

WINDHAM RAYMOND SCHOOL  
**LINK**

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THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE COMMUNITY  
OF REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 14

# LINK

WINDHAM RAYMOND SCHOOL

From the Superintendent... Sandy Prince

## Community partnership key to our success

To ensure each student has the opportunity to receive a world-class education, the Regional School Unit 14 Board of Directors voted in June to adopt the new five-year Strategic Plan.

As you may recall, we spent the last school year in a highly collaborative process and timeline to collect data from school and community stakeholders. Critical insight and understanding from community members, business people, parents, and school personnel helped us identify strengths, challenges, and potential opportunities that were used as the foundation for developing the Strategic Plan. The information guided us in setting top priorities that provide a clear direction and identify the actions that will lead the Windham Raymond School District into the future.

While we move forward in this new decade, RSU 14 will focus on 21st-century skills for our learners. We know that this must be done with revolutionary instructional practices, along with leveraging technology and working to open the world to our students. Many of the jobs of tomorrow do not even exist today, and we must expand the walls of the classroom to meet the unique needs of today's students. We will help them develop skills to be competitive and compassionate in a global society.

Meanwhile, the opening of school went amazingly well and we anticipate a great school year. We have hired some outstanding new staff and now have more than 700 employees. Our team is excited about the privilege of working with your children this year. Educators have worked this summer on improving and expanding our curricu-

lum resources and instructional strategies. Many have participated in training and workshops to continue their curriculum learning as part of our commitment to providing your children with the best educational experience possible.

One of the biggest factors in the overall success of our students and our district always is our ability to work in partnership with our families and communities. We hope that you feel welcome in our schools and that you will become involved in many of the things that are taking place. Please browse our website at [www.windhamraymondschools.org](http://www.windhamraymondschools.org) to learn more about the successes of last year and the promise of the coming year, and enjoy the articles in this fall edition of the **Windham Raymond School Link**. We are committed to communicate to our *Sandy Prince, continued on page 3*

## District briefs

The **May Health Fair** at Manchester Elementary School will be featured in October on WCSH-Channel 6's Schools That Shine program. The station was on hand during the fair to shoot footage for the 30-second Schools That Shine spot. Manchester was selected by the station from an essay submitted that described the event. According to Debbie Sample of the TV station, "Many schools teach nutrition or have exercise classes, but it sounds like you have gone the extra step to make this far more extensive and engaging for your students."

After four years of implementation of the **Everyday Mathematics program**, a group of fourth- and fifth-grade teachers worked during the summer to refine the assessments and

review all components of the program. The purpose of this intensive summer work was to provide more consistency for students and to align this comprehensive numeracy program with the new national standards.

**Janis Cummings**, first-grade teacher at Raymond Elementary School, was among nine teachers statewide named to the Starting 9 Teachers' Hall of Fame, a program run jointly by Unum and the Portland Sea Dogs. The teachers had the honor of throwing out the first pitch at the Portland Sea Dogs game June 18, and were issued a personalized Sea Dogs jersey with the number 10 (for 2010); a hat; and a personal check for \$500. Cummings said she is using the money to buy a computer to use in her classroom.

Four courses at **Southern Maine Community College** are available to Windham High School juniors and seniors this fall. Students can qualify for free tuition if they have a B or better average or have qualifying SAT or Accuplacer scores. Classes include English Composition, Earth Science, College Algebra and Introduction to Sociology.

In the last school year, more than 20 students participated in the Early College for ME program, at SMCC, University of Southern Maine or Central Maine Community College.



## Seeing stars: Nutrition ratings a hit

The stars are guiding Regional School Unit 14 to healthier eating.

A nutrition navigation system begun by Hannaford in 2006, the Guiding Stars System was launched at Windham High School in February. It continues this fall, and is expected to expand to both the Windham Middle School and Jordan-Small School by winter.

"Think of it as a GPS to find better food," said Jim McBride, director of operations for the Guiding Stars licensing company, a subsidiary of Hannaford.

Hannaford developed the system with the help of a scientific advisory panel. The ratings work on a good, better, best system, with one star representing good nutritional value; two stars, better; and three stars, the best nutritional value per 100 calories. The ratings are posted on tags.

"Launched as a nutrition guidance program within grocery stores, Guiding Stars has quickly

demonstrated its value in a wide variety of environments as a key nutrition guidance component," said McBride, a Windham resident whose wife, Kim, teaches language arts for gifted/talented students at the middle school.

McBride said the company had been looking to involve the Guiding Stars program with school food services. When Windham won the three-year, nearly \$1 PEP health and wellness grant last year, nutrition was included as an important component.

"Last fall, we started to make plans to implement," said McBride. "We were thrilled to be able to partner with the school."

"We've been really excited about having it," said Stephanie Joyce, district health coordinator and a registered dietician. "We want to help students and staff make healthy eating a part of their lifestyle."

At first, all the so-called grab-and-go-foods – selections such as milks, juices, snack foods, fruit and veggies – were rated with Guiding Stars. Toward the end of spring, emphasis shifted to recipes of foods already served, with the goal to reformulate for more nutritious, less processed meals.

"We're looking forward to continuing that work, as well as looking for more opportunities," said McBride.

Joyce said the Food Service staff enjoys working on the new recipes. *Seeing stars, continued on page 3*



## Bow walking

*Grace Pomeroy skips across the bows of the gathered kayaks just before she jumps into Frenchman's Bay at Acadia National Park. She was part of a four-day Summer Expedition earlier this summer run by Windham High School's Outing Club, which gave students the opportunity to try out the kayaks and other equipment funded through the three-year, nearly \$1 million federal Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) grant. Other students on the trip were Jenna Eastman, Nick Rallis, Sam Clapp, Cory Willey, Tim Dubois, Joe Parent, Sam Gifford, Sarah Paluso, Jesse Gallant, Allie Mack, Evelyn Gross, James Gallant, Justin Hardesty, Cody Cook, Ben Dionne, Nick Moulton, Caleb Moore, Matt Yeaton, Zoe Hall, Shannon Busque, Allison Sample, Ben Richardson, Keith Metayer, Ida Beckwith, Megan Rich, Keegan Nee, Kendra Mayberry, Sarah Ferrian, Lauren Thurlow, Jed McGill, Bridget Webber, Riley Dow and Jenna Robertson. Next summer, several such trips are planned.*

**Auditorium calendar on website** C.J. Payne is the new auditorium coordinator for the Windham Performing Arts Center. Anyone interested in what's coming up at the auditorium or in booking the auditorium for an event can check out [www.windham.k12.me.us/wpac/index.cfm](http://www.windham.k12.me.us/wpac/index.cfm), or call Payne at 892-1810 ext 341.



High school classes go virtual

For more than 25 students at Windham High School this fall, one of their classes will have a very different feel.

This group of students is the first to participate in a new partnership that Windham High School has made with Virtual High School.

For this new semester, students will be in the following courses: AP Statistics, Environmental Science, AP European History, Sociology, Philosophy, Creative Writing, Animal Behavior and Zoology, Pre-veterinary Medicine, Genes and Disease, Practical Law, Criminology, Kindergarten Apprentice, Oceanography and Constitutional Law.

Mary Peters, a Windham High math teacher, is teaching a Virtual High School course called "Math You Can Use in College," which she described as a non-traditional pre-calculus approach that focuses on using graphing calculators to solve problems.

Teaching an online course with students from across the globe is very different from meeting face to face with students.

"By being a virtual student ourselves, we learned Virtual High School from the students' perspective, which will help to anticipate any difficulties they might have," said Peters.

At WHS a netbook for each student

Windham High School now owns 1,050 Dell netbooks. The software included allows an e-Reader like a Kindle (rotating the screen 90 degrees), comes with math software, Quiz taker, graphic editing, software to study astronomy, Web Design editor, 3D Modeling, music production, video converter, Movie Maker, Photo Gallery, multiple web browsers, an Office automation suite and many other applications.

Pam Hecker, the new high school tech support person, is the point of contact for any issues with the new 1-to-1 initiative for high school students.

Also available now is WebEx, which will allow classes in Windham to link to classes in Raymond to share educational experiences and projects, interact and share computer desktops.

In Raymond, Austin Carr has been named to the information technology department as replacement for the retiring Dennis Dory, who has served as the technology department in Raymond for two decades.

Students are keen on green



Students at the green summit event were, from left, Danielle Collins, Erlon Valliere, Alex LaFerriere, Tyler Johnson, Abigail Libby, Logan Kellogg, Laura Tracy, Taylor Colangelo, and teacher Aaron Vachon.

Eight students from Aaron Vachon's Windham Middle School sixth grade joined more than 150 students from across New England and New York at the University of New Hampshire for the 10th annual KIDS Consortium (www.kidsconsortium.org) Student Summit on Service-Learning in May.

Raymond technology advances

Austin Carr, a former teacher from Windham, has joined the information technology department in Raymond. Carr brings extensive technology skills blended with teaching skills – the mix that now-retired Dennis Dorey brought to Raymond while he supported the tech needs there for 24 years.



Austin Carr

Carr will take care of all things technology related for Raymond: hardware, software, application support for assessments and questions by teachers and staff. This critical role is essential in allowing the technology to support the needs of the district into this millennium.

In addition to Carr, Priscilla Wood is Technology Integration Specialist in Raymond, and will spend the majority of her time helping teachers use technology in their classrooms. Wood also promotes distance education opportunities for Raymond students by using StudyWiz, NoteShare, Moodle and Google Apps.

Raymond Elementary School students also now have use of an additional cart full of laptops. The newer equipment will supplement the existing Mac computers. In addition, the school has

two Smartboards, which help bring interactive and hghi-tech classes to the students. Student use of the Internet will now be commonplace.

At Jordan-Small Middle School, Mary MacDonald is the new technology teacher, and will help students achieve technology competence so they will be successful using 1-to-1, computer-to-student instruction in the High School.

The Jordan-Small computer instruction parallels the computer instruction at Windham Middle School. Students will learn Office suite applications such as NeoOffice, word processing, spreadsheets, databases, as well as presentation tools and multimedia applications such as iMovie and keyboard skills.

Technology applications are advancing, as well. A new application introduced at Jordan-Small allows virtual dissections of animals through the computer. This has been used successfully in Windham for years.

Federal money helps boost nutrition efforts

Statistics show that Maine has the highest rate of obesity in New England, with more than 60 percent of Maine adults and 30 percent of children under 18 overweight or obese.

The money is part of the Communities Putting Prevention to Work program of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and originates from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Some \$372.8 million was released to 44 communities

nationwide. Maine received \$4.4 million.

The goal is to improve the health of Lakes Region residents by increasing physical activity, improving nutrition, and decreasing obesity, one of the leading preventable causes of death and disability.

access to unhealthy foods and increasing access to healthy foods and beverages. The grant will also increase access to and participation in physical activity for all K-12 students, as well as partner with adult education programs to provide more health and fitness courses, along with subsidies for participation.

Youngsters supported to make right choices

At Windham Primary School, it's the simple rules that have the biggest impact on behaviors.

In a program called Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, which now has been under way for some four years, the staff members "teach and re-teach appropriate behaviors, so the children have the best chance to make the right choices," accord-

ing to Kristin Grant, the assistant principal.

"We try to create simple rules for the whole school: Be safe, be respectful, be responsible," Grant said.

"In each of the areas of the school – hallways, café, playground, on the bus – we all have common area expectations defined," said Grant. "Teachers, monitors and everyone on the staff give kids many opportunities to hear what the expectations are."

Educators use data from all different environments in school to see where students are being successful in their behaviors and where they are having

trouble. As in academics, all children don't learn the behavior expectations in the same way.

"For certain students, they don't connect, and need re-teaching in different ways," Grant said. "When a child has repeated behavior issues, we put in support/intervention for him or her. We help them be successful."

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support "really is a process," said Grant – one where positive change is definitely being seen.

District children find Reading Streets

Reading Streets is a new, research-based reading program that includes kindergarten through sixth-grade teachers are implementing this fall in Raymond schools.

Created by leading experts in reading instruction, the Reading Streets program offers a comprehensive reading and writing program for elementary students. The program was developed using recommendations that came from the National Reading Panel, which was created in 1997 to assess the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read.

The Reading Streets program incorporates all of these elements.

The program is divided into a series of thematic units that include components of reading and writing instruction. Each of the units is backed by a selection of engaging reading materials that can be used with low readers, average readers, and students with advance reading skills.

In addition to the student reading selections, support materials for classroom libraries contain an appropriate mix of fiction and non-fiction. For students who are struggling to become good readers, the program contains a parallel component called My Sidewalks. Classroom teachers started the preparation for the implementation of this program last spring, and remained busy during the summer unpacking materials and planning lessons for students.

In Windham, the fourth- and fifth-grade teachers have

been gradually implementing Reading Street during the past two years into their literacy program. During the summer, a small group of fourth- and fifth-grade teachers, along with the standards-based teacher, gathered together to work on creating six new literacy standards for the students. These standards, which clearly define academic content standards, provide the basis for content in instruction and assessment.

Throughout this process, the teachers have also created key indicators for the students and have matched various skills and strategies found throughout Reading Streets to the standards and indicators created for reading and writing. Along with creating key indicators, the teachers have created a plan for intervention, so that all students can work toward and achieve the same goals.

Seeing stars continued

"They're so enthusiastic about what they do," she said.

McBride said Mission Wellness, a group of students interested in improving health and increasing nutritional offerings in the cafeteria, is also looking at ideas to raise awareness of Guiding Stars.

"The more we can do that, as well as work with the school to add more recipes, we'll see even greater success at having students make healthy choices. Which is what it's all about," he said.

Joyce pointed to the connection between eating healthy foods and learning, "so supporting our students in the cafeteria will help them in the classroom, too."

Sandy Prince continued

larger school community – whether the subject is the Strategic Plan, sporting events or our accomplishments – because that communication is critical to our success.

As always, if I can assist in any way, do not hesitate to contact me.