooms. We are close to two months in, and teachers are loving what they are seeing.



Dr. Becky Bailey, an award-winning author, renowned teacher and childhood expert created Conscious Discipline in 1996. Conscious Discipline is an evidence-based, trauma-informed practice built on the premise of developing discipline within children rather than applying it to them. The heart of Conscious Discipline is centered around relationships and the extension of the home family to the school family. Conscious Discipline helps to support children’s social emotional needs and well being, while offering

classroom management strategies to the classroom staff.

Some daily activities classroom staff are doing to promote safety and a school family are:

- S.T.A.R breathing (smile, take a deep breath and relax) - to disengage stress
- School family jobs - every child contributes to the classroom daily
- Wish well board - building empathy amongst the children
- I love you rituals - building connections between peers and teachers
- We care center - encouraging children to take care of one another
- Family and friends boards - bringing the children’s families into the classroom
- Daily greeter and goodbye wisher - creating connections at the start/end of the day
- Brain smart start - every day is started with getting the brain organized and ready to learn
- Safe keeper ritual - focuses on the idea that the classroom is a safe place to be and we will work together to keep it that way

While the journey with Conscious Discipline is underway, we still have a lot of learning and growing to do. We are confident that by using this program we can help children learn how to regulate their emotions and become successful in solving social conflicts.

Clockwise from top right: Child’s job is to be the greeter to the other children in the classroom. Getting a “chicken wing” hello from his friend!

Using a pinwheel to practice deep breathing before heading to choice time.

Practicing deep belly breathing.

Left, inset: School Family Jobs - everyone contributes daily to the school family & jobs rotate on a weekly basis.



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Terri Portice
Director of Teaching and Learning

How Can I Help My Child Find Academic Success?

***The following information was taken from Michigan Department of Education, "Collaborating for Success" Parent Engagement Toolkit.*

According to research, the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to:

1. Create a home environment that encourages learning.
2. Communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's

achievement and future careers.

3. Become involved in their children's education at school and in the community.

These three seemingly simple steps require dedication and commitment from all students, parents and school personnel. The resulting benefit of this investment in time and effort is well worth the future aspirations and success of every child. (pg. 5-6)

At the Middle School Level, parents are encouraged to:

- Discuss school activities.
- Monitor out-of-school activities.
- Volunteer and regularly attend parent-teacher conferences and other school events. (pg.40)

At the high school level, parents are encouraged to:

- Guide their student toward postsecondary education and career preparation.
- Encourage reading and doing their homework.
- Stress the value of education. (pg. 40)

Helping Your Child Plan for College and Career:

At the beginning of high school, sit down with your child's teachers, counselor, or other advisor to discuss what it will take for your child to graduate; your child's goals; and his or her plans after high school. Create a plan together to help your child reach these goals, and review it every year to make sure he or she is on track. This plan should include:

- An appropriate course sequence to meet your child's goals. For example, if your child wants to study biosciences in college, he or she will likely need additional or advanced math and science courses in high school to be prepared for college-level coursework.
- The most appropriate extracurricular activities for your child. For example, if your child is interested in journalism or photography, encourage him or her to sign up for the school yearbook class. These activities will help your child expand his or her learning outside of school and may help foster new hobbies or interests.
- Ways you can help your child prepare for college or a career. For example, if

your child is interested in a particular field, look to see if internships exist to build his or her work experience in that subject area. Look for college fairs to attend, and encourage your child to visit colleges in which he or she might be interested. Finding ways of how to pay for college or advanced training. College can be expensive, but there are lots of ways to get financial help, such as scholarships, grants, work study programs, and student loans. You just need to make the time for you and your child to do the research. You can start by helping your child fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) during his or her senior year. Visit www.fafsa.ed.gov for help and more information on FAFSA and financial aid. (pg. 53)

The above information was taken from Michigan Department of Education, "Collaborating for Success" Parent Engagement Toolkit.

http://mi.gov/documents/mde/4a._Final_Toolkit_without_bookmarks_370151_7.pdf

Reading is important for students at any age, as well as into their adult lives. The importance of reading every day is shown in the graphic below. This picture has been shared before, but it's a great reminder of how reading, just a few minutes every day, can make a life-long difference.

Why can't I skip my 20 minutes of reading tonight?

| Student A reads 20 minutes each day | Student B reads 5 minutes each day | Student C reads 1 minute each day |
|---|--|---|
| 3600 minutes in a school year | 900 minutes in a school year | 180 minutes in a school year |
| 1,800,000 words | 282,000 words | 8,000 words |



90th percentile



50th percentile



10th percentile

By the end of 6th grade, student A will have read the equivalent of 60 whole school days. Student B will have read only 12 school days. Which student would you expect to have a better vocabulary? Which student would you expect to be more successful in school... and in life?

(Nagy & Herman, 1987)

21st Century Learning

The Partnership for 21st Century Learning has created a vision for learning that outlines the critical components needed for students to find success in the world around them. We live in a world where change is constant and it's necessary that each of us continue to learn and grow as education, jobs, and the world around us continues to advance and change. Below outlines the needs of 21st Century learning components to be addressed both inside and outside the walls of our schools.

Critical components for successful **Student Outcomes:**

- Life and Career Skills
- Learning and Innovation Skills – 4Cs
 - o Critical Thinking
 - o Communication
 - o Collaboration
 - o Creativity
- Information, Media, and Technology Skills
- Key Subjects – 3Rs and 21st Century Themes

The items listed above represent the skills we need to instill in our learners through the Support Systems of Standards and Assessments, Curriculum and Instruction, and through 21st Century Learning Environments we create in our schools. To make this happen, we continuously strive to provide our educators ongoing professional learning options so they too can continuously grow their skills to meet the ever changing expectations.

In the chart below, the overarching skills are listed as well as the sub-skills. I have also listed why this is important to flourish in the 21st Century schools and work force.

| Life and Career Skills | Learning and Innovation Skills | Core Content Learning | Information Media & Technology Skills |
|--|---|--|--|
| Flexibility & Adaptability | Creativity & Innovation | Language Arts (Reading, Writing, Listening/Speaking, Language, etc.) World Languages skills | Information Literacy |
| Initiative & Self-Direction | Critical Thinking & Problem Solving | Mathematics & Economics | Media Literacy |
| Social & Cross-Cultural Skills Leadership and Responsibility | Communication | Sciences that include Health and Environmental | ICT Literacy: Information, Communications & Technology |
| Productivity & Accountability | Collaboration | Geography, History, Government & Civics | Critical Reasoning & Thinking Skills |
| WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? | | | |
| Students need to develop critical thinking and reasoning skills in order to apply the core content knowledge learned to life and careers. It is also important that individuals have the social and emotional skills to successfully navigate life and work environments in the 21 st Century. | Being a life-long learner that can demonstrate innovation ensures that student are prepared for the increasingly complex life and work environments. These skills are needed for both today as well as into their future. | Having a strong understanding of key subjects and these 21st century themes will be essential for continued success in school, work, and for life. As educators, we are finding ways to weave the 21 st Century Interdisciplinary Themes into the content areas learning. These opportunities provide students with deeper level understanding of academic content area while also experiencing skills needed for the 21st Century workplace. | We live in a technology and media-driven environment. We have access to an abundance of information and rapid changes in technology. It is important that students understand how to critically view information found in print, media, and on social media platforms. They also need to realize that what they post may affect them when future employers search these sites in deciding who they might hire. Effective 21 st Century learners know how to discern what is found in print/media and how to effectively utilize communication skills and the tools available to them in an ethical and positive manner. |

*Information taken from the Partnerships for 21st Century Learning.
For more information, visit P21 at www.P21.org.*



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RPMS Choirs bring a “Latte” Talent & Heart to Coffeehouse Concert

On October 18, the RPMS Choirs held their 5th Annual Coffeehouse Concert at Reeths-Puffer Middle School. Attending parents and community members enjoyed delicious coffee, cocas and fall-themed treats from the Giving Bean Coffee Company while enjoying large and small ensemble performances. Students also wowed the audience with solo acts that highlighted their singing and song-writing talent

This year’s Coffeehouse featured a collaboration with Mike and Laura Boxer. Mike and Laura comprise the local folk band, “Plain Jane Glory.” Choir students had the opportunity to hear about the song-writing process from Mike, who is also an R-P alum! The concert provided a sneak peek of the 2018-19 Choir Calendar and the many performance events ahead. It’s going to be a great musical year at RPMS!



Leadership Camp

RPMS student leaders spent three days surrounded by students from other area middle schools. They were provided opportunities to grow as individuals and as a team. The team went in with ideas about what might improve the school environment and they left with a focused project and action items they will be responsible for carrying out. Our group is focused on providing education to their peers about the risks and downfalls of vaping, which teens across the country are underestimating.



Foundry in a Box



Many thanks to Mr. Perreault and his group of volunteers Marty, Jill, Joe, Reg, Beverly, and Lou!



The middle school had a special visit from Mr. Perreault and his “Foundry in a Box.” Students in Mr. Tescari’s S.T.E.M. classes had the opportunity to mold, pour, and finish a real tin casting. This program is made available through the American Foundry Society and the local chapter that Mr. Perreault is a huge part of. With help from experienced volunteers, approximately 150 middle school students were able to participate.

Metalcasting is very prevalent in our area and provides many career opportunities such as:

- Business Managers
- Chemical Engineers
- Computer Engineers
- Electrical Engineers
- Human Resources
- Safety Managers
- Accountants
- Quality Control Technicians
- Marketing and Sales People
- Mechanical Engineers
- Metallurgists
- Skilled Trade



Students Take the Lead

RPMS Calling All Colors students are taking charge of leading the learning to prepare for a future opportunity when they will welcome Martin Lowenberg, a Holocaust survivor to Rocket City. Middle School students are leading the lessons and facilitating conversations among their peers. They are making connections with Mr. Lowenberg’s survival experience and respect, pride, integrity, hope, grit, perseverance, growth mindset, and being a bystander. In the process of positively impacting the culture of our building, student leaders are also gaining and practicing valuable skills.



RPI Radiates Pride...



Before the school year began, staff at RPI hit the ground running with PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) and have not looked back. The purpose of PBIS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm. To create an environment where everyone feels welcome, but more importantly, a sense of belonging. Teachers have taken a “team approach” by teaching/reinforcing common expectations building-wide. They have also been focusing heavily on building positive relationships with ALL students, not just those in their own classroom. This has created a positive culture where students feel cared about, respected, and motivated to be successful in all they do. When you walk through RPI doors, in the halls, or into a classroom, you will see positive interactions between teachers/students and students/students. Everyone is motivating each other to do and be their best, which in turn improves behavior, student engagement, and achievement. Staff will continue to focus on teaching “The Rocket Way” - Respect, Pride, Integrity, and fostering positive relationships. RPI’s mission is for ALL students to feel welcome, safe, and appreciated for their efforts, both academically and socially. This belief truly brings out the best in everyone...Go Rockets!!



Mrs. Coyne and her student helpers greeting kids before class. Studies show that positive greetings at the door of classrooms increased students’ academic engagement by 20% and decreased disruptive classroom behavior by 9%.



At RPI, Saying and Doing are Way Different

At RPI, we are always saying to do it the “Rocket Way” and focus on the positives in one another. We say, “We are a team!” We say, “We support all kids to their fullest potential.” We say, “What did you learn today?” All these ideas are playing out in our halls daily. We are challenging our students to be “doers!” RPI students have already lead three student fundraising activities, host RPI’s morning YouTube channel, completed two project-based learning events, created a yoga and mindfulness class, and have traveled to Grand Rapids, Lansing and multiple locations throughout Muskegon. All of these activities are tightly aligned to our goals for learning. We may say the quotes above, but when we put these quotes into action our kids win. When our school and community finds the positives in each other, we all win!





Small Group Instruction at RPI

Classrooms continue to change to meet the needs for our kids. Data-based grouping, along with targeted instruction, are becoming normal in all content areas throughout RPI. Students are being asked to show their thinking more and more in the classrooms. This collaboration takes coaching and strategies to allow for learning directly with the teacher and other groups. They hold each other accountable in learning while they work independently. We see that students who have a choice in their learning perform better, get direct instruction when they need help, and feel better about their learning. When they have a teacher that works with them throughout the day in a small group, they have more confidence in their work. It is fuel to continue to structure classes with collaborative, small group instruction, and opportunities for students to have a choice in their learning.



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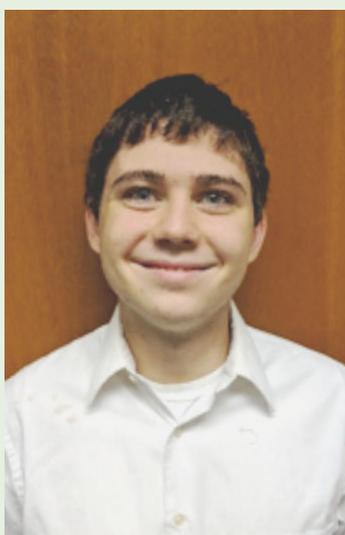
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Dakota



Evan

Commended Rockets

Two seniors, Evan Hodson and Dakota Kilcrease, have been named Commended Scholars in the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program.

About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2019 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, Commended Students placed among the top 50,000 scorers of more than 1.6 million students who entered the 2019 competition by taking the 2017 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

“The young men named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success,” commented a spokesperson for NMSC. “These students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation. We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success.”

Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Rockets educating Rockets! A huge shout out to Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Mollett from RPHS and Mrs. Overway and Mrs. Marvin from RPI and most of all, their students. Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Mollett’s cross-curricular 9th grade, World History and English Project Based Learning (PBL) students created children’s

books to share with Mrs. Overway and Mrs. Marvin’s students at RPI.

Recently, our 9th graders walked to RPI and met with Mrs. Overway and Mrs. Marvin’s students. The 5th and 9th grade classes were then grouped up with four high school students reading their books and leading guided activities for four RPI students. The RPI



students took notes, did activities, and provided constructive feedback to the high school students.

This was an outstanding, collaborative opportunity for the high school students to present their knowledge to the 5th graders and ultimately answer their driving question for the unit: “Did the benefits of exploration outweigh the costs?” It served as an equally profound opportunity for the RPI students to be introduced to the Age of Exploration, which they will be learning about later this school year. After the 9th graders finished their reading and activities, the RPI students also practiced their craft of giving targeted feedback. We are so fortunate to have such innovative teachers and students willing to explore ideas and try new things to maximize their potential as educators and learners.



Partnering with Community, a Win for R-P Athletes

Fundraising is a necessary part of the high school athletic experience, involving a lot of time and energy from both athletes and coaches. Consequently, it tends to be the least favorite part of the high school athletic experience. Gemini Production Solutions, an Indiana-based event management company, reached out to a few Reeths-Puffer coaches in hopes of partnering and providing coaches and athletes some quick and easy opportunities to earn money for their teams. Without reservation, R-P coaches jumped at the offer.

Gemini Production Solutions invited R-P Athletics to help with cleaning at the Electric Forest Festival on June

25th & 26th as well as July 2nd & 3rd. The R-P Athletics Team was responsible for cleaning the area known as, “The Good Life,” and in return, Gemini Production Solutions wrote Reeths-Puffer a significant check for their work.

R-P Athletics would like to send out a huge thank you to “Ranger” Rick Resener and Brenda Morse from Gemini Production Solutions, Joe and Jake Veltman from West Michigan Rubber, and Dean Transportation. Because of the help from these organizations, 100% of the money earned went directly into enhancing the R-P high school athletic experience!



Marching Band Wins 15th State Title

The RPHS Marching Band stormed Ford Field in grand fashion sweeping all three captions on their way to our school's 15th State Championship in marching band competition.

Mr. Hodson, Mr. Harris and Mr. Olian provided stellar leadership throughout their fall competition season leading up to the state championships held at Ford Field. This championship is extra-special for Mr. Hodson as he watched his son, Evan, take Ford Field one last time. It was also Mr. Hodson's last time directing our marching band as he will retire from his post as director of bands for RPHS. Mr. Harris, who was instrumental in guiding our band to this championship will now take full reigns of our marching band program.

We are very proud of our students, the tech crew, parents and especially, our directors!

Congratulations to our newest State Champions!



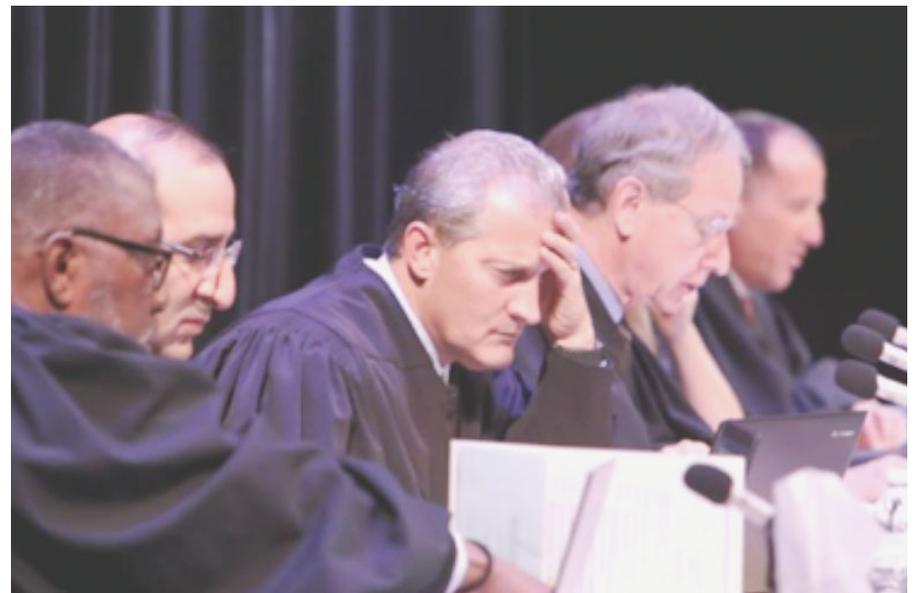
State Supreme Court Visits RPHS

As part of a community connections program, the Michigan State Supreme Court hears a case on the grounds of a public school, college or university once annually. This year marked the 23rd year of our state's highest court hearing a case outside of their courtroom in Lansing.

The event filled the Rocket Centre with over 350 Rocket students, 306 guest students from Muskegon County schools and over 200 dignitaries from Western Michigan.

The search and seizure case was very interesting for the students and the other guests in attendance.

The justices were very impressed by the engaging questions that our students presented during the debriefing time with the court. They also made kind remarks about our facility and the accommodating nature of both students and staff. It was a great experience for everyone involved.





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REETHS-PUFFER SCHOOLS 2018-2019 FALL SPORTS SCHEDULE

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athletic schedules can be found at rphsathletics.com

Reeths-Puffer Middle School
athletic schedules can be found at rpmsathletics.com

GO ROCKETS!

BOARD MEETINGS:

December 10, 2018

April 15, 2019

January 14, 2019

May 20, 2019

February 11, 2019

June 17, 2019

March 18, 2019

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