

Reading Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Packet

March 14, 2024



Open Session 7:00p.m.

Reading Memorial High School Library

Reading, MA



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

School Committee

Date: 2024-03-14

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: School - Memorial High

Location: School Library

Address: 62 Oakland Road

Agenda:

Purpose: Open Session

Meeting Called By: Thomas Wise, Chair

Notices and agendas are to be posted 48 hours in advance of the meetings excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Legal Holidays. Please keep in mind the Town Clerk's hours of operation and make necessary arrangements to be sure your posting is made in an adequate amount of time. A listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting must be on the agenda.

All Meeting Postings must be submitted in typed format; handwritten notices will not be accepted.

Topics of Discussion:

7:00 p.m.	A.	Call to Order
7:00 p.m.	E.	New Business 1. Vote to Approve 07-01-2024 through 06-30-2027 Reading Paraeducators Association Contract
7:05 p.m.	B.	Public Comment Focus on Excellence Consent Agenda 1. Minutes (02-29-2024) 2. Robotics Competition Field Trip Request 3. Nature's Classroom Field Trip Request 4. Varsity Boys Basketball Donation 5. Acceptance of Jae S. Lim Foundation Award 6. Acceptance of FY24 Evaluate and Select High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) Network Support Grant Award Accounts Payable Warrant Reports 1. 02-29-2024 2. 03-07-2024 Reports 1. Student 2. Director of Finance & Operations 3. Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning 4. Superintendent 5. Liaison/Sub-Committee
7:20 p.m.	E.	New Business 1. Student Opportunity Act Plan Review, Discussion, and Vote

This Agenda has been prepared in advance and represents a listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting. However the agenda does not necessarily include all matters which may be taken up at this meeting.



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

		<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Fee Structures<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Strategic Overview and Planb. Driver's Education Fee Update, Review, & Approvalc. Transportation Fee Update, Review, & Approval3. Discussion on Potentially Co-Sponsoring the Right to Read Film Viewing with the SEPAC in May 2024
	F.	Information / Correspondence <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "RE: Please change the school calendar to respect the Jewish High Holy Days" - Liberman, Rebecca
9:00 p.m.		Adjourn

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://readingpsma.zoom.us/j/88656391831>

Meeting ID: 886 5639 1831

Find your local number: <https://readingpsma.zoom.us/u/kevtzj5din>

Reading Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Packet

March 14, 2024



Consent Agenda



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

School Committee

Date: 2024-02-29

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: School - Memorial High

Location: School Library

Address: 62 Oakland Road

Session: Open Session

Purpose: Open Session

Version: Draft

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Tom Wise, Sarah McLaughlin, Shawn Brandt (remote), Erin Gaffen, Charles Robinson and Carla Nazzaro

Members - Not Present:

Others Present:

Assistant Superintendent of Learning & Teaching Dr. Sarah Hardy, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services Dr. Jennifer Stys and Superintendent Dr. Thomas Milaschewski

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Olivia Lejeune on behalf of the chairperson.

Topics of Discussion:

A. Call to Order – Mr. Wise called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. to review the agenda.

Roll Call to order – Ms. McLaughlin – here, Mrs. Gaffen – here, Mrs. Nazzaro – here, Mr. Robinson – here, Mr. Brandt (remote) – here, Mr. Wise – here

E. New Business

1. Vote to Approve 07-01-2024 through 06-30-2027 Reading Cafeteria Employees (AFSCME, Council 93, Local 1703) Contract

Mr. Wise briefly reviewed the changes made to the Cafeteria Employees Contract. We have renormalized the pay scales and level set to the market. Other changes include the introduction to longevity, New Year's Day as an additional holiday, and increased the uniform allowance from \$325 to \$400. Mr. Wise also noted the state initiative to now serve breakfast at the elementary level, starting in FY25, which does include an adjustment to the contract.

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to approve the 07-01-2024 through 06-30-2027 Reading Cafeteria Employees Contract, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro.

Roll Call Vote – Mr. Brandt – yes, Mr. Robinson – yes, Mrs. Nazzaro – yes, Mrs. Gaffen – yes, Ms. McLaughlin – yes, Mr. Kraunelis (Town Manager) – yes, Mr. Wise – yes. The vote passed 7-0.

B. Public Comment

Public Comment – None

Focus on Excellence

1. Parker Leaders and Parker World of Difference – Dr. Milaschewski introduced Parker students participating in A World of Difference and Parker Leaders. Both organizations and groups are paving the way in terms of student leadership and advocacy in the community.

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes (02-08-2024)
2. RMHS Boys Swim Team Donation
3. RMHS Ski Club Field Trip Request
4. Robotics Competition Field Trip Request
5. Acceptance of FY24 High School Senior Internship in Education Project Grant Award

Accounts Payable Warrant Reports

1. 02-08-2024
2. 02-15-2024
3. 02-22-2024

Payroll Warrant Reports

1. 02-02-2024
2. 02-19-2024

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to approve the consent agenda with the removal of the Pats Peak ski trip planned for the upcoming weekend, seconded by Mr. Robinson.

Roll Call Vote – Mr. Brandt – yes, Mr. Robinson – yes, Mrs. Nazzaro – yes, Mrs. Gaffen – yes, Ms. McLaughlin – yes, Mr. Wise – yes. The vote passed 6-0.

Reports

- Assistant Superintendent for Learning & Teaching – Dr. Hardy discussed today’s successful internship fair at the high school. We had over 30 local companies attend. Dr. Hardy recognized different groups within the arts department. Recently, two photography students will be receiving the 2024 Scholastic Arts and Writing Award: Ryan Fox and Annabelle Goldy. Additionally, the jazz band was recently awarded a gold medal at the Paul M. Albert Norwood Jazz Classic and the Drama Club participated in the METG high school festival with their short adaption of *The Great Gatsby*.
- Assistant Superintendent for Student Services – Dr. Stys discussed the partnership with the Children’s Cabinet as we work on increasing our social emotional supports. She also recognized Mary Giuliana for the outreach and work she is doing with community members such as Joe Thomas and Donna Fitzpatrick from the Reading

Lions Club, Dr. Barrett from Reading Eye Care, Dr. McHale from Ideal Eye Care, and Morgan Faustino at Convenient MD.

- Superintendent – Dr. Milaschewski reiterated starting next year, breakfast will be served at all schools. We have two sites up and running with a breakfast cart at the high school and recent launch at Killam. Dr. Milaschewski recognized staff members who have been vital in supporting the Killam School Building Project: teacher Ms. Katie Cole, teacher Ms. JoEllen McGinnity, and paraeducator Ms. Denise Iozzo. As of 7pm tonight, we have launched the Killam School Building Project website (KillamSchool.com). Thank you to Mrs. Nazzaro for her help creating the vision, parent Mr. Chris Haley who shared his expertise and volunteered time to help us behind the scenes get this up and running and Ms. Olivia Lejeune who received training to keep the website updated and maintained.
- Liaison/Sub-Committee
 - a. Mr. Robinson – The Recreation Committee had a robust meeting last week. SWEC met to formulate a presentation to the Select Board.
 - b. Mrs. Nazzaro – Please follow the Killam School Building Project Facebook page to stay connected. Tonight, we had a sustainability community meeting and the next community meeting is March 18th which will focus on site and traffic.
 - c. Mrs. Gaffen – PAIR met last week and received the preliminary DEI Community survey results which were really interesting. A full presentation will be provided to the Select Board.
 - d. Ms. McLaughlin – No report
 - e. Mr. Brandt – No report
 - f. Mr. Wise – Last night, the budget was presented to the Finance Committee. It was a good meeting and we received positive feedback.

D. Old Business

1. Discussion and Vote on FY25 School Calendar

Dr. Milaschewski noted as the high school continues their review of the pilot schedule, we will come back to this committee with any changes that need to be reflected on the calendar. A community member pointed out that Christmas is noted as a holiday, but should be a vacation day. We will update the calendar to reflect this change. The committee has raised a point of school ending on a Monday next year and it was discussed with the union. We will stick with this end date and see how the year goes with snow day calls. Ms. McLaughlin also pointed out that the holidays falling during February and April vacation should be changed from “holiday” to “vacation” days.

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to approve the 2024-2025 school calendar as amended, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro.

Roll Call Vote – Mr. Brandt – yes, Mr. Robinson – yes, Mrs. Nazzaro – yes, Mrs. Gaffen – yes, Ms. McLaughlin – yes, Mr. Wise – yes. The vote passed 6-0.

E. New Business

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to take item E3 out of order, seconded by Mr. Robinson.

Roll Call Vote – Mr. Brandt – yes, Mr. Robinson – yes, Mrs. Nazzaro – yes, Mrs. Gaffen – yes, Ms. McLaughlin – yes, Mr. Wise – yes. The vote passed 6-0.

3. Special Education Program Review Progress Tracking Update (SOAR, SAIL, EMBARC, REACH, & LEAD)

Dr. Stys and her team provided an update on progress relating to recommendations provided through recent special education program reviews. This is a high-level overview sharing updates by specific program (REACH, SOAR, LEAD, SAIL/EMBARC, LIFT, RISE, Learning Center) and at the end of the year, the district will present a written update on each recommendation outlined in each program review. With each program reviews, there were common recommendations across all programs. Recommendations across the programs included:

- Hiring a program administrator with appropriate credentials to supervise specialized programs
- Hiring a transition specialist
- Revising the current program descriptions to define program missions, philosophies, and outcomes
- Increasing parent and staff communication
- Planning high-quality professional development for teachers, paraprofessionals, and related service providers
- Improving transition planning for each student moving between schools

Over the next few months, the team will be sharing different presentations for parents and the community to attend. A question was raised about the LIFT program and investments being made as it was not discussed during budget season yet positions are being posted. It was discussed that a position from the Wood End SAIL track has shifted to the LIFT program. We have also shifted unfilled para positions. This has given us flexibility to make additions without adding positions as it is a continuation of existing funding.

A full presentation can be found in the packet.

The committee took a five-minute break and returned at 8:41 PM.

Mr. Brandt exited the meeting at 8:29 PM and returned at 8:53 PM.

2. ARC Core Implementation Plan Update: What we are seeing in classrooms and next steps for calibrating and customizing

Dr. Hardy provided a progress update on the ARC Core implementation plan specifically reviewing what we are seeing in the classrooms. The presentation included a lot of graphics so the community can get a good understanding of the foundational skills and knowledge building being developed.

There are areas for continued calibration. This spring, there will be a training focus for K-2 teachers to get a better understanding of the foundational skills scope and sequence. We also want to support teachers in the data collection process. For next year, we are looking

at explicit professional development for K-2 teachers and continued partnership with The Hill for Literacy. The team will continue customizing and monitoring ARC Core to ensure it is meeting our needs.

The full presentation can be found in the packet.

4. FY25 Kindergarten Enrollment Update

Dr. Milaschewski reviewed the FY25 kindergarten enrollment. We have had 220 students register which is a gap between the 268 projected. We have outlined in the packet our plans for outreach to students who are not registered and we will come back with an update at the April 4th meeting.

5. Review of Charter Committee Updates to Reading Home Rule Charter and Collation of Feedback

Mr. Robinson provided a high-level review of the updates made to the charter. As it pertains to the schools, the changes made are naming vernacular changing selectman to selectboard.

Mr. Wise noted some scheduling changes. The next committee meeting is on March 14th. We will not hold the March 28th meeting and the next meeting will take place on April 4th at the METCO Headquarters. After that, we will not meet again until after Town Meeting.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkTnm91tFuw>

Meeting Adjourned from regular session at approximately 9:31pm.

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow



82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149

TO: Reading School Committee
FROM: Olivia Lejeune, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
DATE: March 12, 2024
RE: Vote to Approve Robotics Competition Field Trip Request

Please vote to approve an out of state field trip request to the University of New Hampshire for the Robotics Team to participate in a competition. The trip will take place on March 29th and March 30th from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

Please find attached the field trip approval form.

Thank you.

Reading Public Schools



Field Trip Approval Form

Trip Coordinator:	Chuck Strout
School:	RMHS
Grade(s) Attending:	9-12
Destination:	University of New Hampshire
Type of Trip: (Put all that applies) <i>Local, Day trip, Overnight, In State, out of State or International</i>	Day Trip, Out of State
Educational Purpose of Trip:	Robotics Competition
Date(s) of Trip:	3/30 3/31 3/29 + 3/30
Time of Departure:	7:00 AM
Time of Return:	8:00 PM
Cost of Trip:	\$0
Will there be fundraising? If yes, please attach a fundraising plan.	No
No. of students attending:	~25
No. of teachers attending:	1
No. of other adults attending:	5
No. of Nurses attending:	0
If a nurse is attending, is the nurse licensed to practice in the state/country of the field trip?	n/a
Have all adults had the necessary CORI and/or SAFIS Criminal Background Checks? If not, describe the plan to ensure this is completed prior to the field trip?	
Transportation Required (put all that applies) <i>Bus, Train, Boat, Plane, Private Car, Other</i>	Private Car
Name of Company(ies) providing Transportation:	
Name of Educational Travel Organization conducting the trip (*Please attach the 3 quotes for the Travel Organizations considered if the cost of the trip exceeds \$10,000):	
Food will be provided by (if applicable):	
Will there be students participating in the trips who have food allergies? If so, I have verified	

that the food vendor(s) will be able to accommodate all of our students with food allergies or have otherwise made arrangements to ensure that students with food allergies have safe food options.	
If swimming is involved, the school has determined that a lifeguard will be on duty at all times when students are in the water.	n/a
Please describe the educational alternative for those students who will not be attending the trip.	
Please describe the accommodations/ transportation plan to assure student(s) with disabilities or individuals needing accommodations attending the trip to have equal access to the experience?	
Please describe the medical needs of the students attending the trip and the plan to assure students with medical needs have equal access to the experience?	
Do any students require the administration of prescription medication during the trip? If so, what is the plan for the administration of prescription medication (see 105 CMR 210.00)?	
If you are in a location that does not have cell service, what is the plan for contacting emergency services?	
Please describe the process that will be used to determine student eligibility for the trip.	Members of the Robotics Team

Checklist for Day trips

Please attach the following to this document:

	a. A detailed itinerary of the trip
	b. A copy of any contract associated with the field trip
	c. A list of all adults who will be chaperoning the field trip
	d. Fundraising plan (if applicable)

Fill out this section if the Field Trip is an overnight trip.

Is the bus driver getting sufficient rest in accordance with federal regulations and common sense?	
Departure Information (location and carrier):	
Return Trip Information (location and carrier):	N/A
Lodging will be provided by (if applicable): *Please include if the Educational Travel Company is requiring security on each floor of the lodging*	
Address and Phone No. of Lodging (if applicable):	
Has the school determined that the facility has adequate insurance consistent with the level of risk involved (e.g. sedentary trip as opposed to outdoor, physically active trip)?	

Checklist for Overnight trips

Please attach the following to this document:

	a. A detailed itinerary of the trip
	b. Signed state ethics financial disclosure forms from all staff whose field trip cost will be covered. This is for any field trip where the cost per person is over \$50. Before planning the trip staff should complete the <u>DISCLOSURE BY NON-ELECTED MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE OF FINANCIAL INTEREST AND DETERMINATION BY APPOINTING AUTHORITY AS REQUIRED BY G. L. c.268A, § 19</u>
	c. A copy of any contract associated with the field trip.
	d. A list of all adults who will be chaperoning the field trip.
	e. Fundraising plan (if applicable)
	f. Quotes from three travel organizations (applicable for trips costing more than \$10,000)

The Following Section is for Out of Country Field Trips Only

<p>Are there any current travel warnings or advisories issued by the State Department? Please go to www.cdc.gov or www.travel.state.gov. If YES, please explain:</p>	
<p>Does each student and staff member have the appropriate documentation necessary for travel to the country/countries being visited and for return to the United States?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Note: <i>Copies of all students' passports shall be maintained by the Trip Coordinator.</i> <i>At least one staff member accompanying the students must have a phone number with an international service.</i> Name of Staff member and Telephone Number:</p>	

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To be completed by Reading Public School Administration:

I certify that all requirements of the Reading Public Schools Field Trip Policy have been fulfilled.

APPROVED _____ DATE 3/5/24
Principal (For All Field Trips)

APPROVED Mary M. Brumana R DATE 3/12/24
School Nurse (For All Field Trips)

APPROVED _____ DATE 3/10/24
Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Student Services

APPROVED [Signature] DATE 3-12-24
Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Teaching & Learning

APPROVED Mary M. Brumana R DATE 3/12/24
Director of Health Services

APPROVED _____ DATE 3/12/24
Superintendent of Schools (For All Extended, Overnight, Out of State, & International Field Trips)

=====

School Committee Approval _____ DATE _____
(For Overnight, Out of State, and International Field Trips)

Parents Driving/Chaperoning

Brian O'Connell

Eileen Manning

Harriet Lyons

Chris Boran

Eric Currin

Sanat Patel

Robotics Field Trip Itinerary

Saturday March 30th

6:30am – Depart RMHS

8:00am – Arrive UNH

8am – 8:00pm – Work on robot and compete in matches

8:00pm Depart UNH

9:30pm Return RMHS

Sunday March 31st

6:30am – Depart RMHS

8:00am – Arrive UNH

8am – 5:00pm – Work on robot, compete in matches, attend awards event

5:00pm Depart UNH

6:30pm Return RMHS

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Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow



82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149

TO: Reading School Committee
FROM: Olivia Lejeune, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
DATE: March 12, 2024
RE: Vote to Approve Nature's Classroom Field Trip Request

Please vote to approve an out of state, overnight field trip request to Nature's Classroom in Charlton, MA. The trip will take place September 25-27th for Coolidge 7th grade students.

Please find attached the field trip approval form.

Thank you.



Field Trip Approval Form

Trip Coordinator:	Sarah Marchant
School:	AW Coolidge Middle
Grade(s) Attending:	7
Destination:	Nature's Classroom, Charlton, MA
Type of Trip: (Put all that applies) <i>Local, Day trip, Overnight, In State, out of State or International</i>	Overnight
Educational Purpose of Trip:	Experiential Learning; Community Building
Date(s) of Trip:	September 25-27, 2024
Time of Departure:	8:00 AM
Time of Return:	1:00 PM
Cost of Trip:	\$375 (\$125 non-refundable deposit due this spring upon approval; remaining balance due in the fall)
Will there be fundraising? If yes, please attach a fundraising plan.	No
No. of students attending:	121
No. of teachers attending:	Between 6-8 (including 1 administrator)
No. of other adults attending:	
No. of Nurses attending:	Nurse is on site/ part of program
If a nurse is attending, is the nurse licensed to practice in the state/country of the field trip?	
Have all adults had the necessary CORI and/or SAFIS Criminal Background Checks? If not, describe the plan to ensure this is completed prior to the field trip?	Yes
Transportation Required (put all that applies) <i>Bus, Train, Boat, Plane, Private Car, Other</i>	Bus
Name of Company(ies) providing Transportation:	North Suburban Transportation
Name of Educational Travel Organization conducting the trip (*Please attach the 3 quotes for the Travel Organizations considered if the cost of the trip exceeds \$10,000):	
Food will be provided by (if applicable):	Yes

<p>Will there be students participating in the trips who have food allergies? If so, I have verified that the food vendor(s) will be able to accommodate all of our students with food allergies or have otherwise made arrangements to ensure that students with food allergies have safe food options.</p>	<p>Yes. They have a chef on staff who works closely with our school nurse and parents to ensure that there are safe food choices for all students. In addition, we have allowed certain students to bring supplemental food if there is a need or strong preference.</p>
<p>If swimming is involved, the school has determined that a lifeguard will be on duty at all times when students are in the water.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Please describe the educational alternative for those students who will not be attending the trip.</p>	<p>While we hope for all students to attend, those who do not will be involved in classes and project-based learning at school.</p>
<p>Please describe the accommodations/ transportation plan to assure student(s) with disabilities or individuals needing accommodations attending the trip to have equal access to the experience?</p>	<p>We offer this trip to all 7th graders, and work with all families to ensure that we are providing the proper support for student needs so that students have equal access and experience.</p>
<p>Please describe the medical needs of the students attending the trip and the plan to assure students with medical needs have equal access to the experience?</p>	<p>The on site nurse will be available for any medical needs that arise. We do not have any students in this class who require more intensive medical support than a daily nurse can provide.</p>
<p>Do any students require the administration of prescription medication during the trip? If so, what is the plan for the administration of prescription medication (see 105 CMR 210.00)?</p>	<p>The on site nurse will distribute prescription medications at the normal time/ dose/ cycle as prescribed by the student's doctor. We will work with families prior to get doctor's orders and to have official packaging of the medication.</p>
<p>If you are in a location that does not have cell service, what is the plan for contacting emergency services?</p>	<p>There is cell service.</p>
<p>Please describe the process that will be used to determine student eligibility for the trip.</p>	<p>All students are eligible.</p>

Fill out this section if the Field Trip is an overnight trip.

Is the bus driver getting sufficient rest in accordance with federal regulations and common sense?	The bus ride is under two hours, so yes.
Departure Information (location and carrier):	8:00 AM, September 25, 2024 Carrier: North Suburban Transportation Pick-Up Location: Coolidge Middle School
Return Trip Information (location and carrier):	1:30 PM, September 27, 2024 Carrier: North Suburban Transportation Drop-Off Location: Coolidge Middle School
Lodging will be provided by (if applicable): *Please include if the Educational Travel Company is requiring security on each floor of the lodging*	There is dorm-like housing on the site.
Address and Phone No. of Lodging (if applicable):	19 Harrington Rd. Charlton, MA 01507 (508) 248-2741
Has the school determined that the facility has adequate insurance consistent with the level of risk involved (e.g. sedentary trip as opposed to outdoor, physically active trip)?	Yes

Checklist for Overnight trips

Please attach the following to this document:	
X	a. A detailed itinerary of the trip (I have included a sample itinerary)
TBD	b. Signed state ethics financial disclosure forms from all staff whose field trip cost will be covered. This is for any field trip where the cost per person is over \$50. Before planning the trip staff should complete the <u>DISCLOSURE BY NON-ELECTED MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE OF FINANCIAL INTEREST AND DETERMINATION BY APPOINTING AUTHORITY AS REQUIRED BY G. L. c.268A, § 19</u>
X	c. A copy of any contract associated with the field trip.
X	d. A list of all adults who will be chaperoning the field trip.
	e. Fundraising plan (if applicable)
	f. Quotes from three travel organizations (applicable for trips costing more than \$10,000)

=====

To be completed by Reading Public School Administration:

I certify that all requirements of the Reading Public Schools Field Trip Policy have been fulfilled.

APPROVED Sarah Marchant DATE 2/14/24
Principal (For All Field Trips)

APPROVED Cindy Ventura DATE 2/14/24
School Nurse (For All Field Trips)

APPROVED [Signature] DATE 3/1/24
Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Student Services

APPROVED [Signature] DATE 3-4-24
Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Teaching & Learning

APPROVED Mary M. Boushane RJ DATE 3/7/24
Director of Health Services

APPROVED [Signature] DATE 3/12/24
Superintendent of Schools (For All Extended, Overnight, Out of State, & International Field Trips)

=====

School Committee Approval
(For Overnight, Out of State, and International Field Trips) DATE _____

Sample Itinerary (full day):

- 7:30: Wake students
- 8:00 - 8:45: Breakfast (family style, central dining hall)
- 9:00 - 11:00: Family Group Activity
- 11:00 - 11:30: Break
- 11:30 - 11:45: Lunch
- 12:00 - 2:00: Activity #1
- 2:00 - 2:30: Break
- 2:30 - 4:30: Activity #2
- 4:30 - 5:00: Break
- 5:00 - 6:00: Dinner/ Down Time
- 6:00 - 8:00: Evening Activity
- 8:00 - 9:00: Group Sing/ Snack/ Off to Bed
- 10:00: Lights Out

List of Adults Attending:

- As we are rearranging teams and the trip is a few months off, we do not have a clear list of chaperones yet. Ideally, it will consist of 6-8 staff members (including both teachers and administrators, male and female). If we do not get at least 6 staff members, we will welcome parent chaperones.
- Currently, it is certain that Sarah Marchant, Coolidge Principal will be the lead chaperone.
- As the program is fully run by Nature's Classroom staff, school-based chaperones are there for meals, breaks, and for dorm supervision at night. Staff also participate in activities as much as they can/ want.

Nature's Classroom, Inc.
A Nonprofit Corporation
Stefan Sage, Executive Director

19 Harrington Road
Charlton, MA 01507
(508) 248-2741

CONTRACT

PARTIES INVOLVED:

This is an agreement between **Nature's Classroom, Inc.** and A.W. Coolidge Middle School
82 Oakland Rd, Reading, MA 01867 (called "The School")

DATE:

The School will attend the Nature's Classroom program starting Sept. 25th through Sept. 27^h, 2024

SITE:

Nature's Classroom agrees to lease its site in Charlton (HILLTOP) – 19 Harrington Rd, Charlton, MA 01507

SERVICES: Nature's Classroom agrees to provide the following services:

- a) housing for students and staff,
- b) complete food service with meals from lunch on the starting date through lunch on the termination date,
- c) program staff on a 1:12 student ratio for the execution of the educational program,
- d) the reasonable use of recreational facilities only when supervised by school personnel,
- e) the use of all utilities,
- f) a medical person on call

FEES:

EXCLUSIVE USE:

The School agrees to pay a fee per student dependent upon the total number of children attending the program and based on the following price scale _____ , _____ , _____ /student.

Other activities not involving the assigned Nature's Classroom staff may be going on during the same period using separate facilities.

SHARED FACILITIES:

If your group is willing to share facilities and staff with another group, the price is \$330 /student.

DEPOSITE:

A 30% deposit (\$100 / per student) is required by: April 9th, 2024 .
Of this deposit, **35% (approx. 10% of the trip cost) is non-refundable but transferable**, should you need to change the dates.

ADULTS:

The School is allowed two free adult supervisors for every living space occupied. In addition, living spaces housing 20 or more children are allowed 3 free adults. For any additional adults beyond the above ratio the School agrees to pay a fee equal to 70% (percent) of the student cost.

OTHER FEES:

In addition, The School agrees to pay the following fees as described below:

- N/A

DAMAGE:

The School agrees to reimburse the site for damages caused by **vandalism** or improper use of facilities.

(OVER)

RESTRICTIONS:

The School agrees to the following restrictions on use:

- a) at least one (1) adult supervisor will remain on site at all times,
- b) there will be no swimming, boating or high ropes course usage,
- c) none of the adult supervisors will store or consume alcoholic beverages on camp grounds,
- d) adult supervisors will smoke only in designated areas,
- e) no fires will be allowed except in designated areas and under proper adult supervision.

SUPERVISION:

The School agrees to be responsible for supervision during those times when Nature's Classroom staff are not directing activities and during daily and final clean-up times.

MEDICAL SERVICES -- PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

You will note that your contract guarantees you "a medical person on call." It is Nature's Classroom's belief that the medical coverage in this contract is providing students with excellent care. Parents give permission to our staff to administer medical care, over-the-counter medications and medications prescribed by their family physicians. Medications sent by parents will be made available to their children at the correct times and recorded in our log books. Nature's Classroom also works under standing orders from our cooperating physicians. There are emergency medical centers and services near the facilities. If your group requires additional services, we may be able to provide them at an additional fee.

_____ The medical services provided with our contract are sufficient; we do not request additional services.

We need to request additional medical services (you must return the enclosed pink request form).

We (The School) estimate that ⁶⁵ _____ boys & ⁵⁶ _____ girls will attend Nature's Classroom from grade(s) ⁶ _____.

Authorized Signee for Nature's Classroom: Lesleigh Drake

Print Name: Lesleigh Drake Date: 2/13/2024

Authorized Signee for The School: _____

Print Name: Sarah Marchant Date: _____

ADDENDUM (To be filled out by Nature's Classroom)

Deposit number, amount and date received.

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow



82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149

TO: Reading School Committee
FROM: Olivia Lejeune, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
DATE: March 12, 2024
RE: Vote to Accept a Boys Varsity Basketball Donation

Please vote to accept a donation of \$2,500 from SNL Football LLC.. This donation is in support of the Assistant Coach for the RMHS Boys Varsity Basketball Team.

Please find attached the donation letter from Carl McFadden on behalf of the SNL Football LLC.

Thank you.

From: cmcfadden.snfootball.com
To: [Milaschewski, Thomas](#)
Subject: Donation
Date: Monday, March 11, 2024 11:47:05 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from **outside of Reading Public Schools**. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address and know the content is safe.

Dr. Milaschewski,

Please accept this donation of \$2,500 for the assistant coach on the Boys Varsity Basketball Team.

Carl

**Reading High School
Science Prize & Mathematics Prize for Juniors
2024-25 Academic Year**

Proposal by Jae S. Lim Foundation

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Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow



82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149

TO: Reading School Committee
CC: Dr. Thomas Milaschewski, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Derek Pinto, Director of Finance and Operations
DATE: March 11, 2024
FR: Olivia Lejeune, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
RE: Vote to Accept Grant Awarded by the Jae S. Lim Foundation

Please vote to accept a grant of \$4,000 from the Jae S. Lim Foundation to award the top two performing RMHS Juniors in the subject areas of math and science in the 2023-2024 school year. Each award will be in the amount of \$1,500 and \$1,000 is for the purpose of prize administration & prize certificates. Principal Callanan will work with the Department Heads of Math and Science to nominate students through an open and fair process using set criteria developed in 2022-2023.

Please find attached the award letter from Ms. Taeho Lim, President and Director of the Foundation.

Thank you.

1. Objective

- To encourage students to study Mathematics and Science during their junior year

2. 2024-25 Science Prize

- To be named Reading Science Prize
- \$1,500 check and certificate (or plaque) to the best student in science in junior class
- To be judged by faculty committee

3. 2024-25 Mathematics Prize

- To be named Reading Mathematics Prize
- \$1,500 check and certificate (or plaque) to the best student in mathematics in junior class
- To be judged by faculty committee

4. Schedule for 2024-25 Prizes

- Spring 2024
 - Jae S. Lim Foundation sends this proposal for 2024-25 Prizes to Reading High School
 - After acceptance of proposal by Reading High School, Jae S. Lim Foundation will send \$4,000 to be used as follows:
 - \$1,500 check for science prize
 - \$1,500 check for math prize
 - \$1,000 budget for prize administration & prize certificates / plaques (school can keep any leftover money)
 - School announces 2024-25 mathematics & science prizes to sophomores (who will be juniors in 2024-25) before they leave for summer vacation
- September 2024
 - School announces 2024-25 mathematics & science prizes to junior class
- May / June 2025
 - Faculty committee selects the best junior in science and the best junior in mathematics
 - Prize recipients to be announced and given prizes at Awards Ceremony

Reading Public Schools

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82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149

TO: Reading School Committee
CC: Dr. Thomas Milaschewski, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Derek Pinto, Director of Finance and Operations
DATE: March 6, 2024
FR: Katelyn Finnegan, Finance and Business Analyst
RE: Acceptance of FY24 Evaluate and Select High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) Network Support Grant Award

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has awarded Reading Public Schools with a FY24 Evaluate and Select High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) Network Support Grant in the amount of \$15,000. Reading's involvement in DESE's HQIM Network rendered us eligible for this grant.

The Evaluate and Select High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) Network is facilitated by DESE's Center for Instructional Support. It offers comprehensive assistance, including step-by-step guidance, support, information, and networking opportunities for districts embarking on the process of selecting new high-quality instructional materials.

The grant funds will be allocated to compensate members of Reading Public Schools' Secondary Science Curriculum Council for their work in evaluating and selecting high-quality core science curricular materials. This compensation will cover time spent outside contractual hours. Additionally, funds will be allocated for providing professional development opportunities for secondary science teachers.

The work of the Secondary Science Curriculum Council aligns with Reading Public Schools' commitment to providing high-quality, standards-aligned, culturally responsive curricular resources for all students. It also supports the professional development of teachers in skillfully using these materials to facilitate dynamic student learning experiences.

Thank you for your support and your vote to accept the FY24 Evaluate and Select High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) Network Support Grant.

Reading Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Packet

March 14, 2024



New Business

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow



82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149

TO: Reading School Committee
FROM: Olivia Lejeune, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
DATE: March 12, 2024
RE: Student Opportunity Act Plan Review, Discussion, and Vote

At the March 14, 2024 meeting, we will present information about the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) plan. Enclosed in the packet you will find the presentation, which contains information about the SOA and the requirements for the SOA plan. Additionally, you will find a template that contains the SOA plan details for RPS. Once reviewed by the school committee, the SOA plan will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education via the GEM\$ platform.



Student Opportunity Act Plan

Reading Public Schools

March 2024



Outline of Presentation

- Overview of the Student Opportunity Act (SOA)
- Fiscal Changes in Chapter 70 Funding from SOA
- The SOA Plan Requirements
- SOA Plan and the District Strategic Plan
- Highlights of the RPS SOA plan
- Setting Ambitious Targets for 3-year Improvement



Overview of the Student Opportunity Act (SOA)?

- The SOA is an update to Chapter 70 aimed at ensuring, “every student in the Commonwealth has access to a high-quality public education regardless of zip code.” (DESE)
- The goal of the SOA is for “districts to focus on addressing disparities in learning and experiences and outcomes for student groups that are least well served.” (DESE)



Fiscal Changes in Chapter 70 Funding from SOA

- Chapter 70 was updated by the legislation to provide additional funds for education beginning in FY21. By 2027, the SOA will result in a billion dollars in new education funding.
- Additional Chapter 70 funds through the SOA are based on the student demographics in a district such as multilingual learners, student with disabilities, and students living in poverty. It increases funding to districts with high percentages of students in these categories.
- Some districts receive substantial funding through SOA. However, districts like Reading, receive little to no additional Chapter 70 funds.



The SOA Plan Requirements?

- The SOA requires each Massachusetts School District to submit an SOA plan every three years and provide an annual update of progress. This plan is required regardless of the amount of funding a district receives through SOA.
- SOA plans detail gaps in student achievement and outline evidence based programs the district intends to employ to close those gaps. DESE provides a list of evidence based programs for district to select from in creating their plans.
- In SOA plans, districts must detail the financial investments being made in evidence based programs aimed at closing achievement gaps. These financial investments are not limited to SOA funds. Instead, they extend to any funding source being leveraged to implement components of the plan.



SOA Plan and the RPS District Strategic Plan

- The District Strategic Plan is a comprehensive plan that outlines the full set of strategies the district is utilizing for improvement and details initiatives across broad areas aimed at supporting all students.
- The SOA Plan focuses on improvement for specific groups of students. It is a subset of the district's larger strategic plan, outlining initiatives specific to the evidence based programs allowed by DESE for SOA plans.
- The District Strategic Plan and the SOA Plan align with one another and overlap in regards to some important initiatives underway in RPS.



Highlights of the RPS SOA Plan

In preparing to create the SOA plan, we conducted analyses of disaggregated student data including, academic data, attendance data and discipline data. We considered where gaps in achievement exist and looked for patterns across data sets.

Based on our analysis of data, we determined the student groups for focused support would be Black/African American students, MLL students and students with disabilities.



Highlights of the RPS SOA Plan

Based on our review of data, several areas emerged as the focus for the SOA plan.

- **Bolstering SEL systems and mental health supports:** High chronic absentee and discipline rates for Black students, MLL students and students with disabilities indicate a need to bolster SEL systems and instruction. When students miss school, they miss opportunities for academic instruction and engagement in the school community.
- **Adoption of high quality curriculum paired with robust professional development for staff:** The gaps in academic outcomes for Black students, MLL students and students with disabilities show a need for high-quality, standards-aligned tier 1 and tier 2 curriculum and instruction that is culturally responsive. It also indicates a need for professional learning for staff to ensure use of curricular materials and instructional methods are aligned with the needs of all learners and accessible to all learners.
- **Refining and expanding systems for early literacy screening:** Academic gaps persist or widen as students progress through the grades. Early literacy screening and intervention is a way to interrupt this pattern. Ensuring the learning needs of Black students, MLL students and students with disabilities are identified as early as preschool will set students on a path to success.



Highlights of the RPS SOA Plan

- In creating this SOA Plan, we considered feedback and data gathered from parents/guardians, including families of Black/African American students, MLL students and special education students.
- We also utilized feedback and information gathered from staff and members of each school's school site council.
- This information was used as we selected evidence based programs for the SOA Plan, and as we detailed the initiatives related to each evidence based program.



Highlights of the RPS SOA Plan

We selected two focus areas for our SOA plan based on the areas of need we identified. (DESE provided focus areas.)

- Focus Area 1.1 Promote students' physical and mental health and wellness in welcoming, affirming, and safe spaces
- Focus Area 2.1 Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning

Focus areas in the SOA Plans are broad, and each focus area offers a number of evidence based programs (EBPs) for districts to consider for their plans. We selected four EBPs, which are outlined on the following slides. These EBPs are the heart of the SOA Plan.



Highlights of the RPS SOA Plan

EBP #1

Focus Area 1.1 Promote students' physical and mental health and wellness in welcoming, affirming, and safe spaces

EBP 1.1B **Enhanced Support for SEL and Mental Health:** Expand capacity to address social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health needs of students and families (e.g., build knowledge and skills of staff, add specialized support staff, partner with community-based providers, strengthen plans for responding to behavioral health medical emergencies, etc.)



Highlights of the RPS SOA Plan

EBP #2

Focus Area 2.1 Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning

EBP 2.1A Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process: Implement a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum adoption process that engages multiple stakeholders in the exploration and assessment of potential instructional materials



Highlights of the RPS SOA Plan

EBP #3

Focus Area 2.1 Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning

EBP 2.1B Supporting Curriculum Implementation: Engage teachers in professional development linked directly to the curriculum and set up a process to regularly monitor the effectiveness of curriculum implementation



Highlights of the RPS SOA Plan

EBP #4

Focus Area 2.1 Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning

EBP 2.1D Early Literacy Screening and Support: Administer a reliable early literacy screening assessment to identify students who require additional support. Provide research-based interventions tailored to each student's learning needs and delivered by appropriately trained staff members



Setting Ambitious Targets for 3-year Improvement

“Setting ambitious targets for 3-year improvement is a requirement in SOA Legislation. It’s a requirement for state as well as individual districts and calls out achievement targets.”

“The Commissioner’s office has opted to use 3-year targets in ELA and Math for the lowest performing student group category for progress in meeting targets at the state and district level. Streamlines the process for districts and DESE. “

- from DESE



Questions?

Student Opportunity Act Plan Reading Public School

Below is the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan that will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) by April 1, 2024. This plan will be submitted via the GEM\$ platform, which contains a number of drop down options and checkboxes. On the form below, the RPS choices are indicated. Additionally, some sections of the plan require a narrative. For those sections, you will see the narrative section highlighted in green.

This SOA plan was created using the DESE guidelines. You can learn more about those guidelines by visiting <https://www.doe.mass.edu/soa/resources.html>.

Section 1: Analyze Your Data and Select Student Groups for Focused Support

In this section, you will:

- **Analyze district data** to identify significant disparities in learning experiences and outcomes among student groups using the [Student Outcomes Comparison tool](#) or other summary data sources. After conducting an initial analysis to identify disparities, use additional sources of data, including other state and local outcomes data; instructional data; student, family, and community perspectives data; and systems-level data, to go deeper in your analysis and uncover why these disparities exist.
- **Select student groups** who will receive focused support within your SOA plan, as a result of your data analysis findings.

Submission Questions

In conducting your data analysis, where did you observe the most significant disparities in student learning experiences and outcomes? On which measures and for which student groups? **open response**

Reading Public Schools (RPS) is a large suburban district in the Commonwealth that serves 3,850 students. Our student population is 4.6 percent Hispanic/Latino, 84 percent white, 3.4 percent Black/African-American, and 5.2 percent Asian. In addition, 2 percent of our students are English learners (referred to as multilingual learners, or MLL students in RPS), 20 percent are students with disabilities, and 11 percent are low-income. Based on our district's data described below, RPS needs to work on multiple fronts to effectively address the needs of all students.

In reviewing 2023 MCAS data, we noted in grades 4 and 5 Math and ELA growth exceeded the 50th percentile for students with disabilities, low-income students, Black/African American students, Asian students and Hispanic/Latino students. Additionally, in grades 3-5 ELA MCAS, achievement for

Black/African American students grew by 16%, narrowing the achievement gap. In grades 6-8, ELA growth exceeded the 50th percentile for Black/African American and Asian students and achievement grew in ELA for Hispanic/Latino students, narrowing the achievement gap. In grade 10, math growth for students with disabilities and low income students was at or above the 64th percentile. Additionally, increased achievement in math for grade 10 students with disabilities narrowed the achievement gap. Despite these bright spots, the 2023 MCAS results reveal gaps in performance still exist for some student demographic groups, including students with disabilities, low-income students, Black/African American students and Hispanic/Latino.

In addition to MCAS data, we reviewed district academic data sources, which revealed similar achievement gaps for a number of demographic groups. These results, for the most part, mirrored MCAS results, but also revealed gaps for our MLL students. Additionally, when considering factors such as students enrolled in AP courses, we noticed a much lower percentage of Black students and students with disabilities in those courses. When examining the Grade 9 Course Passing rate, Black students and MLL students had a considerably lower passing rate than other groups of students.

We also reviewed data related to attendance and discipline. When examining the rates of chronic absenteeism, Black students and MLL students showed rates much higher than the aggregate. Additionally, in reviewing discipline data, Black students and students with disabilities received more in and out of school suspension than other students.

Based on the review of data described above, several areas of need emerged as the focus for this plan.

Bolstering SEL systems and mental health supports: High chronic absentee and discipline rates for Black students, MLL students and students with disabilities indicate a need to bolster SEL systems and instruction. When students miss school, they miss opportunities for academic instruction and engagement in the school community.

Adoption of high quality curriculum paired with robust professional development for staff: The gaps in academic outcomes for Black students, MLL students and students with disabilities show a need for high-quality, standards-aligned tier 1 and tier 2 curriculum and instruction that is culturally responsive. It also indicates a need for professional learning for staff to ensure use of curricular materials and instructional methods are aligned with the needs of all learners and accessible to all learners.

Refining and expanding systems for early literacy screening: Academic gaps persist or widen as students progress through the grades. Early literacy screening and intervention is a way to interrupt this pattern. Ensuring the learning needs of Black students, MLL students and students with disabilities are identified as early as preschool will set students on a path to success.

What does your deeper analysis (including the triangulation of multiple types of data) suggest are the best ways to address these disparities across student groups? ***open response***

Below is a summary of how we plan to address the disparities across student groups that were revealed in our analysis.

Bolstering SEL systems and mental health supports: Data points to a number of initiatives that will support the SEL and mental health needs of students. Anticipated activities include conducting a curriculum review to identify and implement SEL programming, aligning behavioral health supports across the district, supporting the SEL of students with disabilities through explicit instruction and addressing chronic absenteeism.

Adoption of high quality (HQ) curriculum paired with robust professional development for staff: Equitable access to HQ curriculum is an important tool in closing achievement gaps. Adoption of HQ curriculum must be paired with ongoing, robust professional development for staff to see the maximum effect.

Refining and expanding systems for early literacy screening: Early identification and intervention for reading difficulties is critical in preventing reading failure in students with lagging skills or a reading disability. Refining and expanding our systems for early literacy screening and our response to students who are identified as at risk should decrease the number of students struggling with reading skills.

Based on your identification of the greatest disparities in outcomes, which student groups will require focused support for rapid improvement as you implement your evidence-based programs over the next three years? **checkbox**

Section 2: Set Ambitious Three-Year Targets for Improving Student Achievement

In this section, you will:

- **Commit to adopting the three-year improvement target established by DESE with the option to develop additional three-year accelerated improvement targets.** DESE has established a three-year improvement target for each district to include in their SOA plans that focuses on rapidly improving the performance of the “Lowest Performing Students” group. This group, by definition, includes the students who currently have the lowest academic performance, and therefore need the most significant levels of support to reduce the disparities between their performance and that of their peers.
- This target will provide one streamlined measure to show districts’ progress in improving performance across several priority student groups at the same time and will be tracked each year as part of districts’ annual SOA progress updates. However, districts focusing on improving performance for a single student group may set an additional target for that student group aligned to DESE’s accountability targets.

Submission Questions

Please confirm that your district will use DESE's three-year targets for increasing performance for the "Lowest Performing Students" group in ELA and math. **Checkbox**

Yes, we confirm.

If applicable, propose additional three-year targets for addressing persistent disparities in achievement for one or more student groups by subject matter and grade level. **open response**

n/a

Section 3: Engage Families/Caregivers and other Stakeholders

In this section, you will:

- **Describe your district's ongoing efforts** to engage families/caregivers, particularly those representing the student groups you have identified for targeted support, about how to best address their students' needs.
- **Describe the ways in which your district has engaged families/caregivers and other stakeholder groups** in the development of your SOA plan.
- **Confirm your district has engaged with specific stakeholders** in developing the plan as required by law.

Submission Questions

Describe the approaches your district uses to regularly engage with families/caregivers. In your response, please be sure to address what steps you will be taking to meaningfully engage with families/caregivers of student groups you are targeting for accelerated improvement as this plan is implemented. **open response**

The partnership amongst schools, families and community is foundational to ensuring a strong public school system leading to equitable outcomes for students. In particular, we believe the families of our students falling in the "Lowest Performing Student" group, are essential partners in the work to improve outcomes for students. Below are some examples of how we engage with families in our district.

Children's Cabinet: The Children's Cabinet is a recent addition in the Reading community that brings together stakeholders from the schools, town and local agencies and services. The children's cabinet

was established as part of the district strategic plan with the goal of leveraging community partnerships to support students and families by coordinating resources and establishing communication systems.

School Site Councils: Each RPS school has a school site council which meets regularly to assist the principal in the development of the school improvement plan. Councils are made up of staff members, parents/guardians and community members. The members of school councils play a valuable role in providing schools with feedback, varying points of view, and additional information. By providing varied perspectives, the school councils support strong, two-way communication between schools and families.

SEPAC: RPS is fortunate to have an engaged and supportive SEPAC organization that regularly partners with the school district. The SEPAC supports opportunities for dialogue between the central office staff and the families of students of disabilities focused on topics important to families. Additionally, through the SEPAC, families are provided with ongoing training and updates.

Office Hours: Central office staff offer regular office hours to families who want to connect. These meetings are used to answer questions, raise concerns and offer ideas and suggestions.

Events for MLL Students and Families: In RPS, we hold a number of events created specifically for our MLL families. The goal of these events is to ensure MLL families have access to information, opportunities to build relationships with school staff and other MLL families. Additionally, events allow school staff to learn from MLL families about the needs of their students. Below are examples of some of the events held:

- Multilingual Family Literacy Night: Connecting Families and Celebrating Biliteracy- event at the public library to connect families, share multilingual resources, and provide an overview of our MLL program.
- Reading Community Supports Fair- helping families to access town resources
- MLL Movie Nights- social gathering for middle and high school MLLs
- YMCA Summer Camp Information MLL Night- providing information and financial support while registering students for summer camp
- MLL Home visits- connecting with families and assessing their needs

Formal and informal events: All RPS schools hold Back to School events each fall to share information with families and to welcome families into classrooms and school spaces. In the spring, the preschool, elementary and middle schools host open house events that engage families in celebrations for learning. Additionally, each school in RPS has an active PTO that hosts regular meetings and involves families in school-based events. Events are also organized by Friends of METCO who bring together families across the Boston and Reading communities through fun, family-focused events.

How do you plan to measure increased family engagement with parents/caregivers of students in targeted groups in your district over the next three years? **open response**

In the 2022-23 school year, we started the practice of using empathy interviews and focus groups to better understand the experiences of groups of students and families in our schools. We are committed to continuing and expanding this practice.

In addition, we use a variety of surveys to gauge family engagement, which we will continue to use. For example, following each IEP evaluation meeting, the parents/guardians of students with disabilities are surveyed, providing valuable information about their engagement with the school and areas for improvement.

Describe the ways in which you engaged different stakeholder groups in the development of your three-year SOA Plan. How have you integrated the perspectives of those groups into the three-year plan? How will you continue to engage stakeholders throughout the implementation of your plan? **open response**

Gathering feedback and information from parents/guardians was an important step as we considered the best evidence-based programs to select for this plan. We were able to leverage data we have gathered from parents/guardians as part of our existing systems. In addition, we sought out new data from particular parent/guardian groups and community groups. Below are some of the data sources we used to ensure we considered the viewpoint of multiple stakeholders in the development of this plan.

Feedback and information from families of students with disabilities

- We reviewed the feedback that is gathered from families as part of the IEP process. Questions asked of families at that time relate to how well the process met the needs of their family and any questions or concerns they had about the RPS process. This information was helpful in understanding the topics parents/guardians raised as concerns for students with disabilities.
- Survey results from a special education survey sent to the families of all students with disabilities were utilized. The survey asked families to respond to questions focused on what is working well in RPS and where improvements or changes can be made to better meet the needs of students with disabilities. These questions relate directly to the goals of this plan.

Feedback and information from families of MLL students and Black students

- Interviews were utilized to gather information from parents/guardians. The questions utilized focused on student sense of belonging, obstacles to school attendance and ideas from families to better support student academic needs. Additionally, for any families that have requested translation/interpretation, a question was added about the usability of translated materials. The interviews revealed important information that will aid the implementation of evidence-based programs related to SEL and professional development for teachers.

Feedback and information from school site councils, including teachers, families and community members.

- A survey was distributed to the school site council of each RPS school. The survey included questions about ways individual schools build student sense of belonging, build respect and appreciation for diverse families, support the learning of all students and actively engage stakeholders in the school community. These survey results supported the development of our SOA plan by providing important details about areas identified as strengths in SEL and areas that require further staff development. Additionally, the plan pointed to ways to better engage families in supporting the success of their students.

RPS will continue to gather data from these stakeholder groups throughout the 3 years of this plan. Interviews with families have proven to be a rich source of information that counteract assumptions and

bias when problem solving. Additionally, the district is developing a plan for focus groups with middle and high school students to better understand their experiences, needs and goals.

Confirm you engaged with the following stakeholder groups in the development of this plan: Parents/Caregivers, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, English Learner Parent Advisory Council, School Improvement Council, and Educators. **checkbox**

Confirm that your school committee voted to approve this plan and provide the date of the vote. checkbox and open response for date

SC Meeting: March 14, 2024

Section 4: Select Evidence Based Programs to Address Disparities in Outcomes

In this section, you will:

- Review the [Strategic Objectives](#) table.
- Select one to three Focus Areas your district will prioritize to improve student learning experiences and outcomes for student groups identified in your data analysis.
- For each Focus Area, select one or more Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs) from the DESE-provided EBPs list.
- Answer additional questions about each EBP you select, including questions about resource allocation. **As noted earlier in this document, selected priority districts will be required to submit more detailed information.** For each Focus Area as a whole, select metrics you will use to monitor implementation progress using the suggested metrics in this document (these metrics will serve as leading indicators; districts will also measure progress each year through the lowest-performing student group target).

Submission Questions

Focus Area # 1

Select the Focus Area(s) that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis. **Checkbox**

Strategic Objective 1

1.1 Promote students' physical and mental health and wellness in welcoming, affirming, and safe spaces

Which Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs) will your district implement within this Focus Area? **Checkbox**

- 1.1B **Enhanced Support for SEL and Mental Health:** Expand capacity to address social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health needs of students and families (e.g., build knowledge and skills of staff, add specialized support staff, partner with community-based providers, strengthen plans for responding to behavioral health medical emergencies, etc.)

Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027). **open response**

- Include details such as the specific programs that will be in place, staff that will be hired, and/or PD that will be offered.
- Explain how this EBP will improve learning experiences and outcomes for the student groups identified in Section 1. This could include how support for these groups may differ from district-wide implementation efforts.

Work to expand our district's capacity to address SEL and mental health needs of students and families is central to the RPS District Strategic Plan. The SOA plan is an opportunity to focus on a few projects we believe will support the success of our "Lowest Performing Students".

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum Review Team

During the 2023-24 school year, a team was formed to review SEL in RPS, including, the behavioral health supports and the curricular resources used for direct instruction in SEL. This team will continue its work in Year 1 of this plan with the goal of creating recommendations to strengthen supports for SEL and mental health in Years 2 and 3 of this plan. We anticipate the committee will recommend an SEL curricular resource to be used at the elementary level. If so, in Years 2 and 3 of this plan, that resource will be implemented. Additionally, we expect this SEL Curriculum Review Team will identify needed updates to instructional approaches in SEL with recommendations for professional development for teachers. Information gathered from parents/guardians highlighted the need for additional training for staff in ways to ensure all students feel belonging and welcome in school.

An important feature to note about the SEL Curriculum Review Team is the team is co-facilitated by the district's lead social worker and the director of the Reading Coalition for Prevention and Support (the Coalition). The Coalition's work is focused on supporting substance misuse prevention and mental health promotion in the Town of Reading. This collaboration is extremely valuable as we consider how to support the SEL of all students, and in particular, our Black students, MLL students and students with disabilities. The Coalition is able to contribute additional information regarding families and needs in the community and broaden the team's thinking about SEL to extend beyond the wall of the classroom. This ensures that SEL and mental health solutions recommended by this committee will be grounded in a broad perspective, which includes a strong connection to services and supports available in the Reading community.

Leveraging Behavioral Health Staff Roles

Over the past several years, RPS has increased access to behavioral health staff at all levels. This is in the form of additional social workers and school adjustment counselors. One new position is supporting a high school program that students participate in when returning to school from hospitalization or after an extended absence. Additionally, the district added a new role, a METCO Coordinator/School Adjustment Counselor, to each elementary school and one at the middle school level. The district has also increased the number of School Adjustment Counselors at the middle school level. Most recently, an MLL Social Worker position was added.

Work began in the 2023-24 school year to create an organizational structure to ensure roles and responsibilities for behavioral health staff were well articulated. Additionally, this organization structure was aimed at promoting strong supervision and support for behavioral health staff. For example, building leaders created organizational maps outlining the roles of behavioral health staff members, differentiating tasks and clarifying responsibilities. In Year 1 of this plan, we anticipate continued work to articulate the roles of behavior health staff, to solidify the procedures for accessing supports and to clearly communicate this information with staff and families. We believe the addition of these behavioral health roles in the past several years has positioned RPS to provide much needed supports to students and families, and information gathered from parents/guardians indicates this positive impact is noticed by families. However, over the three years of this plan, we will continue to develop and refine the work of our behavior health staff to support our Black students, MLL students and students with disabilities. This will include providing training and support for teachers and staff in culturally responsive practices and SEL practices that best engage and support all students.

Teaching Students with Disabilities about their Disabilities

In the 2023-24 school year, RPS piloted an advisory group for students with disabilities who receive instruction in a substantial separate setting. The advisory group was started with middle school students who are part of our LEAD program, a program that serves students with significant reading disabilities. The goal of the advisory group is to teach students about the impact of their disability and how to self advocate. A focus on student strengths and abilities was also part of the instruction. In Year 1 of this plan, the goal is to expand this advisory group to other grade levels of the LEAD program. By the end of this plan, the goal is to develop advisories for students in all substantially separate special education programs. By providing students with accurate information about their learning styles and the ways their disability does and does not impact their needs in school, we hope to enlist students as essential partners in their education. We believe this will have a positive impact on outcomes for this group of students with disabilities.

Addressing Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absences are one obstacle we identified for our Black students and MLL students. During the 2023-24 school year, RPS created a stipended position to help improve our systems for tracking student attendance and working with families to improve attendance. Additionally, the RPS district leadership team has engaged in a data review of attendance and problem solving to improve school attendance. In Year 1 of this plan, we will utilize our attendance data to gather additional information from families to understand the obstacles to school attendance, understanding some obstacles may be the result of systems in place in our schools. In collaboration with families, we will work to address obstacles to school attendance. By Year 3 of this plan, we will have increased two-way communication with families about

chronic absenteeism and have created a comprehensive resource for school leaders to utilize in supporting school attendance.

Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)? ***open response***

District-wide

What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP for the next three years (FY25, FY26, FY27), across all funding sources? ***open response***

Attendance Lead Stipend **\$15,000.00**

METCO/SACs salaries **\$1,500,00.00**

Cost of SEL curriculum **\$60,000.00**

SEL Committee stipends - **\$14,000.00**

Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?
Dropdown

*** Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?**

Select all that apply

Search...

Select All / Deselect All

- Administration
- Instruction Leadership
- Classroom & Specialist Teachers
- Other Teaching Services
- F** Professional Development
- Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.
- Guidance and Psychological
- Pupil Services
- F** Operations and Maintenance
- Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges
- SPED Tuition
- Other

In addition to the lowest-performing student group target, what metrics will your district use to monitor progress in this Focus Area? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress on the target and metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year. **open response**

Decreased rates of chronic absenteeism

Increase in implementation of Tier 1 SEL curriculum - evidence of adoption and implementation of SEL program at elementary level based on classroom walkthroughs and teacher reflection

Focus Area # 2

Select the Focus Area(s) that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis. **Checkbox**

Strategic Objective 1

2.1 Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging instructional materials that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning

Which Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs) will your district implement within this Focus Area? **Checkbox**

2.1A Inclusive Curriculum Adoption Process: Implement a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum adoption process that engages multiple stakeholders in the exploration and assessment of potential instructional materials

Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027). **open response**

- Include details such as the specific programs that will be in place, staff that will be hired, and/or PD that will be offered.
- Explain how this EBP will improve learning experiences and outcomes for the student groups identified in Section 1. This could include how support for these groups may differ from district-wide implementation efforts.

In working to close the achievement gap in the RPS, an important avenue has been focused on selecting and implementing high-quality and engaging curricular materials that support the learning of all students through culturally and linguistically responsive instruction. RPS has used and refined a curriculum review process based upon MA Implement, which includes engaging multiple stakeholders in the review process. Over the past several years, this work has led to the adoption of a number of HQ materials, such as a HQ curriculum in ELA for kindergarten to grade 5 and in Math for kindergarten through Algebra II. Adopting these new curricular resources has ensured our lowest performing students have access to consistent materials and rigorous instructional approaches. A curriculum review in the area of world language has resulted in shifts in instructional and assessment practices in order to align with the new curriculum frameworks and the latest research about language acquisition. Another result of the world language review has been an increased understanding of the value of biliteracy and a renewed effort to cultivate opportunities to celebrate and recognize our students who speak multiple languages. At the heart of each curriculum review process we run in RPS is a careful examination of how the materials or instructional approach will impact the learning experiences of our Black students, our MLL students and our students with disabilities.

Currently, a number of curriculum reviews are underway. An ELA curriculum review is underway for grades 6-8, and in Year 1 of this plan we expect to start an adoption of new materials and/or new instructional methodology. Our goal by the completion of this plan is to have full implementation in

grades 6-8 of high quality curricular resources and evidence-based instructional and assessment practices. In particular, we aim to ensure students that fall in the lowest performing category are receiving rigorous and culturally responsive tier one instruction in ELA each day.

Also underway in RPS is a secondary science curriculum review. Work began in 2023-24, with the formation of a curriculum council, targeted professional learning for the council and work to understand our current context and the market landscape while establishing a vision for science instruction in RPS. In Year 1 of this plan, we intend to utilize the curriculum review process to continue this secondary science review by initiating a number of program exploration activities, such as field tests, site visits, collaboration with other districts, etc. In Year 2 of this plan, we anticipate the adoption and implementation of high-quality materials and/or updated instructional approaches in secondary science. In order to close the achievement gap, we must ensure our lowest performing students have access to science instruction that is rigorous and engaging with rich content and connections to contexts that matter to students. Adoption may be staggered by grade or level, so in Year 3, our goal is to continue implementation and monitor any implementation already underway. We anticipate the full implementation of this review team may take up to 5 years.

In the 2023-24 school year, we also launched a curriculum review in the area of instruction for MLL students. In Year 1 of this plan, that curriculum council will continue their work and make recommendations for materials to update and improve instruction in ESL. By the end of this plan, we aim to have an articulated curriculum plan for ESL instruction that includes HQ materials, strong instructional approaches and consistent assessment practices. This curriculum review process is essential in order to equip our ESL teachers with a robust program to implement with MLL students. In RPS, the number of MLL students in any given grade or school varies widely. We believe that consistent materials and a documented instructional plan will lead to stronger progress by our MLL students in the acquisition of English and also holistically across their academic courses.

Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)? **open response**

District-wide

What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP for the next three years (FY25, FY26, FY27), across all funding sources? **open response**

Curriculum Councils - **\$40,000.00**

Science Materials **\$150,000.00**

MS ELA Materials **\$300,000.00**

ESL Materials - \$25,000.00

Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?
Dropdown

*** Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?**

Select all that apply

Search...

Select All / Deselect All

- Administration
- Instruction Leadership
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- Other Teaching Services
- F** Professional Development
- Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.
- Guidance and Psychological
- Pupil Services
- F** Operations and Maintenance
- Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges
- SPED Tuition
- Other

In addition to the lowest-performing student group target, what metrics will your district use to monitor progress in this Focus Area? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress on the target and metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year. **open response**

- Increase in HQIM adoption rates as measured by district curriculum inventory
- Increase in % of English learners making progress on ACCESS (year 2)
- Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on the ELA MCAS - grades 3- 6 (year 1), grade 7 (year 2) and grade 8 (year 3)

Increase of SGP on the ELA MCAS for students in grades 4-6 (year 1), grade 7(year 2) and grade 8 (year 3)

Which Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs) will your district implement within this Focus Area? **Checkbox**

2.1B Supporting Curriculum Implementation: Engage teachers in professional development linked directly to the curriculum and set up a process to regularly monitor the effectiveness of curriculum implementation

Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027). **open response**

- Include details such as the specific programs that will be in place, staff that will be hired, and/or PD that will be offered.
- Explain how this EBP will improve learning experiences and outcomes for the student groups identified in Section 1. This could include how support for these groups may differ from district-wide implementation efforts.

As part of the curriculum review process (discussed above), an implementation plan is created for the adoption of any new curriculum or instructional approach. The implementation plan includes the goals for professional development and the systems for monitoring and adjusting implementation.

To support the adoption of our new ELA curriculum in kindergarten to grade 5, a four year implementation plan for professional development was created. That plan included 10 coaching days per school each year in addition to a series of workshops that allowed for vertical and horizontal training and collaboration. In Year 1 of this plan (which will be Year 3 of the implementation plan), coaching and workshops will continue. Those PD opportunities will continue to support teacher understanding of Tier 1 and Tier 2 practices. Particular focus will be given to using the program's assessment system to monitor student skill level and provide targeted instruction alongside standards-based Tier 1 lessons. We believe this two-pronged approach is essential in improving outcomes for our lowest performing student groups. In addition, PD in Years 1, 2 and 3 of this plan will support teachers in leveraging the tiered supports in the program for instruction with students with disabilities. Additionally, we will provide curriculum agnostic PD for elementary teachers in evidence-based reading instruction. By the completion of this plan, our goal is for all elementary teachers to have a clear understanding of the brain science related to acquiring reading skills paired with a solid understanding of the current research about the instructional methodology that best supports all students to learn to read in school.

In Year 1 of this plan, we are planning for robust professional development of staff in grades 6-8 related to middle school literacy instruction. This PD will be outlined in the Implementation Plan created by the Curriculum Council in the spring of 2024. By the completion of this plan, our goal is to have trained all middle school staff in adolescent literacy, including ELA teachers, content teachers and all special education staff.

As part of our curriculum review process in RPS, implementation teams are established to monitor and support the work of staff as they begin using the new materials, learn about shifts in instructional

methodology and utilize new assessment tools. Currently, we have an implementation team for Math (K-6) and ELA (K-5). In Years 1, 2 and 3 of this plan, those two implementation teams will continue. Over the 3 years, their work will evolve as adoption of the new programs is solidified. Their role will focus on creating feedback loops that allow building and district leaders to monitor the fidelity of implementation, learn about PD needs, and identify any gaps or refinement needs in the program. Also, in Year 1 of this plan, a Middle School ELA implementation team will be formed to monitor and support implementation of the new curriculum. It is anticipated that a secondary science implementation team will be formed in Year 2 of this plan.

Another part of the curriculum review process in RPS is the work of the district data team to identify and understand gaps in student achievement and growth and the contributing factors. In Years 1, 2 and 3 of this plan the district data team will continue to review internal assessments in the areas of ELA and math to understand the changes in student learning and monitor.

Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)? ***open response***

Elementary and Middle Schools

What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP for the next three years (FY25, FY26, FY27), across all funding sources? ***open response***

Implementation teams - **\$9,000.00**

ELA PD for Elementary - **\$105,000.00**

Literacy PD for Middle Schools - **\$45,000.00**

Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?
Dropdown

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Select all that apply

Search...

Select All / Deselect All

Administration

Instruction Leadership

Classroom & Specialist Teachers

Other Teaching Services

F Professional Development

Instructional Materials, Equip., and Tech.

Guidance and Psychological

Pupil Services

F Operations and Maintenance

Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges

SPED Tuition

Other

In addition to the lowest-performing student group target, what metrics will your district use to monitor progress in this Focus Area? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress on the target and metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year. **open response**

Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on the ELA MCAS - grades 3- 6 (year 1), grade 7 (year 2) and grade 8 (year 3)

Increase of SGP on the ELA MCAS for students in grades 4-6 (year 1), grade 7 (year 2) and grade 8 (year 3)

Which Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs) will your district implement within this Focus Area? **Checkbox**

2.1D Early Literacy Screening and Support: Administer a reliable early literacy screening assessment to identify students who require additional support. Provide research-based interventions tailored to each student's learning needs and delivered by appropriately trained staff members

Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027). **open response**

- Include details such as the specific programs that will be in place, staff that will be hired, and/or PD that will be offered.

- Explain how this EBP will improve learning experiences and outcomes for the student groups identified in Section 1. This could include how support for these groups may differ from district-wide implementation efforts.

Alongside the new HQ ELA program implementation in kindergarten to grade 5, we adopted a new early literacy screening in the 2023-24 school year. Work is underway to solidify data routines, intervention plans, and the connection between general education screening and special education evaluations. In year 1 of this plan, we will work to leverage the data gathered in the 2023-24 school year to refine our systems for monitoring and implementing interventions in literacy. This will include continued professional development for leaders and literacy specialists. Our goal by the end of this plan is to build our knowledge and skill in providing impactful interventions that are customizable to individual student needs and capable of being dynamic and nimble. This is necessary to ensure the achievement gap is closed for our lowest performing students.

During Year 1 of the plan, we will pursue a new preschool literacy screening tool. Identifying preschool students in need of intervention will be an important step in improving student outcomes. We know that intervening early can have a tremendous impact on the future outcomes of students who demonstrate gaps in early literacy skills. Our goal by the end of this plan is to have a strong implementation of a preschool literacy screening tool, including robust data routines, an effective intervention planning process, and strong progress monitoring practices.

Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)? ***open response***

Preschool and elementary level

What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP for the next three years (FY25, FY26, FY27), across all funding sources? ***open response***

Cost for K-3 early literacy screening tool - **\$55,000.00**

Cost for PK early literacy screening tool - **\$8,000.00**

Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?
Dropdown

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Select all that apply

Search...

Select All / Deselect All

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- Guidance and Psychological
- Pupil Services
- F** Operations and Maintenance
- Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges
- SPED Tuition
- Other

In addition to the lowest-performing student group target, what metrics will your district use to monitor progress in this Focus Area? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress on the target and metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year. **open response**

- Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on 3rd Grade ELA MCAS
- Increase in the number of students exiting the “at-risk” category on our early literacy screener

Section 5: Summarize your District’s Plan

In this section, you will:

- **Write a brief executive summary of your three-year SOA plan.** This section will be presented at the beginning of your plan in all public-facing documents to make it easier for stakeholders to review.

Submission Questions

Please write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing your 3-year SOA plan. **open response** Make sure the summary:

- Identifies the student groups you are targeting for accelerated improvement.
- Describes the selected Evidence-Based Programs your district will use to address the disparities in learning experiences and outcomes for these student groups.
- Explains at a high level the investments you plan to make and what will change in your district because of this plan.

The Reading Public Schools Student Opportunity Act plan is focused on improving outcomes and closing gaps in achievement for our Black/African American students, our multilingual learner students and our students with disabilities. Data analysis pointed to a number of evidence-based practices, which once implemented, we believe will close the learning gaps for these groups.

- **Improving SEL and Mental Health Supports:** A foundational need for learning are environments where all students feel safe, engaged and supported with challenges. Ensuring robust SEL instruction paired with reliable systems for accessing support from trusted adults are key components in our SOA plan.
- **Utilizing high-quality curricular resources, evidence-based instructional methodology and strong assessment practices:** Ensuring all students have access to HQ learning and teaching every day is an evidence-based way of addressing the achievement gaps faced in RPS. This plan outlines how RPS will use the curriculum review process to adopt and implement HQ materials, research-aligned instructional approaches and important early literacy screenings aimed at closing academic achievement gaps for our “Lowest Performing Students” group.
- **Providing robust professional development for teachers and staff:** Paired with the adoption of new HQ curricular resources and assessments, RPS will provide professional learning opportunities to support teachers and staff in the use of new materials and approaches. This professional learning will include opportunities for staff to better understand the barriers that exist in RPS for students in our “Lowest Performing Students” group and the ways they can utilize new materials and approaches to reduce those barriers.

By implementing these strategic initiatives, our goal is to foster an inclusive learning environment that will allow for academic achievement for all students in RPS.

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of



82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149

Date: March 14, 2024
To: Tom Milaschewski
From: Derek Pinto, Director of Finance and Operations
Re: Review of Student Fees

The district has been reviewing all fee-based programs and tuition rates throughout Reading Public Schools.

An evaluation of the current fees has become necessary in order to best support the operational needs of the district and ensure the sustainability of various programs. These increases are consistent with our strategy of providing high quality educational experiences and related services for our students.

The relative stability of fees over the last several years evidences our commitment to ensuring that fees are appropriate – some fees have not been adjusted since 2012. Considerations in evaluating fee increases included (but were not limited to) addressing: programmatic needs, rising operational expenses (contracts, related expenses), salaries, and the consolidation/simplification of fees. Current market rates and the rates of similar services in surrounding school communities were also examined.

School-fee programs are not designed to act as profit centers, but to defray expenses and maintain quality of services or enhance experiences. We aim to support families to the greatest degree possible by creating payment plans, allowing for prepayments, and providing financial hardship applications. We are striving to keep the increases minimal through diligent financial stewardship and control of expenses.

Service/Program	Fees Adjusted
Extended Day	January 2024
RISE	January 2024
Driver's Education	March 2024
Student Transportation	March 2024
Athletics	Under Review
Food Services	Under Review
Use of School Property (Facilities Rental)	Under Review

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of



82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149

Date: February 29, 2024
To: Derek Pinto, Director of Finance and Operations
From: Chris Nelson, Director of Community Education
Re: Proposed Driver's Education Tuition Rate

The district has been reviewing all fees and tuition rates throughout the Reading Public Schools. The Community Education Department did a cost comparison for the Reading Memorial High School (RMHS) Driver's Education Program with similar programs in Reading and the neighboring communities. Based on our comparative analysis, the Community Education Department is proposing to increase the Driver's Education tuition rates for July 1, 2024.

The Driver's Education Program consists of 30 hours of classroom lessons followed by 12 hours of driving lessons and 6 hours of observation lessons. We also offer additional driving lessons and Road test sponsorships.

The Driver's Education Program fees have been fixed since December 2014. It is the goal of the department to keep the cost reasonable for the families. However, with the increased cost of fuel, maintenance, supplies, insurance, payroll, etc., the tuition rates will need to be increased to continue to provide the high-quality services Reading families expect.

Another reason for the proposed increase is maintenance of the Driver's Education vehicle. The current vehicle is a 2014 Ford Focus with 109,000 miles. The wear and tear on the vehicle is expensive. This year we need to purchase new tires, additional signage for the vehicle, complete preventative and regular maintenance and plan for unexpected repairs. We are working with the Central Office and the Town of Reading about the possibility of purchasing a new Driver's Education Vehicle.

We are proposing an increase of slightly over 5% to the Driver's Education Program. The chart below shows the current rates and the proposed new rates.

Reading Driver's Education Proposed 24-25 Rates

	CURRENT COST	PROPOSED COST
Driver's Ed Class, Driving Lessons	\$675	\$710
Additional Driving Lessons	\$14/hour	\$15/hour
Road Test Sponsor	\$90	\$95

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Reading, MA 01867
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As we compared the cost of neighboring Driver’s Education Programs our new proposed prices keep us below the market price. We compared our cost to the nearest driving programs to Reading. Below is the comparison between the RMHS Driver’s Education Program and AAA, AGGANIS, iDRIVE, MIDDLESEX DRIVING ACADEMY, TANNER CITY and TRI-TOWN.

Reading Driver’s Education Price Comparison

	PRICE
AAA	\$950 w/ Membership \$1025 w/o Membership
AGGANIS	\$1089
iDRIVE	\$850
MIDDLESEX DRIVING ACADEMY	\$1125
RMHS DRIVER’S ED	\$710
TANNER CITY DRIVER’S ED	\$900, \$800 for Bishop Fenwick and Essex Tech Students
TRI-TOWN	\$1089

Ultimately, it is our belief that the increase in tuition cost is the best course for the sustainability program. It will enable us to meet the expanding costs while simultaneously enhancing the experience for all enrolled students. Therefore, we seek approval to implement the tuition rate increase for the Reading Memorial High School Driver’s Education Program for July 1, 2024.

C.c. File

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of



82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149

Date: March 14, 2024
To: Tom Milaschewski
From: Derek Pinto, Director of Finance and Operations
Re: Student Transportation Fees

State regulations mandate that the district transport students in grades K-6 who live more than 2.0 miles from the school they attend.

Transportation is not provided to students who are enrolled in Reading Public Schools through the School Choice Program. Boston resident students are paid for through the METCO grant. Transportation is a family responsibility if a student is not attending their home school and they have been approved for a transfer request through the Superintendent's Office.

Reading resident students who attend Killam Elementary School, Coolidge Middle School, Parker Middle School, and Reading Memorial High School are offered the option to purchase transportation for a fee based on the space availability on buses and on existing routes.

The district charges for this optional transportation service, and transportation revenues and fees are managed through the School Transportation revolving fund. School Transportation fees have not been reviewed since 2016.

Contractual increases from the transportation provider have necessitated a review of the fees. Year-over-year escalators have been noted by the provider for the two subsequent years of the contract (FY26 and FY27), as shared in the January 25, 2024, School Committee meeting. Increases from the transportation provider for services range from 12-13% - we must pass on a portion of this increase on to the end user. There are 119 paying riders this school year and 214 total riders.

An increase is being proposed as a result of provider increases, and is necessary to defray expenses and reduce the burden on the district operating fund.

Students	Current Fee FY24	Proposed Fee FY25	Approx. Percentage Increase
One student	\$450	\$475	5.5%
Two students	\$800	\$850	6.3%
Three students	\$1,150	\$1200	4.3%

Reading Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Packet

March 14, 2024



Information/Correspondence

From: [Wise, Thomas](#)
To: [Rebecca Liberman](#)
Cc: [Milaschewski, Thomas](#); [Office of Equity and Social Justice](#); [Lejeune, Olivia](#)
Subject: RE: Please change the school calendar to respect the Jewish High Holy Days
Date: Monday, March 11, 2024 8:06:49 PM

Rebecca –

First, my apologies for the delayed response.

As mentioned in the past, it is the belief and opinion of the administration and Committee that adding holidays covering one religion isn't tenable without adding holidays for other religions. As we start to look at the scope and scale of that premise, it quickly becomes untenable. As such, we only recognize Federal holidays as no-school holidays on the calendar and have [Policy IMDA – Accommodations for Religious Observances](#) to address the greater concern around religious holy days. As Dr. Milaschewski mentioned in a previous email, we have placed a much greater emphasis on adherence to that policy district-wide over the last few years. Further, one of our members asked us to review the portion of the policy concerning tests or quizzes the day after a major holy day as many of those holy days have evening-focused worship for which studying would be required leading into the next day. We will endeavor to review that policy in the Policy Subcommittee and ultimately as a full Committee soon. Your engagement in that review would be welcome should time allow on your part.

Thank you for your continued engagement and support as we work to ensure all our students and families feel welcome and supported in our district.

Thomas Wise

Reading School Committee

Email: thomas.wise@reading.k12.ma.us

SC Distribution List: schoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us

Mobile: (617) 869-6825

Reading Public Schools Website: <https://reading.k12.ma.us>

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From: Rebecca Liberman <rfliberman@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 8:47 AM

To: DG School Committee <SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us>

Cc: Milaschewski, Thomas <Thomas.Milaschewski@reading.k12.ma.us>; Office of Equity and Social Justice <oesj@ci.reading.ma.us>

Subject: Please change the school calendar to respect the Jewish High Holy Days



CAUTION: This email originated from **outside of Reading Public Schools**. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the School Committee and Supt. Milaschewski,

I am very disappointed that once again no major Fall Jewish holidays are given off from school. This is very stressful for Jewish students and staff because they come early in the school year, and the policy against deadlines, tests, tryouts, etc is routinely violated. Many other districts and even the US Supreme Court respect these dates, and Reading even did for awhile, so I don't understand why we won't go back to giving students days off for the first day of Rosh Hashanah and for Yom Kippur.

I urge you to reconsider, especially given the alarming rise in antisemitism right now.

Thank you.

Rebecca Liberman

50 Pratt St.