

The Superintendent Sentinel | PARENT NEWSLETTER

June 2022



Message from the Superintendent

When I wrote my welcome back letter to parents and families in September, I looked toward a fulfilling school year with extraordinary opportunities for our students. I recall my excitement as we opened our school doors for all students for full days of in-person instruction and am proud to say our school doors never closed during this year. Since then there have been countless events, activities, and celebrations that demonstrate how we are moving in a direction that positions COVID-19 in the background. As this year comes to a close, I am filled with gratitude and would like to express my appreciation for those who have made this year a success.

Thank you to parents and families. The support of parents has made this year a huge success. When we asked parents to partner with us, we saw amazing things happen in our schools. Our HSA provided us with some wonderful fundraisers and student celebrations.

Thank you to teachers and staff. The teachers and staff worked tirelessly to achieve the goals we set out to achieve at the beginning of the school year. They provided a constant source of comfort and consistency for students. We recognized the efforts of our staff by honoring a select group of educators as our Governor's Educators of the Year; a true accomplishment!

Thank you to students. I have continuously admired our student's resilience in the face of challenge. I have truly enjoyed watching the children of Readington learn and grow this year. They are an impressive group of young people with bright futures!

As the summer approaches there is so much to look forward to - summer barbecues, the pool, beach, vacations, and summer reading - I am continually reminded of how we are a community who "Together, Inspire and Inquire." We will be here in September to empower members of our community to lead purposeful lives with integrity, to cultivate a spirit of discovery, and to embrace connections in our diverse, global society. I look forward to living this mission with you in the fall!

In photo above: Dr. Hart and our 2021-2022 GEOY Honorees



Dr. Jonathan Hart / 908-534-2897
Follow me on twitter @hartjonathanr

Summer Board Meetings – July 19 and August 23, 2022

Please note the summer Board of Education meetings will start at 5:00 p.m. The board agendas will be posted on Thursday, July 14 and Thursday, August 18. Please check the agenda for the announcement of meeting location.



"Cause a little bit of summer is what the whole year is all about." – John Mayer



Curriculum Corner The Summer Matters

Dr. Stacey Brown, Supervisor of Humanities
Ms. Sarah Pauch, Supervisor of Math, Science & Technology
Ms. Sherry Krial, Supervisor of Professional Development



“The Summer Matters: How to decrease summer learning loss but still have fun”

“What?! I have to read and do math during the summer, too?” Does this sound like a statement made by a young person in your home? Hopefully not, but if it does, you are not alone. For some students, the volume of academics typically slides during the summer months. Even more discouraging, some students’ academic engagement slides all the way to zero--- not a single book or math calculation all summer! Other children are avid learners, reading 1-2 books every couple of weeks and practicing math skills in authentic settings.

Research shows that children that don’t engage in academics over the summer, especially young students and students who are struggling, can lose up to three months of learning in just one summer. Make plans with them now to avoid summer regression. There are easy steps to take to avoid summer regression. Reading just a few books this summer, visiting the local library, and insisting that children make time for reading can curve the summer slide.

Here are a few tips for keeping your children engaged in reading all summer long:

Be a model. Experts agree that this is the most important thing parents can do. Children mimic the people they respect and feel closest to. If you make time for reading and talk about the books you are reading, your children will be anxious to become readers, too. Make a list with your children about all the books they want to read this summer.

Read together. Find a series or topic that you both enjoy and read together: historical non-fiction, biographies, science fiction, or books that link to a summer trip or activity are all great choices to hook children into reading.

Give kids time to read. Summer schedules can be jammed packed, so be sure to find time for your child to read. Time in the car is a great opportunity to listen to audiobooks. Insist that kids bring a book with them to the beach or cabin or on a long drive or flight. Visit the local bookstore in vacation spots. Talk with your child about the books they are reading.

Check your child’s school website and social media links. Some schools offer a recommended summer reading list. Check your child’s school website for a quick guide to the best books to read this summer.

Set aside “no electronics time” daily. Summer days are long. There is plenty of time for kids to read a book and make reading one of their priorities. Start with an amount of time that can be easily achieved by your child and build time weekly.

Begin right away. Don’t wait until the last weeks of the summer to begin a reading routine. Start right away. Be consistent and begin as soon as school ends so that an established routine is set for the summer.

Here are a few tips for keeping your children engaged in math all summer long:

Highlight the math in everyday activities. When shopping, help kids calculate change or discounts. When watching a baseball game, talk about what players' statistics mean. When cooking, try halving or doubling a recipe, and assist kids in figuring out the new proportions.

Read short math stories together. Studies have shown that reading math-focused stories to children, such as Bedtime Math books or the Family Math series, can help boost math scores in school.

Play math games. Games like Yahtzee, Racko, Blokus, Monopoly, and Set all rely on skills necessary for math, such as counting, categorizing, and building. Even playing with blocks and assembling jigsaw puzzles can help kids learn spatial skills and recognize patterns.

Find small ways to practice math at home. While worksheets alone won't solve the summer math slump, small amounts of practice with basic formulas can help. Problem-of-the-day math calendars are a great way to practice basic math problems on a small scale. Parents can also find resources on Investigations about what types of mathematical procedures they should be practicing with their children. --*Summer Math Loss by Leah Schafer*

Promoting a child's love of learning is one of the most important things we can do as parents to put our children on the road to success. Keep the learning alive this summer and reap the benefits in the fall when your child goes back to school with confidence.

Summer Enrichment

Mrs. Colleen Ogden, Summer Enrichment Coordinator
cogden@readington.k12.nj.us



Summer Enrichment courses will be held at district schools on **July 25 - 28, 2022**, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m., and **August 2 - 5, 2022**, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. There are still openings for the July dates/registration is closed for the August dates. Registration and additional information can be found on the Readington School District Summer Enrichment Website. Please [click here](#) to access.

Tech Department: Summer Wishes

Mr. James Belske, District Technology Coordinator
jbelske@readington.k12.nj.us or 908-386-2502



As we near the end of the school year, it was wonderful to see how our students utilized and embraced technology throughout our district. With the support of an awesome teaching and technical support staff, students every day relied on and incorporated technology into their learning requirements. Equally important will be the continued professional development & staff

training to help maximize and utilize technology to its full potential. Our district looks forward to providing and supporting technology for our students and staff needs as we transition into another school year. We hope everybody has a wonderful and restful summer break! As always please feel free to reach out to me directly with any technology questions or general comments.

***"What a computer is to me is the most remarkable tool that we have ever come up with.
It's the equivalent of a bicycle for our minds." – Steve Jobs***

Self-Care

Mr. Anthony Tumolo, Supervisor of SEL and Special Projects



In recent years, the term “Self-Care” has become a popular buzzword. Most of us have been informed that when on an airplane, we are instructed to put our own oxygen mask on first before helping someone else. Furthermore, it is understood by many that it is important to take care of yourself in order to be your best for those around you, but what does self-care actually mean? How would you define it and why is it so difficult to do? I invite you to take a moment to reflect on this.

For me, I have come to realize that this term is extremely personal and it looks different for each of us. A pioneer psychologist, Carl Rogers stated, *“I have always been better at caring for and looking after others than I have in caring for myself. But in these later years, I made progress (p. 80). Self-compassion can serve as a protective factor against such potentially debilitating effects of work-related burnout.”*

Below, I offer you a short list of resources that may help you understand the science behind self-care along with practical strategies to implement into your everyday busy life. It takes a conscious choice to take time for yourself and

your well-being. So this summer, my hope for each of you is that you take moments to focus on you and your needs. Give yourself permission to take care of you, so you can be the best version of yourself for those around you. You deserve that and so do the people around you. I wish you all a joyful, rejuvenating summer.

- [Self-Care Questionnaire](#)- Take this short questionnaire to help you identify specific areas in your life that are well-tended and those that could use more time and attention.
- [The Science of Self-Care](#) by Momentous Institute
- [Caring For Your Mental Health](#)- National Institute of Mental Health
- [Mindfulness Practices](#) to cultivate peace, focus, and a sense of calm
- [Cosmic Kids](#)- Mindfulness, Stories, Yoga and Movement for K-3 students
- [SEL District Parent Page](#)
- [What is Self-Care and Why is it so Important?](#)- from Everyday Health

Other Resources for Parents

Helping our Children Cope During these Difficult Times

[Our Readington District Safety and Security website](#)
[American School Counseling Association website](#)
[Center for Resilience Well-Being In Schools](#)
[The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)
[Helping Children Cope with Tragedy](#)
[Helping Children Cope with Tragedy - Spanish Version](#)

“The only person who is educated is the one who has learned how to learn and change.”

– Carl Rogers

Three Step Road Map for Mental Health Hack When Tragedy Hits

As shared by Screenagers

Dr. Delaney Ruston of Screenagers recently shared the following Three Step Road Map for Mental Health Hack when Tragedy Hits and how to help our children with their mental health while dealing with the recent events that have occurred. You may use this 3-step roadmap any time you think these resiliency skills could be positive for your child.

Step #1: Discuss and normalize how common it is for many emotions to arise that keep a person from doing actions. These are just some of the thoughts that often go through a person's head (young or old): "I am so inconsequential, so what difference can I make?"; "The problems are so big, so the little things don't matter."; "This is all pointless. We are doomed." Discussing this thinking pattern is key because we know that young people are more prone to all-or-nothing thinking. Talking about such mind patterns is an important way of broadening emotional intelligence.

Step #2: Address what we can and can't control. An exercise you may try with kids and adults together that is always really well received is to have them draw a hand and write things all over their hand they feel they can control. For example, "I can control creating art to spread positive messages." ... "I can control my attitude." ... "I can control what I choose to watch or read." ... "I can control what I focus on." Then, have them write the things the person can't control around the outside of the hand. We can't control other people's actions. When they are done, have everyone make a fist to remember this is everything you can control. The essential aspect of this exercise is that it speaks to truth. Kids know when we are overselling things, like when we tell them, "You can totally change the world." They want authenticity, which this exercise is about.

Step #3: Follow their lead but be ready with a backpack of provisions. If your child is already doing some positive actions, that is great, and let them keep leading the way. But if they are not, it can be helpful to give them provisions. For instance, *you* can help model some actions by writing a letter to a congressperson from your family and bring it to your teen to see if they would sign it. Another example is to organize an outing with another family where you will be doing consciousness-raising. Coordinating and compromising with your teen makes them more likely to come along. Maybe you agree it will only be a short time, but the chances are that they will want to stay once they are there. We can all do things to make a difference in our community to help our kids become even greater change makers.

Ideas to get the conversation started:

1. What are events in the world on our minds these days?
 2. What feelings can keep us from doing any actions to help?
 3. When was the last time we did something to make a difference, a donation, community service, etc., and how did it make us feel?
 4. What is a way we might tackle something we are upset about today, even right after we talk now?
 5. Do you ever see things on a social media platform that concern you? What can you do if you see something that you think is potentially harmful?
-

Meet our New Readington Middle School Principal

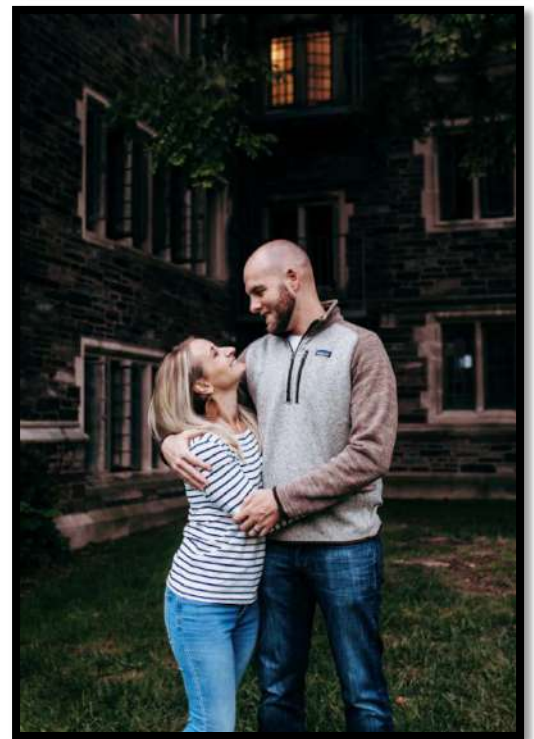
The Readington Township School District is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Timothy Charleston as the next Principal of Readington Middle School, effective July 1, 2022. Mr. Charleston's appointment was approved by the Readington Board of Education at their meeting on April 26, 2022. Dr. Jonathan Hart, Superintendent of Schools, is pleased to welcome Mr. Charleston to Readington and shared; "We are thrilled to have Mr. Charleston join the RMS family and the leadership team. His skill set, previous experiences, and connection with children will serve our community well."

Mr. Charleston comes to Readington from Princeton Public Schools in Princeton, NJ where he has been employed for the past eight years, most recently serving as the Assistant Principal of the middle school. His previous experience also includes appointments as Supervisor of Social Studies Enrichment and Global Education, Acting Director of Technology and Innovation, and School Safety Specialist for Princeton Public Schools; District Supervisor of Instruction, Information and Technology Coordinator, and Social Studies Teacher for Green Brook Township Public Schools.

Mr. Charleston is a graduate of Seton Hall University with a Bachelor of Science in Education, Rutgers University with a Masters in Social Studies Education, and the University of Scranton with a Masters in Educational Administration. Mr. Charleston's teaching philosophy includes fostering inclusive learning environments that allow all students to find their joy and purpose in a global society. Mr. Charleston comes to us with strong leadership skills, data analysis expertise, and is an avid community builder. Mr. Charleston has an amazing ability to connect with middle school students academically and also through his love for sports, pizza eating, and the air guitar.

Mr. Charleston and his wife Kristen reside in Flemington, NJ with their children Gwen, Shane, Luke, and Blaire. The Charleston family enjoys being outside together, especially taking in the sunsets from their backyard in Hunterdon County.

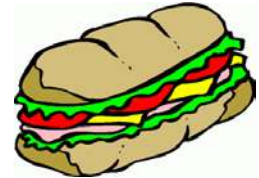
ANNOUNCEMENT 



welcome
TO THE
TEAM

Business Office Spotlight: Wednesday Deli Lunch

Mr. Jason Bohm, Business Administrator
Mr. Ray Egbert, Assistant to the Business Administrator



Our school district partners with Maschio's Food Services to provide the district's breakfast and lunches. Their friendly staff prepares and serves every breakfast and lunch to each student at all four schools. Maschio's is an industry leader that continually strives to provide good nutritious food. Maschio's, in partnership with Zone 7, participates in the Farm to School program. Zone 7 is a fresh food distributor working with local farmers to provide fresh food to customers including schools. Our schools receive fresh food each week which has allowed menu items of fresh salads with arugula and romaine and various fruits.

Maschio's has recently started two new menu choices at Readington Middle School. The first menu change was the Deli Bar Day. Every Wednesday, students have the choice of made to order sandwiches featuring turkey, ham, Italian, and vegetarian. Topping choices include American cheese, provolone, lettuce, tomato, pickles, mayonnaise, mustard, and oil & vinegar. Students decide what type of sandwich and toppings they desire via an order form returned by the students on Monday or Tuesday.

The second choice menu change includes a hot grab n' go breakfast sandwiches available every Friday morning at Readington Middle School. Sandwiches have included a hot "bowtie" stuffed pastry and a waffle maple chicken sausage sandwich. The breakfast includes a sandwich along with fresh fruit, juices, and milk choices.

Maschio's is planning a Chef Day at Readington Middle School on June 9th. This will allow each student to taste test menu items that may be offered in the future. Also, the Chef will work with the local staff to make menu or recipe changes.

An important item to note for the 2022-2023 school year is that the U.S. Department of Agriculture program allowing free breakfast and lunch is set to expire on June 30, 2022. The student lunch price for the 2022-2023 school year is expected to be \$3.50.

Our district encourages any and all parents that need assistance to submit a free and reduced lunch application to the district. If a family qualifies, student(s) may receive assistance well beyond free or reduced meals. Assistance with school supplies, field trips, Chromebook fees, programs sponsored by the HAS, among others are available. For any questions relating to financial assistance, please contact Mr. Ray Egbert at rayegbert@readington.k12.nj.us or at 908-534-2895.



"With every healthy meal and snack you provide for kids in your community, you're not just nourishing them today; you are shaping their habits and tastes for the rest of their lives!"- Michelle Obama

Building Spotlight: Three Bridges School

Three Bridges School Awarded \$10,00 NJEA/Sustainable Jersey Grant

Detention Basin to Bioswale Project

Dr. Kristen Higgins, Principal



A team of dedicated people who include school, township, and local business people are working together to create a bioswale from the drainage collection area between the playground and Forest Avenue. The current detention basin collects the water run-off from the school grounds along with any other water coming downhill from the adjacent neighborhood area. Instead of being absorbed, the water flows out onto the street and ultimately ends up in the South Branch of the Raritan River. This project will create a bioswale that will absorb the water, reduce the run-off and provide an instructional opportunity for the students in Readington and the community.

Readington Township Schools has been dedicated to sustainable education since 2014 when Three Bridges School earned a State and National Green Ribbon. As a district, we are committed to offering unique learning experiences through our efforts to incorporate environmental education into our regular learning. As we have suffered several flooding catastrophes recently, it is important that we look at how we manage stormwater and how our management affects others. It is important that our students learn that our actions impact others. Our efforts can make a difference. If we

pass that learning onto others, their actions can make an impact as well. Hopefully, working together, we can help mitigate the effects of the storms we have been experiencing.

The school has also had years of experience with working with Raritan Headwaters as we have earned the Watershed Level certification. We have participated in the water festival where the community and Raritan Headwaters came together to teach about water conservation and pollution. Further, the school has routinely participated in a river cleanup in the fall where the students, parents, and teachers come together to collect trash on the river beds. In addition, the district continues the learning through their fourth-grade trip to the Raritan River.

This bioswale installation will combine nicely with our vegetable, sensory and pollinator gardens on the school grounds. Just visiting the school will give the community wonderful ideas for how they can take action and create sustainable places on their own properties. We are so excited to begin the work this summer and into September. Please be on the lookout for volunteer opportunities.





Goodbye to our Retirees

The following retirees were recognized at our May 10, 2022 Board of Education meeting with appreciation for their years of service to the students of the Readington Township School District. Please join Dr. Hart in wishing our retirees all the best in this next chapter of life.

Readington Middle School

Mr. Douglas Ayers, Math Teacher
Ms. Judith Doslik, Math Intervention Teacher
Ms. Sharon Moffat, Principal
Ms. Cheryl O'Brien, ELA Teacher
Mr. Bruce Wild, Special Education Teacher

Holland Brook School

Ms. Karen Cooney, Instructional Aide
Ms. Lori Dribbon, Music Teacher
Ms. Linda Rakowitz, Special Education Teacher

Whitehouse School

Ms. Teresa Miller, Grade 1 Teacher

Three Bridges School

Ms. Jayne LaMothe, Instructional Aide

District

Ms. Margit Braeunig, School Bus Driver
Ms. Donna Masucci, Confidential Secretary to the Director of Pupil Services
Ms. Anne Moore, Confidential Secretary to the Curriculum Department



Mark Your Calendars

Upcoming Events:

- June 20 / Early Dismissal – 8th Grade Graduation
- June 21 / Early Dismissal – Last Day of School

Upcoming BOE Meetings:

- June 8, July 19, and August 23



"You're off to great places. Today is your first day! Your mountain is waiting, so get on your way!" – Dr. Seuss