

AUGUST 2023

VOLUME 2023/24, ISSUE 1
THE DISTRICT NEWSLETTER FOR REETHS-PUFFER SCHOOLS



ROCKET CITY NEWS

Respect, Pride, Integrity



In Rocket City, we are a collection of schools, townships, and communities united under

a vision of wanting more, doing more, and becoming more. We are a geographic area where the hope of the future is more important than the challenges and accomplishments of the past. We are an area where the character strengths of engagement, grit, gratitude, empathy, and optimism drive our vision not to be the best in the world, but to be the best for the world. Here is where grit and empathy matter more than current ability and money.

As we navigate this journey as families, schools, and communities united in one district, I urge us all to engage in our students' lives. We can do this by modeling grit and determination, by expressing gratitude for the opportunities



we have been given, by utilizing empathy to understand the needs of others, and by being optimistic that hard work, determination, perseverance, drive, understanding, and love can truly make a difference for you, for others, and for us all. As we transition into the 2023-2024 school year, let's all resolve

to be the best we can be for each other, for ourselves, and for our world.

It's a great time to learn, contribute, and compete in Rocket City!

Sincerely, Steve

Steven L. Edwards

Open House!

Meet your Teachers
Walk the Gardens
Play with Friends
Enjoy a Snack
Make some Music
Say "Hello" to the Chickens
Be Happy!



Reeths-Puffer Pennsylvania Elementary

August 21, 2023

6:00pm-7:00pm

Bring the whole family!

Radium Photography will be available to take your child's school picture, so please make sure to visit them!

Pennsylvania Elementary Kiddos Love Books!



A great addition to our activities this year was adding a monthly visit from the MADL bookmobile. Mr. Jim (and Bernard from *Where the Wild Thigs Are*) came and read to both classes and then let the kids check out books. Fun fact: Mr. Jim was a student at Pennsylvania Elementary and loved seeing the building and all of the changes from when he attended!



West Michigan author Jill Barry-Cowan visited Penn this spring to read us her newly released book, *Millie Dreams of Michigan*. She brought fairy wands for each of the kiddos and they helped bring the book to life through Millie's adventures. Her new book, featuring Millie and her cousin Billy is set to be released on August 1st.



Penn's Feathered Friends

Kindergarteners at Penn are no strangers to caring for chickens. Caring for chickens is full of life lessons that could benefit these kiddos for their entire lives. Our feathered friends teach problem solving, patience, responsibility, team work, and respect for other creatures. They give us all something to care about besides each other and our school environment, all of which play a vital role in our daily school life. Each day, no matter what the weather, our “compost commanders” head to the coop and feed the chickens our lunch scraps, change out their water, and collect the eggs. Each of the classes also take turns cleaning out the coop and nesting boxes, putting down new bedding, and raking the outside run. Recently at summer gardening, the parents watched in amazement as the kiddos cleaned and replenished the coop and run with no direction at all from the teachers.



Compost commanders bringing the lunch scraps to our feathered friends.



Helping with a deep clean of the coop!



Freshening up the coop after a clean out!



Raking out the run before adding pine pellets to help keep it dry.

Each year we get chicks in the spring so the kids can experience raising babies. Once they are too big to be inside, we rehome them. This year, we decided to take it one step further and try our hand at hatching fertilized eggs.



Watching the hatching process begin!

We borrowed an incubator and the kids were in charge of making sure the temperature and humidity were kept in the proper range. They also kept track of the days. One fascinating thing this experience gave us was watching the development of the embryo over time. Candling the eggs gave us a sneak peek at what was going on inside that little egg. Truly amazing! Finally, the much anticipated day 21 came, and as if on cue, began the hatching process as we watched in amazement. We successfully hatched and raised 6 chicks.



We kept checking and the pip is now a crack. It won't be too much longer!



Around lunch time this little chick finally made its way into the world.



The kids loved checking in on the chicks in the brooder throughout the day!



Finally getting to hold them! All of our kinders were so patient waiting until the chicks were a little bigger to hold them!



Greetings Central Families,

We extend a warm welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! We look forward to continuing our mission of maximizing the potential in all of our learners. To that aim, we are using the summer to grow and develop professionally through

improvement and collaborative efforts that center on positive learning environments, viable curriculum, high quality instruction and design, data practices, and school safety. Our continued focus from a school improvement perspective involves using strengths-based approaches to provide all students a joyful experience, rich in purpose and meaning.

We value the role you play in your child's education, and recognize the impact that strong partnerships between school and home can have on student achievement. Your support and input are essential to our ongoing success. In the ensuing months, please consider participating in engagement events, health and wellness activities, math and literacy nights, and volunteering when needs are communicated. Additionally, please be sure to download the R-P app to follow our success stories as they unfold. While it will remain a priority to communicate pertinent information throughout the year, please be aware of a few important upcoming dates:

Office Reopens - Tuesday, August 8

Welcome Back & Placement Letters Sent Out -
Week of August 14

Open House - Wednesday, August 23 from 6:00 - 7:00pm

First Day of School - Monday, August 28

We eagerly await our students' return. Until then, enjoy to the fullest the remaining weeks of summer fun, and kiddos, keep reading every day!

We look forward to an exciting year of learning, and 2023-2024 being the best year yet!

Yours in Education,

Cody Hamilton

Central Elementary Principal



YOUTH EXHIBITION

Central was well-represented at the 2023 Youth Exhibition in downtown Muskegon to close out the year. The event gave students and staff an opportunity to showcase and celebrate the awesome learning that took place this year both at school and off-site throughout Muskegon County using project, place, and problem-based learning approaches.



Exhibits included Gardening at Central, Waste-Free initiatives, Salmon in the Classroom, Frog Unit, Bee Unit, Earth Savers, Canoe Paddles, and the Maple Syrup project. Most impressive was the extent to which students had clearly become the experts as a result of their studies and explorations throughout the year, allowing them to explain their learning and the processes of discovery to those visiting their displays.

The student experience continues to elevate at Central by way of hands-on, authentic, and outdoor learning. With each new idea merely folding into the next innovative thought, we look forward to 2023-2024 and beyond!





Positive Learning!

Cultivating a positive learning environment remains a primary area of focus and top priority at Central. Through Caring School Communities, PBIS, Capturing Kids' Hearts, and Ride with Pride, we continue to foster meaningful relationships worth protecting as we grow together, and worth restoring when things aren't easy.

As a culminating event to honor our first full year of CKH Leadworthy, and second year with Ride With Pride, we held a school-wide assembly to celebrate the journey and the many successes that have come as a result of our commitments. Ride With Pride gave students the opportunity to pledge our behavior expectations of Respect, Pride, and Integrity, while committing to the

Rocket Way both in and outside of school. In partnership, Leadworthy gave students the opportunity to sharpen their character and commit to a higher standard of excellence with monthly character themes such as

Self-Direction, Empathy, Responsibility, and Perseverance. Combined, and aligned, our school community continues to be enhanced as everyone involved recognizes their importance in shaping the overall experience, and generating collective success.

The gymnasium was filled with confidence and pride throughout the assembly. Most impressive, however, was the genuine excitement students displayed when their peers were recognized and honored. Their selfless joy was powerful, and inspiring. We look forward to this year's successes catapulting even greater ones to come, recognizing that we are better together!



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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.



Greetings R-PEL
Parents/Guardians and Families,

Welcome back R-PEL students and families, hopefully you have enjoyed an amazing summer in West Michigan! There is no better place to enjoy all that Michigan has to offer.

We are excited for the start of the 2023-2024 school year! The entire R-PEL team has been working really hard this summer to prepare for August 28th, the first day of school. Our focus continues to be on student safety, creating a positive learning environment and providing high quality instruction that allows for positive learning opportunities for our students.

As we start the transition from summer fun and relaxation to the fast-paced scheduled days of school, please savor the rest of your summer and make the best of your remaining days. Students, please continue to read every day!

The school building is ready to go. Our playground areas are still a work in progress. We are excited to have upgraded equipment and play areas for our students. The school office will be open Monday through Fridays from 8:00-4:00 each day. Student placement letters will be mailed out the week of August 14th. This letter will also contain other important back to school information.

Meet and Greet Information: August 23rd from 6:00-7:00 PM. Please report to your student's classrooms. This is for all Kindergarten through fourth grade students.

School Pictures will be available in our cafeteria on August 23rd from 5:45-7:30 for anyone that would like their picture taken early. We will also be taking school pictures during the school day on September 12th. Order forms will be in the welcome back letter that will be mailed to individual homes in August.

Feel free to call me in my office, 744-4777 if you have questions or concerns. We look forward to seeing all of you this fall and we are excited about another great school year at Reeths-Puffer Elementary School.

Paul Klimsza

Principal, Reeths-Puffer Elementary School



Mrs. Cowan visits Reeths-Puffer Elementary

We were so pleased to have former RP graduate Jill Barry-Cowan visit Mrs. Oyler's first grade class. This was the first time in 11 years that she has been back within the district. Today Mrs. Cowan came to inspire students by reading her first published book, "Millie Dreams of Michigan". This will be the first of many books in this new children's series inspiring children to use their imagination, and see the world. The students were amazed to see that this RP graduate worked hard and made her dreams come true. A person just like us! We loved her interactive read aloud strategy and students proudly waved their magical wands just like the character in the story, while she read aloud. Students were able to join in on many catchy parts as the wand took them to all their destinations. Our students loved that this was a book where they will be able to follow the character on many more adventures. We took it as an opportunity for writing in the classroom. We wrote to Mrs. Cowan to give her ideas of where "Millie" could travel next. Students wanted to see Millie in the following places in the future, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Florida, Texas, and Africa. The students are so excited to follow this author as she continues her journey to inspire young children. Keep on writing and remember your dreams can come true!



RPEL Fourth Graders Take Action!



Fourth Graders at Reeths-Puffer Elementary are making strides to make a difference in their community! After reading *The Hope Chest* by Karen Schwabach, the students were inspired to find their own unique way to take action and make a positive difference.

Students from Mrs. Harris's class organized a beach clean-up at Duck Lake State Park. They enlisted the help of their families and spent a Saturday evening cleaning up trash along the beach. Another group of students from the same class reached out to our local United Way and organized a school wide effort to collect items for a Baby Drive. They ended up filling an entire truck bed with donations!



In Mrs. Boes' class one group raised generous donations for Pound Buddies through a school wide can drive, another raised a significant amount of items to donate to Faithful to Felines, and another for Team Trees. Two students also asked local businesses to donate new bird feeders and houses for our school bird sanctuary, and Tractor Supply graciously donated one of each!

In Mrs. Machinski's class, the students worked together to create coloring bags for our local hospitals. The bags contain coloring pages and crayons for kids to use to pass the time during a long hospital wait. The class also decorated each of the bags to help bring a smile to the kids using them.

"How wonderful it is that nobody needs to wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."
- Anne Frank. We are so proud of these young Rockets for finding a cause and using their passion to make a difference.



Top left, descending: Addison Morrall, Jayce Streit, Zander Hinkle, Alex Carten, and Shanel Vanderberg (not pictured) filled a truck with donations for the United Way's Baby Drive.

Liam Kuberski, Jimmy Fodrocy, Sophie Tyszko, Madison Sharpe, Cecelia Halmon, and Kadence Heykoop spent a Saturday evening cleaning up the beach at Duck Lake State Park.

Brynnley Lamphere, Gwenyth Hower, and Harper Losee dropping off their donations at Faithful to Felines.

Shoutout to Family Farm and Home on Whitehall road for donating a brand-new birdhouse and bird feeder. Danny Zimmer and Andrew Corbin were thrilled! The birds are happy too!

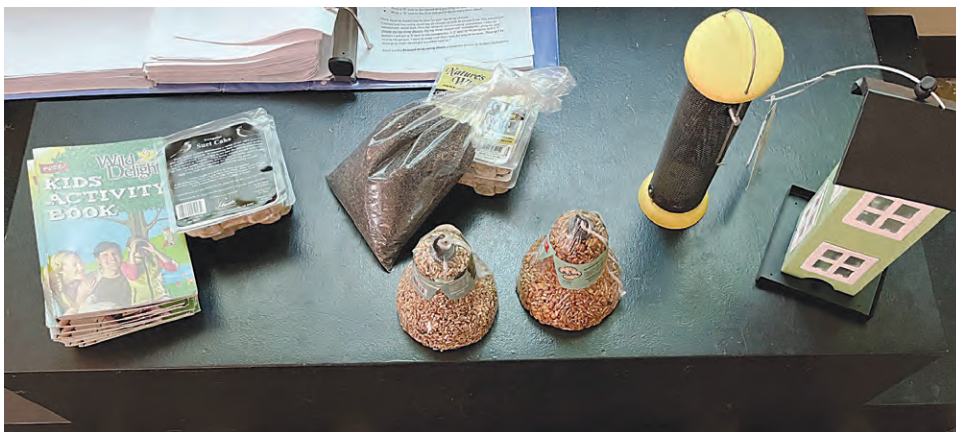
Top right, descending: Sadie Holmes, Haley Pruitt, and not pictured, Brayleigh Dietz dropping off their donations at Pound Buddies.

Wyatt Oyler, Jason Hernandez, and Carter Pruitt raised money for 17 trees to be planted!

Mrs. Machinski's class with their decorated coloring bags!

The Bird House of Generosity

R-PEL students from Mrs. Oyler's First Grade Class wanted to thank "The Bird House" in North Muskegon for their generous donation. The Bird House donated several bird feeders to our first-grade class. In the spring, first graders learn about birds, and the different body parts that help the bird survive. Students research and learn about the following birds: The Green Bee Eater, The Woodpecker, The Hummingbird, The Penguin, The Bald Eagle, The Peacock, and the Mallard Duck to name a few. Students had so many exciting questions about how they eat and when they eat, so after some reflection I thought "I have to figure out a way to get some birds to watch right from the classroom". With this thought, I went out into the community and asked questions, and it was the ladies at "The Bird House" that really took me under their wing. They answered all my questions, and sent me home with many bird feeders, and bird activity books for my entire class. All of this to help my first graders learn. Thank you, Kathy and Deb, you ladies rock! My students wrote thank you notes to Kathy and Deb for their generosity. The students were blown away by their kindness. They love watching the birds daily. I am looking forward to doing more business with these ladies in the future.



R-PEL Community Day



Thursday, June 1st we invited our Community Partners in to present to our entire student body about a variety of careers. We worked with Erica Johnson from the ISD and Michelle Kuck from the Career Tech Center to help collaborate and organize the day. Amongst the presenters, we had a bee expert speak about commercial pollination who came with an awesome display of a beehive, a water conservationist who spoke about how we can negatively and positively impact our watershed, and a retired educator who showed kids first-hand the importance of recycling.

We also had a DNR officer, Family Financial Credit Union Employees, a caterer, and local first responders including paramedics, firefighters, and 9-1-1 dispatchers who all selflessly dedicated their entire day to share valuable information with the students and share about their careers with all of us here at R-PEL

This annual event connects what we learn through our ELA curriculum to real world careers through hands on activities.



- Driveway Grading
- Recycled Asphalt
- Crushed Concrete
- Dolomite
- Slag
- Screened Topsoil
- Beach Sand
- Play Sand
- Fill Sand
- Clay

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Purple Up Fun!



As a parent of an Airman for 13 years and as a grandparent of two “military brats” that don’t live nearby, I wanted to do something special for the kids here in the Reeths-Puffer School District, K-6th grade in honor of my grandchildren. Being a military child can be very challenging. Never knowing when mom or dad will be deployed, and for how long, or, even when the family will have to move to another state or possibly another country. Kids are just expected to do what the parents say. It’s not easy and many are young enough that they don’t totally understand the sacrifice they are making as a family and as an individual to serve

our country. My son’s family has moved 3 times, with a 4th coming this fall. He has deployed twice and has been to numerous training sessions for weeks at a time. This can be very hard on the spouse and the children involved. I am so proud of all of them in their family and the kids in this district that have to go through some of the same things.

The “Purple UP” program is here to promote the sacrifices that children also make in a military family. The entire month of April is dedicated as the “Month of the Military Child” with April 15th Being “Purple Up for Military Kids” day. I wanted to say thank you



For more information about the “Purple Up” program you can check out these websites: <https://veteran.com/purple-up-day/> and <https://nationaltoday.com/purple-up-day/>

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to these elementary kids in our district by giving them a few purple goodies. I have seen first-hand what some of these kids have gone through and I appreciate the unknowing sacrifices they are making to serve our country along with one or both of their parents. Keep up the good work kids. I’m sure that all of Reeths-Puffer is proud of you.





R-PTLE 2023-24 School Year - Excited to be back!

We are looking forward to the school year beginning once again! Our Instructional Staff spent the summer learning, developing better instruction, and recharging. This summer work always serves as a reminder for how lucky we are to have the honor

to work with your students. The level of fun, joy, and laughter we experience is so much more when they are around. We can't wait to see them all again.

As we gear up to begin again, we are focused on looking for improved ways to engage with all the support our learning community is capable of providing. Local business and family involvement are something we strive to improve upon every year. We have the most amazing group of people involved with our PTO. We are very excited to engage with our PTO and find ways to strengthen our learning community and increase the impact our community can have on our students, as well as, the impact our students can have on our community. In connection to this mission, we have started to develop and will continue to strengthen over the next few years is our effort towards Project-Based Learning. Connecting our learning to solving problems and improving our learning community in an active and hands-on way benefits all of us. We look forward to this growth and the impact it will have on our students. If you have ideas that you would like to share related to this mission, do not hesitate to reach out.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you during our upcoming open house. We have new Teachers to introduce, new friends to meet, and a continued focus on excellence to establish once again. When we return we will see improvements to our playground areas. We have reactivated our gardens, both our raised garden beds and our hoop house have been upgraded with a renewed effort and passion! Also, under construction is an outdoor learning area surrounding our hoop house. So many things to be excited about as the 2023-24 school year is about to begin.

Please visit our website at <https://www.reeths-puffer.org/o/twin-lake> and/or our Facebook page at Twin Lake Elementary for ongoing updates to the beginning of the school year. A few dates to keep an eye on:

First weeks in August: Classroom Teacher assignments and supply lists.

Week of August 21st: Return to school open house held at Twin Lake Elementary.

August 28th: First week of school (Monday-Thursday ½ days for the first week back).

Gardening Project and Outdoor Learning Area



Reeths-Puffer Elementary Schools were awarded a grant this past year to restore our gardens. This effort is to establish a garden to table program that can be sustained for years to come. This incredible opportunity has already started to see the “fruits from its labor!” The cap to this program is that the food grown in our gardens will be served to our students at lunch. The following is a note from Miss Mileea:

Hi, my name is Miss Mileea. I am Reeths-Puffer's District Garden Educator! Reeths-Puffer school District was given a grant that gave me the opportunity to revive Twin Lake's hoop house and raised garden beds. I loved seeing the passion, and determination of Twin Lake's elementary students while planting their seeds and watching with curiosity and excitement as their garden continues to come to life. Your students get to discover how fruits and vegetables grow from seed to table, and what it means to take care of their school gardens and community.

Presently under construction, due to a thoughtful and generous donation from a former student at R-PTLE, our students will have an outdoor learning area attached to our hoop house to support the learning in the classroom and for our garden to table program. We will be excited to share more about this project when we complete construction.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Career Tech Center in Muskegon is **FUTURE. FOCUSED.** by offering teens the following career-prep programs:

Allied Health | Auto Collision/Refinishing | Auto Service Technology | Bio Tech & Engineering | Computer Aided Design | Construction Trades | Cosmetology
Criminal Justice | Electrical/Computer Technologies | Environmental/Veterinary Sciences | Graphic Production | Health Science Academy | Hospitality & Food Management | Software Design & Development | Machining/Engineering Technology | Welding Technology



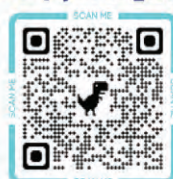
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Tiffany's Garden Restoration

Twin Lake Elementary has a special garden on our campus that was made in honor of one of our students who died in a car accident near the school. This accident happened about 30 years ago, and the garden has been left unkept for the past ten years or so. It was starting to become unrecognizable. Mrs. Olsen and her 4th-grade students decided to bring it back to life.

As part of our EL curriculum, we learn about how children can make a difference in our community. The garden is one of the projects this class decided to work on this Spring along with holding a Kids' Food Basket Drive.

In order to make a more personal connection to the purpose of the project, the class held a Google Meet with Tiffany's brother, Trevor, who now lives in Ohio. His first-hand account engaged the students and motivated them to get to work. The class spent almost four hours on Friday, April 21 working hard at pulling out overgrown bushes and plants. The students used teamwork and perseverance and felt a sense of pride at the end of the day. Since then, the class has worked to remove an old, dying tree, get a new replacement tree, spread mulch, and plant perennials- all of which were donated by local businesses or community members thanks to the letters that were written and sent by the students. The hope is that the garden will once again flourish and be a beautiful place for students to enjoy for years to come.





John Ball Zoo Supports Our Learning

Mrs. Essing's and Mrs. Zweigle's (Mrs. Hogan's) first grade classes went to John Ball Zoo to explore birds (along with many other animals). We spent the day at John Ball Zoo learning about birds. We researched and learned what makes a bird a bird, their physical characteristics, and what some of



their physical characteristics are used for to help them survive. We had so much fun observing birds in real life and learning more about them!

Our third and fourth grade classrooms were able to have the Zoo in their rooms! To support our learning around

animal adaptations and defense mechanisms in the Spring, John Ball Zoo brought animals in which we could actually get our hands on. Our learners were completely engaged with the lesson as they got to see, hear, and touch their learning!



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Thank you to our amazing Ride With Pride Sponsors for the 2022-2023 School Year. The Ride With Pride program is successful through the partnerships of law enforcement, schools and community partners. This year we were grateful to partner with Rynbergs Car Company as our car sponsor at RPHS, Rynbergs has already committed to donating another car for the 23-24 school year! Major sponsors also included Dean's Transportation, Yodel's, The Style Bar Salon and Spa, Family Financial Credit Union, Hobo's Tavern, Bellacinos, Joe's Creative Expressions and First Responders Children's Foundation. Thank you to ALL our sponsors



READING PROGRAM

Our Summer Reading Program is ending August 19th, but that doesn't mean you should stop reading. Find a good chapter book you can share with your family, or pick up several copies of a book to start your own Book Club. Pro Tip: Comics, Audiobooks,

that book you have to read for class...it all counts! Take the library with everywhere by visiting - madl.org/athome- to see all of our resources. Some of you have won prizes for all that reading you did over the summer, stop in to see if there is anything waiting for

you, and cheer on all readers.

Join us in the fall to build Lego creations, read to our Bow Wow Reader friend, go on a treasure hunt, visit with Santa, and enjoy Storytime and so much more. Some events you can join on the day it is happening, and some of the programs require registration - madl.org/calendar. See you @ the library!

Ms. Rachel Church - Twin Lake Library



Welcome Back, Rockets!

This is always my favorite time of the year. The excitement and promise of a new school year is unlike any other feeling. As teachers, we are experiencing a casserole of emotions. We are excited, rested, anxious, maybe a little scared, and definitely nervous. I'm guessing that is not a unique feeling for

both the parents and students...especially our incoming 5th graders! We are really excited to welcome you, the class of 2031, to the building for the first time as a unified grade (all three elementaries coming together for the first time)!

A few notable dates and events for you to plan for:

Tuesday, August 22

- Open House
- 5th Grade: 5:30-6:45 (with a welcome meeting in the cafeteria at 5:30)
- 6th Grade: 6:15 - 7:15

Sunday, August 27

- My Wish For You
- 5:00 - 6:30
- Last year, we started this event. We will have sticky notes on tables near door 1 (for 5th grade families) and door 5 (for 6th grade families) for you to write an encouraging note or 2 for your student. We ask that you keep this limited to sticky notes and not make this too elaborate! We want each student to have an encouraging message on their locker when they get to school on Monday, August 28.

Monday, August 28 - Thursday, August 31

First week of school. School will be in session from 7:45 - 10:55 on these days.

I will have more specific information about the start of school as we get closer! Please look for an email from me the week prior to open house! Lastly, once class rosters are solidified, your student's teachers will reach out to welcome you to their team! This should also happen the week prior to open house!

We cannot wait to learn and grow with you this year!

Your's in Rocket Pride,

Scott Panozzo

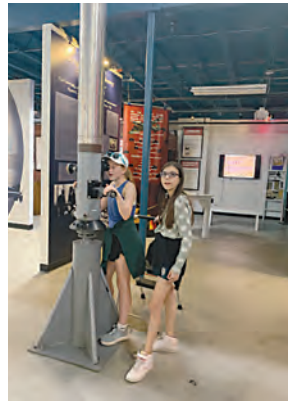


Camp Invention

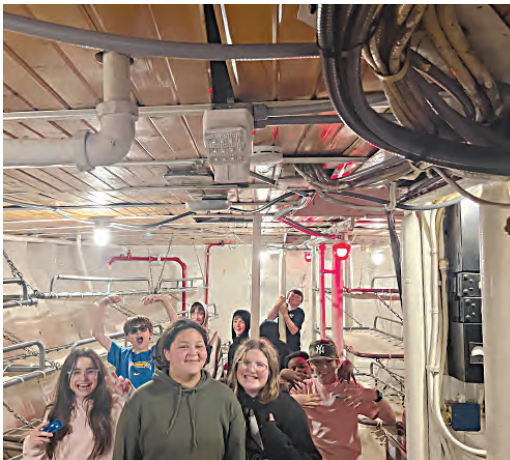
This year marked year 7 of inventors designing, creating, building, innovating, collaborating, engineering and, of course, inventing! Each year the program has been even better than the year before, which seems impossible as participants will attest to the FUN that is built into every aspect of science along the way. Students

work to solve problems by using properties of physics and the scientific process by hypothesizing, testing, revising, and improving. This year kids got to design and build their own skate park, program and decorate their own Mimic-bot, create and promote their own pop-up market stand, and they even came up with ways to innovate party planning! Aspects of biology and entrepreneurship further extended our explorers to get curious about the world around us!





Collaboration With Our Community Grows!



In May, Mrs. Olsen, Mr. Scott, and Mrs. Wahr had the opportunity to take their students on a study trip to the USS Silversides Museum. At the museum, the students attended a presentation to learn about the history of submarines, explored the museum, toured the USS Silversides Submarine, and investigated the instruments used in submarines. They also compared the instruments used on the submarine to tell time and direction, without the presence of the sun, to the sundials they created in a previous science unit. To wrap up the adventure, they took a walk to Pere Marquette Beach where the students hung out with friends on the playground. The day was remarkable, and it was an exciting opportunity for the students to learn outside the classroom walls!



Youth Exhibition of Learning

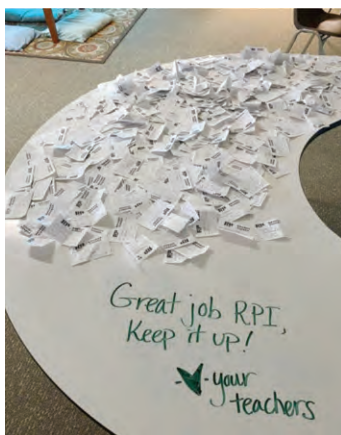
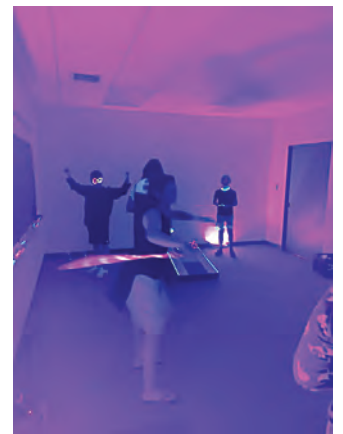
The MAISD holds a special event each year to showcase various Project-Based Learning accomplishments. This year some of Mrs. Peterman's students showed off their talents by sharing books they had written and illustrated. After learning about empathy, students used their writing skills to produce their own story showing empathy. Mrs. VanderLaan shared her knowledge and tips of becoming a writer, as well as many other community members sharing their time to help with illustrations and revising. Since stories are meant to be shared, the 5th graders read their books to some lucky RP elementary students.



The Rocket Way on Display... All of the Time!



Our PBIS team had a GREAT year of recognizing students who are showing the Rocket Way—Respect, Pride, and Integrity! Students were rewarded with Rocket Tickets which could be used in our “Blast Off Shop” (student store) or entered into a drawing for a bigger reward. Some students were selected to participate in Pumpkin Bowling in the fall, play games with high school visitors, or attend the bowling party in the Spring. Other students, who chose to save their Rocket Tickets all year were able to pie Mr. Panozzo in the face. It was a great year with a lot of fun for all!



Science In Action!



Students in Mrs. Moore's 6th grade class took a boat trip on the W.D. Jackson was a huge success. Students used math to calculate statistics based on the data pulled from the physical evidence retrieved from Muskegon Lake. Students analyzed the biology, turbidity, geography, and climate all while collaborating and discovering real-time status on the health of our ecosystem!



Duck Lake State Park

Team Matz/Peterman took their learning into the outdoors at Duck Lake State Park. After learning how to settle big emotions each week with Mrs. Peel, students had a chance to celebrate this



with a few culminating activities. Finding a rock and needing to locate it in a pile helped their team learn that like rocks, we are all unique in our own ways and need to embrace our strengths and our weaknesses. Hiking through the pines, using senses to notice the world around, and outdoor yoga provided practice and a great reminder of the simple ways we can be mindful now and for the years to come. Learning to build bird nests proved to be more challenging than one would think. However, by using design, collaboration and determination, students found success! This is sure to be an experience that will be cherished for a long time.





Welcome to RPMS

It won't be long before we open our doors for the 2023/24 school year and we can't wait to meet the incoming 7th grade class while continuing our journey with our 8th grade group! As the Principal of Reeths-Puffer Middle School, it is

my pleasure to welcome students back this fall. Our staff are preparing to provide the best experience possible for RPMS students! Collectively, we recognize that this is a formative time in students' lives filled with many opportunities to conquer new challenges and persevere by failing forward. As a middle school student, you will experience a level of independence, voice, and decision-making that comes with a great deal of responsibility. We look forward to supporting students through this time of transition by engaging in positive interactions and providing the tools, knowledge, and experiences necessary to be successful. We will continue to stress the importance of "The Rocket Way" by encouraging students to demonstrate respect, pride, and integrity at RPMS. Additionally, we will focus on our mission and vision to promote confidence, collaboration and critical thinking in support of our students becoming thriving citizens.

As we begin the 2023/2024 school year, it is important to place the following events in your calendar:

Registration and Student Schedule Pickup

During registration, work stations will be available for parents to complete the registration process online. You may complete the registration process in advance to make the process quicker. Parents must have a Parent PowerSchool account (get a code from our office if needed). Specific registration directions will be e-mailed in August. Once registration is complete, schedules will be provided and the building will be available to walk your schedule, take your school photo, & find your locker.

- Tuesday, August 15th (12pm-3pm & 4pm-7pm)
- Wednesday, August 16th (8am-12pm & 5pm-7pm)

Open House

Opportunity for parents, students, and staff to connect on building and classroom information.

- Thursday, September 7th (6:30pm-8pm)



Pride Day 2023

Thanks to the planning and preparation of middle school staff and student leaders, we were able to execute Pride Day 2023. Pride Day was filled with competitions, lessons, and activities aimed to demonstrate an individual and collective sense of what it means to be a Rocket! The event included school-wide Rocket Recognition to celebrate students demonstrating The ROCKET Way and Ride with Pride, a fitness challenge known as the color run, and a number of events for students to participate in throughout the day. Pride Day also marked the end of our class competition with the 8th graders edging out the 7th grade to earn a slushy day! We have a lot to be proud of at RPMS!



Rockets Take on Europe!

R-P M.S. continued its amazing tradition of traveling to Europe this summer in June! An adventurous group of 46 students, parents, and staff members traveled to Spain, France, and the United Kingdom. After a long day of travel, the group began their tour by viewing artwork at the famous Prado Museum before enjoying a traditional Spanish dinner of Paella. The next few days in Madrid were spent viewing the Palacio Real, Puerta del Sol, and Plaza Mayor as well as exploring many of the different neighborhoods in Madrid. The group also had the opportunity to venture to the nearby cities of Segovia, (where they saw a Roman Aqueduct built in the first century as well as the Alcazar, rumored to be the



inspiration for Disney's castle) and the walled city of Toledo with its beautiful cathedral. The group also was able to try many traditional Spanish dishes, desserts, pastries, and beverages.

The group then boarded a plane to Paris to explore the City of Lights for the next few days. Upon arrival, travelers explored the area around the famous Notre Dame Cathedral. During the days in Paris, the group spent some time in the Louvre Museum to see

the Mona Lisa and Venus de Milo, among other priceless works of art. Some members of the group traveled to Monet's Giverny Gardens to see where the famous painter lived and was inspired, while others enjoyed some free time around the city to shop and sightsee. Travelers were able to view the Arc de Triomphe and the Eiffel Tower and take plenty of pictures. One day was spent traveling to Versailles to tour the beautiful palace and gardens. The group ended their time in Paris with a riverboat cruise on the Seine and a glimpse of the sparkling Eiffel Tower!

The last leg of the tour started with taking the Eurostar, a high-speed train that travels 300 km/180 mph, to London. The group started their exploration with the Tower Bridge and continued on to St. Paul's Cathedral and the Covent Garden area. Many participants opted for an optional Harry Potter tour to visit filming locations of the famous movie series. The final day in London was a full one, starting with a city tour to see Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace and the Changing of the Guards, Big Ben and the House of Parliament, and a ride on the London Eye. Everyone had a great time spending our last night in the Piccadilly Circus area shopping, watching street performers, and enjoying the London nightlife and atmosphere.

The Middle School offers an opportunity to travel to Europe every two years. The trip that began



many years ago as a language centered exposure has evolved to become a cultural travel experience for students and parents which has been richly rewarding and considered by many to be "the trip of a lifetime." The trip offers an excellent opportunity to experience different languages, cultures, history, food, and expand our borders beyond Rocket City. Parents often remark how much their children change and mature after experiencing such a life altering and eye-opening opportunity. The next trip will be to Italy and Greece in the summer of 2025, and planning is already underway. Students enrolled in the 7th or 8th grade for the 2023-2024 school year will have the opportunity to enroll on this trip and Mrs. Luick will be providing more information in the fall. Space is limited and goes very quickly as this is the trip and experience of a lifetime!



Welcome RPHS Students!

The energy, excitement, and preparation on our campus all summer would indicate that the 2023-24 school year is going to be amazing! We are proud to offer a growing number of choices each year

to students where they can build meaningful relationships with adults and other students around common interests both during the day and after school. We are proud of the connections and relationships that make our school feel small while offering big school opportunities with fine and performing arts, Advanced Placement, support classes, athletics, and a variety of clubs.

To assist in the start of a great year together, below are some important events to place on your calendar:

Registration and Schedule Pick Up Information

You can begin pre-registering your student from home in August. An email will be sent to parents and students with specific directions. Workstations will be available at registration to access the on-line process if assistance is needed. Once the on-line portion is completed, during registration, you will get your schedule, be able to walk your schedule, get a parking pass if needed, and take your school photo. Complete your on-line registration in advance to make the process quicker. Like years past, you must have a parent PowerSchool account.

Schedule Pick-up/ Registration at High School:

Thursday August 17

8-11:00 Juniors & Seniors

12-3:00 Sophomores & Seniors

Friday August 18

8-11:00 Juniors & Seniors

12-3:00 Sophomores & Seniors

Monday August 21

8-11:00 Freshman

12-3:00 Freshman

For 10-12th grade students, plan on 30-60 minutes.

For incoming 9th grade students, plan 90 minutes.

Flex Time To Meet Specific Needs

A goal in all that we do is to meet students where they are in order to maximize their full potential. One of the greatest, and most challenging, parts of teaching and learning is that each student is unique and their needs are also unique. We design daily lessons with this in mind and we are also excited that next year to add on by utilizing 40 minutes twice a week in a very targeted and specific way to meet the varied needs of our students. A foundation of this Flex Time will be a relationship that will be established with a teacher over the entire four years of a students' career at the high school. Relationships are at the core of everything we do. Prior to Flex Time, we will utilize technology within PowerSchool for students to report to the class where they need reteaching, preteaching, or assessment support. Students will also have the opportunity to engage in increased post-secondary preparation and planning, mental health supports, and a variety of activities that improve our school climate and culture. Student voice and leadership is essential to the success of our building and will also be a driving force for the opportunity the Flex Time will provide students at the high school. We can't wait to see our students thrive with this intentional use of flexible time.



Send Off Of The Class of 2023

As each student walked across the stage on June 6th, there was so much more wrapped into each step than the name that was read. Each student has a story, a list of successes, and barriers that were persevered through their time at the high school. The graduating class of 2023 also has a collective story of perseverance and success. The class of 2023 ended their Freshman year with the shutdown of in-person learning and in-person social experiences, but that certainly has not stopped this class from leaving their mark as leaders at R-PHS. The valedictorian, salutatorian, and elected class speakers represented their class well with celebrations of accomplishments and shared memories as well as challenges for their classmates to create their own story, embrace and learn from mistakes, and to reflect on their accomplishments and community support along the way.

During the Honors Ceremony, we celebrated the accomplishments of the class of 2023 with over 1.8 million dollars in scholarships earned toward their future education. In addition to colleges and trade schools throughout Michigan and the country, the class of 2023 has 49 students that have earned and will be using the Muskegon Promise which will provide two years of free education at Muskegon Community College or Baker College of Muskegon. From there, students can earn an associate's degree and choose to transfer to a four-year university. The night was a great celebration of past accomplishments and a future of life-long learning.

Whether it is in student sections, on the stage, in arenas, or in our classrooms, this class has made Reeths-Puffer proud and has a bright future in front of them. They have had an impact through their leadership that will last well beyond their time as a student. They are forever ROCKETS!

Curriculum Corner



Nate Smith
Director of Instruction and Learning

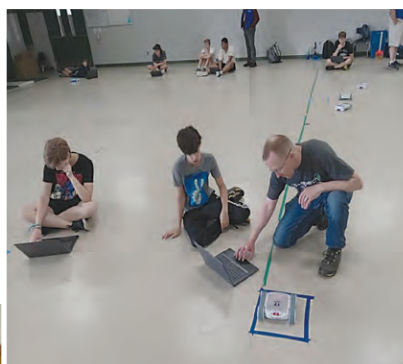
Sometimes Things Change

Welcome to the 2023-24 school year! We are excited to continue the learning journey with our students being at the center of each decision. Their ideas and curiosities drive our classrooms each day.

This year we will encounter incredible opportunities, such as learning with new technologies coming at us from Artificial Intelligence and new computers that are specialized in visual and virtual environments. The environments that students are

learning in are ever changing and range from virtual classrooms with kids from all over the Midwest to a new scheduled flex time at the High School allowing students to seek support based on their own needs and learning desires.

These are exciting times with many changes for Reeths-Puffer. We need to embrace these changes and grow in

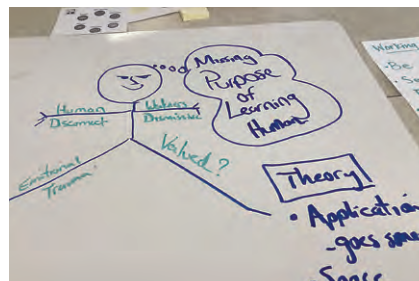
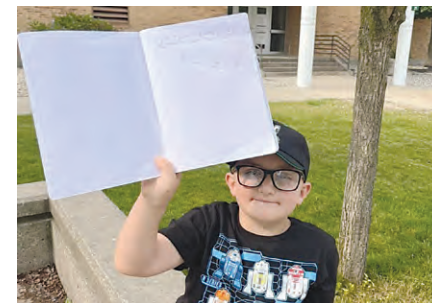
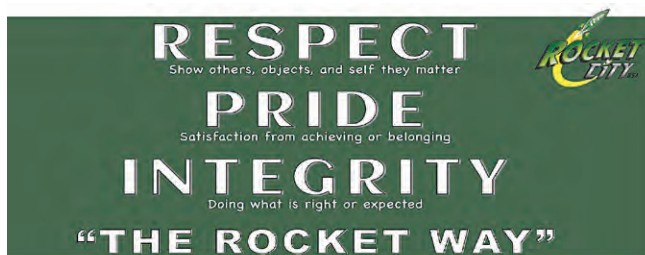


our understanding of their use with and for our Rockets to allow our students to graduate and make an impact on the world! Here's to a great year of innovation, curiosity and embracing the changes that we are experiencing together!



Sometimes Things Stay the Same

There are some Reeths-Puffer strategies that will stay the same that families and students can expect heading into the 2023/24 school year. As a community that values learning we will continue to maximize our students each day with decision making, support and opportunities that are built on our Big 3.



PBIS – Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports

Our students, upon returning to school, can have confidence that they will be greeted and supported in “The Rocket Way”. Respect, Pride and Integrity in everything that we do. Whether we are competing on the volleyball court, walking the halls or are in the student section at an event, these words continue to be our way to promote a positive learning environment, consistent language and expectations in our schools and community.

Viable Curriculum – Visible, Standard Aligned and Student Centered

Our students and families can expect to have a curriculum that is consistent for students across classrooms that are based on state standards but most importantly designed to maximize their potential beyond Reeths-Puffer. Students are able to utilize their unique backgrounds, contribute and add value to the learning environments and experiences in collaboration, problem solving and project-based demonstrations of learning. Our goal is to create learning environments in which our students are welcomed and encouraged to take risks with their learning and improve a little bit every day.

Emotionally and Physically Safe Environment

We believe that students need to feel safe, seen and valued for their unique talents to be maximized. This occurs through positive interactions, communication that is open and honest, safety protocols, clear expectations and an entire community that works together for each student. We remain committed to counseling access and support for students who need unique learning paths and academic support.

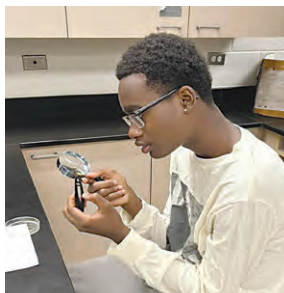


Summer Acceleration Extends to Year 3 This Summer

When our community was faced with unfathomable challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic we were, and continue to be, charged with supporting our kids and families in the recovery from the shutdown and disruption of a global pandemic. One of the most impactful and inspiring components of the recovery has been the creation and implementation of a community-based learning program called Summer Acceleration. This program is funded by federal recovery dollars and each year we have wondered if there would be funding provided to continue this impactful program for our students.

Each year we learn and we tweak. This year 100% of our staff are R-P teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers and administration, which allows for even greater connections for kids to their community and school. We have partnered with over 40+ community businesses, non-profit organizations and community agencies. This summer our learning community is more than just school. It is authentic learning, students take their ideas to locations around Muskegon, work side by side with professionals in the community and are working with the community to build a stronger Muskegon after Covid-19.

The program is dependent on Federal Grant funds which end this year so the future of the program is uncertain but we just could not be more humbled and thankful for the support of the 2000+ K-12 students and families who have trusted us with this recovery program and the positive impact it has had on our Rockets and their learning!



Reeths-Puffer Schools Wins the Certificate of Excellence Award

Reeths-Puffer Schools Muskegon, MI

The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) is pleased to award Reeths-Puffer Schools the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting (COE). ASBO International's COE recognizes districts that have met the program's high standards for financial reporting and transparency.

The district was recognized for its Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year ending 2022. This was the district's ninth submission for the award and the ninth year it was received. District leadership has been committed to this undertaking and is very proud of this accomplishment. The finance department, led by Finance Director Tracey French, compiled the necessary information in time for the annual audit. Brickley DeLong, certified public accountants assist with some technical aspects of the submission.

"The COE's mission is to promote and recognize excellence in financial reporting," ASBO International Chief Operations Officer/ Interim Executive Director Siobhan McMahon says. "The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report informs stakeholders about the financial and economic state of the district, making it an important communications tool for building trust and engaging with the school community."

By participating in the COE program, school districts demonstrate their commitment to financial transparency. A district's participation in the COE program can facilitate bond rating and continuing bond disclosure processes. Reeths-Puffer Schools' strategic plan includes the valued goal of "the open sharing of district financial information". This award is another symbol of the district's commitment to this goal.

Reeths-Puffer Schools is the only district in Muskegon County that is a current recipient of this award, and one of only a handful in the West Michigan region and the State of Michigan as a whole. The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for Reeths-Puffer can be retrieved on the district website at www.reeths-puffer.org.



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UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

September 11, 2023

January 15, 2024

May 20, 2024

October 23, 2023

February 12, 2024

June 17, 2024

November 20, 2023

March 18, 2024

July 15, 2024

December 11, 2023

April 15, 2024

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