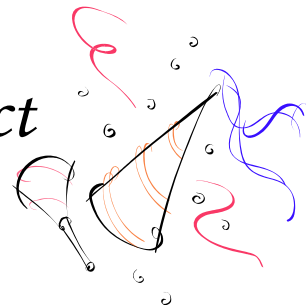




Readington Township School District Parent Newsletter



January 2012 Edition

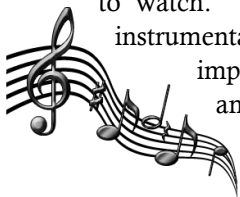
Editor in Chief: Barbara Sargent, Superintendent bsargent@readington.k12.nj.us

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Welcome back to school and to the (almost) second half of our academic year. We have a few new folks working among us whom I'd like to introduce:

- Three Bridges School has a new Media Center Specialist named Bridget Hartman. Bridget recently graduated from Rutgers University.
- Jennelle Barbiche joins the Social Studies department at Readington Middle School to fill the retiring shoes of Caroline Green-Chonko. Jennelle is a graduate of Penn State University and has taught in Flemington-Raritan and Asbury.
- Michele Doyle has been hired as a new French teacher at Holland Brook School. Michele most recently taught in the Chatham School District and takes the reins from Madame Lois Baldwin, who resigned to take a position at Robbinsville High School.
- Paul Nigro begins his work as Principal at Holland Brook School. The students and staff organized a lovely thank you send-off for Hal Blackstone just before the holiday break and are excited to work with their new principal. Paul comes to us from High Bridge Elementary School where he has served as principal for the past four years.
- No one was feted more than Mary Jean DiRoberto during the last days of December, and we wish her a long and healthy retirement. We have identified a candidate for the Supervisor of Humanities position and anticipate this person will be approved at our January 10th board meeting.

I would also like to acknowledge at this time the marvelous work of our performing arts teachers. The December chorus and band concerts at the schools were so much fun to watch. The students sounded great—and the instrumental talents of our older students are very impressive. Thank you to those teachers and their helping teacher elves for presenting such fabulous shows!



MATH WEBSITES

IXL is a comprehensive, standards-aligned math program offering unlimited practice in thousands of skills. One of the best things about IXL is that students can access it from school and from home!

Each student in the district has been assigned a user ID and password by their teacher. In most cases this is the same user ID and password a student would normally use to log into school computers. To access IXL Math from home simply open a web browser on your computer and navigate to: www.ixl.com/signin/readington

After signing in, click the Practice tab to select skills to practice. You can place your mouse over any skill to see a sample question. Or, click the Awards tab to begin conquering math challenges and uncovering prizes!

Another math website to try is <http://www.coolmath-games.com/0-coffee-shop/index.html>. This is a new version of the Lemonade Stand math game and features a Coffee Cart as the business site.

Of course, children should be monitored anytime they visit Internet sites. Please be sure to hover and provide proper supervision so that your child's experience with these sites is a positive and safe one. Enjoy!



Wednesday, January 18

HSA Meeting and Meet/Greet Principal Paul Nigro
Holland Brook School Media Center
7:00 p.m.

Please join us for coffee, treats and conversation with our new HBS principal before the regular HSA meeting begins.



Pulp Fiction

Colleen Cruz, a teacher and author who works with the Teachers College *Reading and Writing Project*, recently spoke about the role that trashy fiction plays in readers' lives. "If you were to stretch out your log of reading, there would be some trash in there. It might be the summer beach



read by Danielle Steele or Janet Evanovich, or the quick skim through *People* magazine in the supermarket aisle, but most of us naturally and easily incorporate some pulpy reading into our literary days." We need to give that same break for our student readers. Looking for a healthy balance in your children's reading diet? Read on!

Colleen Cruz stresses that readers "cannot live on Anna Karenina alone." Proficient readers naturally include a mix of reading ~ non-fiction, short articles, light reading fare, and heavier novels ~ in their literary lives. It's especially critical that we offer this mix of text to our developing readers, lest they tire and get frustrated from a diet of steady "classics". Trash reading might be considered the gateway to more hefty reading.

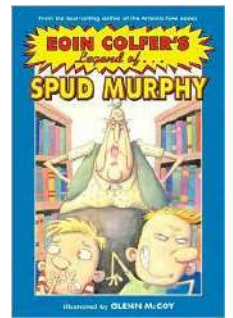
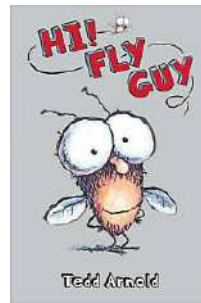
Categories of Trashy Fiction

- ✓ Pop Culture: Sponge Bob, Clone Wars, etc.
You won't invest in these titles to save them for years and years, but should get them for the short term. They'll only be "hot reads" for a short time, and your child can pass them along to friends.
- ✓ Sports: Not Matt Christopher, but those photo-driven books about the hottest new star athletes. There's little print, but great photos and captions to capture students' interest.
- ✓ Graphic Novels: Hardy Boys and Goosebumps, to name a few, are some of the books now available as graphic novels – or, comic book text – as we might recognize it. Don't dismiss these so easily. Readers need to read left to right, up and down, shaky bubbles and plain bubbles, and interpret the pictures. There's lots of inference work and synthesis work as readers pull all these strategies together.
- ✓ Gross Out Books: Such as, Grossology (a non-fiction book), The Bathroom Reader, and R.L. Stine's Rotten Stuff. Allow your parent sensibilities to decide which titles you will allow and which ones you won't.
- ✓ Books with Cool Covers: Sparkly, silvery covers act just like fancy gift wrap to attract readers. Some of the *Star Wars* books have these, and be sure to check out Legend of Spud Murphy by Eoin Colfer, author of Artemis Fowl.
- ✓ Joke Books: These books showcase word play, sarcasm, subtlety, and inference. Better for comprehension than we would probably acknowledge.

- ✓ Genre: Subject matters of horror, humor, and science fiction are big draws for readers.
- ✓ Magazines: *MAD Kids*, *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, *Boys Life*

Degrees of Building

Know the next "less trashy" level of book to recommend. Librarians can help with this. For example, first grade readers might start with Super Fly Guy, go to Minnie and Moo, then Elvis the Rooster, to Henry and Mudge. Adult readers might start with *PEOPLE*, then read some Danielle Steele, then Nicholas Sparks, then An American Wife, and finally Anna Karenina. As long as our children don't spend all of their reading time immersed in trashy literature, they're sure to be honing their comprehension skills on a variety of reading.



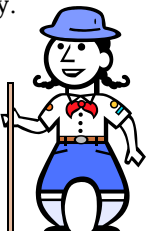
Save the date!
March 22nd
HSA Spring Social
Stanton Ridge Golf and Country
Club
Details to follow on ListServe

SCOUT SUPPORT

Scout Leaders, are you in need of someone to:

- ✓ Lead a Cub Scout meeting for the Scholar achievement;
- ✓ Serve as a Merit Badge Counselor for Personal Fitness, Communications, Reading, Scholarship, or Journalism;
- ✓ Assist Girl Scouts or Brownies with any badges associated with fitness or academics or literacy.

Please feel free to reach out to me (Barb Sargent) for support in these areas. I've done these activities for the Hillsborough Scout Troops and am a registered counselor, and I'd be happy to assist in Readington, as well!



Readington Township Schools January – March 2012 Calendar



January

- 2nd – Schools Closed – Winter Recess
- 3rd – Schools Reopen from Winter Recess
- 5th – HBS Gr. 5 Band Technology Night, 6:30 pm
- 5th – HBS Gr. 4 Strings Orientation, 7:30 pm
- 10th – Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 pm
- 11th – Special Education Parent Advisory Meeting, “Technology in the Classroom”, 7 pm
- 13th – Early Dismissal for Students – Curriculum Day
- 16th – Schools Closed – Martin Luther King Day
- 17th through 20th – HSA Used Clothing Drive at All Schools
- 17th – Market Day Pickup 4:30-5:30 pm
- 18th – HSA Meeting, 7 pm
- 20th – TBS/WHS Movie Night
- 24th – HBS Invention Convention
- 24th – RMS Algebra Midterms
- 24th – Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 pm
- 25th – HBS Invention Convention
- 26th – End of Marking Period 2
- 26th – HBS Invention Convention Snow Date
- 27th – Chat with the Superintendent, 9:15 am

February

- 2nd – Hunterdon Central Back-to-School Night
- 6th – HBS Club Photos
- 9th – Report Cards Distributed
- 10th – RMS Winter Dance, 7-9 pm
- 14th – Market Day Pickup, 4:30-5:30 pm
- 14th – Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 pm
- 15th – HBS Chorus/Band/Strings Concert, 7 pm
- 17th – Early Dismissal for Students – Curriculum Day
- 20th – Schools Closed – Presidents Day
- 23rd – RMS Lip Sync
- 24th – TBS/WHS Winterfest
- 28th – Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 pm (at TBS)
- 29th – Grade 5 Visits to RMS for Musical, 1:30 pm



March



- 1st and 2nd – RMS Musical
- 1st – HBS Science Olympiad
- 2nd – HBS Science Olympiad Snow Date
- 2nd – Read Across America Day
- 6th – TBS/WHS Kindergarten Registration, 6-8 pm
- 7th – TBS/WHS Kindergarten Registration, 9-11 am
- 8th – HBS Bobcat Bingo, 6:15 pm
- 9th – Early Dismissal for Students – Curriculum Day
- 11th – Daylight Saving Time Begins
- 13th – Market Day Pickup, 4:30-5:30 pm
- 13th – Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 pm
- 14th – RMS Pi Day
- 14th – Special Education Parent Advisory Meeting, 10 am
- 16th – TBS/WHS HSA Mini-Courses
- 19th – 23rd – HBS and RMS Book Fairs
- 22nd – HSA Spring Social
- 23rd – TBS/WHS HSA Mini-Courses
- 26th – 30th – WHS Book Fair
- 27th – Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 pm (at HBS)
- 29th – Chat with the Superintendent, 7 pm
- 30th – TBS/WHS Winterfest Snow Date