

April 2014

Dear Parents & Guardians,

It is hard to believe that our second trimester has already wrapped up and we are on to the final one of year!

And what a trimester it was! Band and 6/7 chorus had their winter concert, with a slight change. Instead of 5th joining the 6th and 7th grade students, they held their own recital in February. For students that have only been playing a few months – they did a fabulous job. We also had a few students participating in District 3 6th grade Honors Festival and Jazz Festival, as well as the upcoming 7/8 grade Honors Festival.

We also hosted our school spelling bee with students from all grades. We were able to watch our one of our own, 6th grader Chloe Courant go from winning it in the school to taking 4th place in the State Spelling Bee after 5 ½ hours of competition!

We ended March with the Smarter Balanced Field test. This test will replace the fall NECAPS, likely in the spring of 2015. We are just one of 20,000 schools participating.

Infinite Campus will continue to provide students and parents with access to their grades. Please contact the office by phone or email if you are having any issues, or have questions. Parents should register for their own account; just contact the office to get the information.

Rockland District Middle School is trying to go as paperless as possible to be more environmentally friendly. We understand that not all families have access to computers, please let us know if this is the case at your home. We've got lots of valuable information on our website, including our student handbook. Go to RSU13.org and choose RDMS. You can also find athletic and health/nutrition information on the district's website.

Please contact with any questions or concerns. Thank you for all your support. Our staff and our families are a team working towards academic excellence in all our students.

Sincerely,
Kathryn Hollicker, Principal

Congratulations to our Eagles of the Month (listed 5th, 6th, 7th): September: Angel Freeman, Noah Deabler, Brooke Post; October: Zach Healey, Georgiana Chammas, Matthew Shaw; November: Shilo Berry, Jaret Winchenbach, Ashley Young; December: Aidan Fogg, Maggie Tinker-Wadsworth, Noah Labbe; January:

Autumn Harvey; Marcus Camber, Jasmine Bouchard; February: Ryker Weaver, Bailee York, Annaliese Poisson; March: Ryley Havener, Elayne Gustafson, Cole Stevens

Congratulations to our monthly Agenda winners (listed 5th, 6th, 7th): September: Julia Porter, Bailee York, Gabby Straka; October: Marshall Camber, Mia Blumenthal, Bennett Penney; November: Lainie Hooper, Jade Philip, Jasmine Bouchard; December: Angel Freeman, Julie Sprayberry, Drew Simmons; January: Brandon Abbott, Audrey Young, Noah Labbe; February: Lily Stratton, Steffani-Rae Jillson, Cole Stevens; March: Mariah St. Clair, Maggie Tinker-Wadsworth; Bea Weinand

Parents' Group Meeting Notice: The RDMS Parent Group is actively searching for volunteers. We try to meet in person once a month, at RDMS. If you are interested you can contact Janet Corcoran (jcorcoran@rsu13.org) or Becca Barstow (rbarstow@rsu13.org), or check out our page on Facebook (RDMS Parent Group).

Visitors: All visitors must enter through the main front doors, which are locked during the day, and sign in at the office and sign out when leaving the building. Please help us maintain a safe and secure school for your children. We also ask visitors to wear a "visitor badge."

Dress Code: The dress code, established in policy by the Board of Directors in 2002, will be enforced. Students will be given a T-Shirt to wear if necessary. Students must continue to adhere to the length of skirts over leggings. Leggings are not a replacement for slacks or jeans. Ripped tops, pants, and jeans are also prohibited. Parents may be called to bring appropriate clothing.

Upcoming dates of importance:

4/17: Parent-Teacher Conferences, 11:20am dismissal
4/18: 7th Grade Medieval Day
4/21-4/25: April vacation - no school
5/5-5/9: Tooth Protectors, Inc. at South School
5/15: RDMS Spring Open House & Academic Fair, 5:30pm
5/16: Early dismissal day, 11:20 am
5/26: Memorial Day - no school

YELLOW TEAM NEWS – Grade 5

Mrs. Cornforth, Math: It's hard to believe the second trimester is over! There is so much left to do and time is flying by!

We held an honors assembly that recognized many fifth graders who achieved High Honors (all As and 1 B) and Honor Roll (all As and Bs). Students are working hard to earn this recognition by completing their homework on

time, completing their work neatly and in an organized manner, having a great attitude for learning, and participating in class discussions.

In Fifth Grade during the second trimester, the students continued to progress in Math, focusing on Geometry, 2- and 3-digit multiplication, and long division (long division the way most parents learned it; the traditional way...finally, something traditional!). Many students have improved drastically in this area and are now ready to proceed to tackling fractions. iPads are still in use, but we are constantly emphasizing the care and appropriate use of them.

Parent conferences will be coming up in April. Be sure to call our school office when the time gets closer to make appointments.

Everyone is tired of the snow and looking forward to Spring springing soon. They say, "Patience is a virtue"...Mother Nature has certainly been testing us all. Our hallway in the fifth grade wing will soon reflect the bright and cheerful determination the students have about the changing of the season.

Mrs. Majunka, ELA and Health: Our health class has begun studying the circulatory system. After a few weeks we will study the respiratory system and finish the trimester studying and discussing issues related to personal safety and awareness. We are using iPads, in addition to the textbook, to watch videos, research articles, and even take online quizzes. Learning how our bodies work and discussing how to stay as healthy as we can is an important component of a well-rounded education.

In our ELA classes we are using trade books to deepen our appreciation of various literary genres. Some classes are using Literature Circles with assigned roles to discuss the readings and share understandings. Some students are using journaling techniques to develop skills in independent reading and comprehension. All students are continuing to work on writing skills with precise grammar application, as well as learning and practicing spelling rules. Learning to use the power of the pen (or pencil!) is an adventure, which stretches the imagination and also requires students to become logical in their thinking.

Ms. Slocum, Science/Social Studies: Social Studies classes have been studying early explorers of the Americas. We have been creating a book in which to collect information on each explorer. We have discussed that the word "explore" has different meanings to different groups

of people. While the history books call some of the people we have studied explorers, we might actually have different words to describe them better than the word "explorer".

As soon as we complete and evaluate our books, we will move on the exciting topic of landforms. So, we will be moving back to Science and land forms soon.

RED TEAM NEWS – Grade 6

Mrs. Tripp, Social Studies & ELA: In ELA the sixth graders have finished a unit on nouns and possessive nouns. Our next unit will be a writing unit. We will focus on writing a three-paragraph essay and then move on to writing a persuasive essay. The students will be completing the district wide writing prompt in May. This will show their growth in writing for the year, very exciting!

Reading: We are currently reading *Woodson* by Gary Paulsen for our novel study. The students are reading the book in small group, class and individually. Please ask your student about the book and their literature circle. We will read another novel, *A Year of Impossible Goodbyes*, for our Pacific Rim unit in late April.

Social Studies: The students are learning about Ancient Egypt in social studies class. The students are studying the geography, the rulers, accomplishments, religion and culture of one of the first great civilizations. Our next unit will cover Ancient China. Please ask your student about their Africa map quiz.

Mr. Crossley, Science & ELA: In English, students have working on grammar, specifically nouns, pronouns and verbs. Students are practicing how to properly apply rules of grammar for their writing. Students will soon be working on writing prompts to apply these rules.

Reading: Students have been reading and responding to short stories over the past several weeks. We will be starting a book that students will need to be reading at home. Students will respond to the book and complete projects on what they learned from the reading.

Science: Students are working on our heat and energy unit. They are looking at different forms of energy, energy transfers, heat flow, and comparing kinetic and potential energy. Soon we will move from physical science to Earth science as we begin to study geology. We will look at Earth processes, rocks, and minerals.

Ms. McNeilly, Math & ELA: In reading class we are reading *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. This is a novel of realistic fiction dealing with issues of prejudice, courage and self-respect. The story takes place in 1930. The students are responsible for weekly readings, participating in a literature discussion, journal writing, and vocabulary knowledge and spelling.

In English class we are working on our writing unit that involves a series of opinion and persuasive writings using a 3 and 5 paragraph format. The students will be starting their persuasive essay using specific documentation to support their statement.

Math 1 is working on graphing a coordinate grid, expressions and equations and continuing with fractions. Math 2 and 3 are working on simplifying fractions and converting fractions to decimals and percents. We continue to struggle with basic facts and the students now have a weekly quiz to demonstrate their knowledge, as this is an imperative skill that all students must have to move through 6th grade math concepts.

BLUE TEAM NEWS – Grade 7

Mr. Gallagher, Math & ELA: Students are beginning to wrap up Module 5 – Ratios and Percent. We completed a pre-test before the unit started and will complete a post-test as each group completes the module. This is all part of the Assistments study in which we are participating. Next we will move on to Modules 2 and 3, covering addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of fractions and decimals.

Please encourage your student to spend some time working on the Aleks program each night. It will help him/her to understand the mathematical concepts that we are working on, as well as boost their confidence in their abilities.

Upcoming dates for the 7th Grade:

April 17: Parent-Teacher conferences. Be sure to sign up early, as time slots are limited.

April 18 Medieval Day: This is a culmination of studies by Miss Campbell's classes on medieval times. We have a re-enactment group who will come in a provide students with an idea of what it was actually like living in medieval times.

Early May: The guidance counselors at Oceanside West are arranging a Step-Up Day for all incoming 8th grade

students. Students will be bused to Oceanside West where they will meet students from Thomaston Grammar School and St. George School, as well as teachers from Oceanside West. Hopefully, this will help ease their transition in to next year.

May 15: Open House

Miss Campbell, Social Studies and ELA: In ELA we just finished a big poetry unit concentrating on writing several different types of poems, studying figurative language, and studying an American poet. The students also wrote a special Acrostic Poem about themselves that is displayed in our 7th grade hallway. We are now reading *The Giver* by Lois Lowry which is based on a utopian society. The students have been breaking into literature circle groups and working together on reading, answering questions, defining vocabulary and organizing a story board. All students have been enjoying this book so far! They also are writing a paper about a Hero in their life. This is someone they personally know and is a role model to them.

In Social Studies we just finished the history of Russia and studied the geography as well. Perfect timing due to the Sochi Olympics! The students learned about communism and the history of Russia and the U.S.'s relationship through the years including The Cold War and the space race. Now we are onto our Medieval Studies. We have been learning about pyramid of power, influence of the church, feudalism, The Black Death, as well as the daily lives of medieval people. The students have been working hard on web quests! In the next few weeks the students will construct their own castles, cathedrals, or manors. I can't wait to see the projects! They also will be taking on a specific role of a person back in the Middle Ages. We will be having our Medieval Day April 18th, the kids will dress up as their role and we will be able to watch a company reenact Medieval battles as knights and talk about the people of those times.

Mr. Roberge, Science & ELA: In science the seventh grade just completed the evolution unit from trimester two. For Trimester 3 we will be focusing on the basic concepts of chemistry. This includes: States of matter, phase change, heat, density, the periodic table, atomic structure, chemical reactions and acids and bases. We will be doing some demonstrations and some labs to have the students see how these concepts apply to what we can see and touch. The labs with readings and diagrams will hopefully have your child be able to explain the why behind the chemistry we see every day.

ALLIED ARTS TEAM NEWS

Mrs. Groene, Resource Room 5-7: What an interesting winter we've had during this second trimester! The students have been very focused and dedicated to building their academic skills. In ELA, in the resource room we are learning how to improve sentences by adding more details. We are studying reading strategies, and working on decoding skills and comprehension. In math, we are learning about fractions and writing word problems to represent information. We are also continuing to explore and solve logical reasoning problems. We will be working on drill and practice activities to improve in the areas of math facts, spelling and vocabulary throughout the remainder of year, too. Looking forward to a sunny spring! ☺

Ms. Spring, Library: Since having finished serving on the Odyssey committee to pick the most outstanding audiobook of the year and four honor books, I have many audiobooks on CDs. A large number of these have been donated to the RDMS library, such as *Danny the Champion of the World* by Roald Dahl, *Road Trip* by Gary Paulsen and Jim Paulsen, and *Navigating Early* by Clare Vanderpool. These are on CDs and are great for using with students, for family car trips, or for student or staff personal enjoyment. If one would rather listen on their IPAD, MAC Book Air or other device and one has a library card, many books may be downloaded and either read as an EBook or listened to as an audio for free. This is through the Maine Cat library system. Here is the link to get started: <http://download.maineinfolnet.org>

Miss Nash, Band: Band at RDMS is in full swing as we head toward our final concerts in a few months. Recently the 5th grade performed their first ever band concert and did a fantastic job! For such a young group of players, they performed with wonderful concert etiquette, producing a big, beautiful tone. Best of all they played with precision - quite a feat for young players! In addition to playing their band songs, most of the students also played a solo. They all did extremely well.

Two weeks ago 3 band students traveled to Maranacook for the annual District 3 6th Grade Honor Festival and District 3 7/8 Jazz Band Honor Festival. Julie Sprayberry and Noah Deabler played with the 6th grade band, and Abe LeMole performed with the 7/8 Jazz Band. All 3 students represented RDMS very well and played their very best.

In a few weeks, the 7/8 Grade Honors Band Festival, a two-day event, will be taking place in Topsham. Bea Weinand will be representing RDMS on flute.

As we draw closer to the end of the school year and the end-of-year concerts, both bands are working hard on their concert pieces. We look forward to playing for you at our final concert!

Mrs. McMackin's Read 180/RTI 2 classes: My sixth and seventh grade classes are in the process of learning about Edgar Allan Poe as the master of horror. In our READ 180 program, students will be working on how setting helps to give the mood of a story and following plot events. At the end they will write a literary review for a book they have read this year. We are also writing our most memorable moment paper and they should be finalizing their interview they did earlier this month. The sixth graders are continuing with Megawords and are working with r-controlled words. The seventh grade has moved on to Spelling Connections, which asks them to use a dictionary and thesaurus to find meaning in words.

My fifth grade classes are working in the SRA Decoding Strategies reading book. Here they learn syllable patterns in words and read short story pieces. We are comprehension and fluency as we read through the book. For spelling they have started Megawords and have learned about the closed syllable and the silent e syllable words. They are continuing to work in Lexia.

All three grades in class we will be reading *The Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster. A lot of play on words and finding out the importance of learning new things and taking responsibility for your learning is the main theme of this story.

Expectation for all students is to read every night approximately 10-15 pages. At this time, it should be a book of their choice. I will be checking in with them as to what they are reading and how many pages. This will be a weekly homework grade.

Mrs. Johnson, Art: During the month of April our students have some of their art on exhibit in the School Board room at the Central Office on Lincoln Street. Students display a variety of works which show the different mediums, techniques, and concepts that have been explored since fall of 2013.

Students have embarked on a mission to 'reuse re-usables'. Students have worked diligently to disassemble the dried up water based markers at school. The core of the marker and the tip are dropped into an assortment of reusable plastic bottles.

Water is added to cover the marker cores. Over time, usually a few days, the water leaches out the unused watercolor from the cores and tips. Students use the liquid watercolor to paint large murals, experimental watercolor techniques with salt and saran wrap, and mixed with glue. The glue and marker watercolor make an interesting drawing material either by itself or with other paints.

Family members who would be interested in saving items for the art department's reusable art materials program are asked to collect items. The following list of items are suggestions: dried up water based markers, large clear or green soda bottles, lidded plastic containers, detergent bottles, plastic jars with lids, Meow Mix soft food containers, plastic domes from specialty drinks (Dunkin Donuts, MacDonalds, Dairy Queen are examples of businesses in our community that use the dome cup lids), 'old' hard covered books, magazines (Smithsonian, National Geographic, Glamour, teen topics...), white cotton cloth (old cotton sheets), ribbon, acrylic paint, rollers, old useable paint brushes. Your student can bring them by the art room, school office, or you may wish to contact Mrs. Johnson at sjohnson@rsu13.org.

Mrs. Duke, Health and PE:

Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live.
-Jim Rohn

The physical education units covered this trimester will be scooters, dance, cooperative games, fitness, track & field, lacrosse, climbing wall, and recreational games. We are continuing to work on 5 STARS days! (Sportsmanship, Teamwork, Attitude, Rules, & Safety)

In health class, the 6th graders will be continuing drug prevention and will be starting lessons on adolescence & puberty and human sexuality. The 7th graders will be learning about ways to reduce stress. The students will be starting Making Proud Choices soon. This curriculum teaches ways to prevent HIV infection, other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and pregnancy.

Student Activities

Mr. Leonard, Athletics: 7th grade baseball and softball have started with Wes Drinkwater coaching the boys, and Eric Nelson coaching the girls. The baseball will practice and have home games at RDMS, while softball will practice and have home games at TGS. Track and field, open to 6th and 7th grade students, will practice at the RDMS track and has Ellen Spring and Jeff Monahan as the coaches.

To view schedules online, log on to www.rsu13.org; click on the Sports link in the top right hand corner; when the Athletics page loads click on Calendars & Schedules and click on the RDMS link.

Mrs. Rogers, RASA After-School Clubs Rockland After-School Alliance (RASA): The current session of clubs runs March 3 to April 10. If you have any questions about the after-school programs call Youthlinks at 594-2221, or contact Club Coordinator, Sarah Rogers, at 975-5495 or srogers@rsu13.org.

Ms. Schierman, School Nurse:

A couple of reminders:

If your child has a fever (temperature 100F or above) s/he must be home until fever resolves and be fever free WITHOUT medicine for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child has vomited s/he must be home for at least 24 hours without vomiting before returning to school.

Schools will ALWAYS have cases of head lice. While generally a minor and temporary annoyance to the child, an infestation of head lice is NOT caused by poor hygiene or parental neglect. Head lice are RARELY a medical problem and they do NOT pose a public health risk. They CANNOT jump from one person to another and they do NOT fly. Head lice are most readily transmitted by direct head to head contact and schools, surprisingly, are not the most common source of their spread. When children come in close contact with one another, especially during play time and sleep-overs, it is easy to pass head lice along. Please check your child's head on a regular basis and look for nits (tiny, grayish eggs that are attached to the hair) or lice (tiny insects about the size of a sesame seed). There are many effective products available over the counter. Read and follow all directions carefully. For recurrent or persistent cases of head lice, please notify the school nurse and your doctor.