

WINDHAM RAYMOND SCHOOL
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THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE COMMUNITY
OF REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 14



LINK

WINDHAM RAYMOND SCHOOL

Alliance helps district offer more, cut costs

The Sebago Education Alliance, now more than seven years old, continues to be a valuable asset for our school community of educators and learners. Through offering teachers professional development programs to cost-sharing initiatives in a number of areas, the alliance has enhanced the effectiveness of the schools' mission.

"Collaborating with our partner school districts enhances our Mission of Success for All," says Superintendent Sanford Prince. The Sebago Alliance Day Treatment Program is a good example of this."

Other districts in the alliance are Gorham, Scarborough, Westbrook and Bonny Eagle.

The Day Treatment Program

is for children with emotional needs, according to Sue Card, SEA's program coordinator. The program began in 2007 with a primary focus on middle-level students and has since expanded to include high school and, most recently, elementary students. The tuition for students enrolled in the Day Treatment Program is approximately \$25,000 less per student than it would be if they were in another program, such as Sweetser or Spurwink. The program is based at the Little Falls School in Gorham and can meet the needs of 20 students.

The participating districts also save money on professional development. The alliance has

Education alliance
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From the Superintendent... Sandy Prince 2012, another exciting year

Welcome to the 2012 Winter issue of the Windham Raymond School District LINK. Last year was filled with accomplishments for our district. For sure it was a year of doing backflips given the amazing results that emerged from our students and employees. Let me name a few things that happened in December as we closed out 2011.

Our High School Boys' Soccer Team won the Class A State Championship and each player was given a plaque from the School Board. Coach Colin Minte was named Coach of the Year by the Southern Maine Activities Association and was also named Coach of the Year for the State of Maine by the Maine Principals' Association.

Congratulations to the boys and Coach Minte.

I continue to marvel at the Windham Chamber Singers and their American Family Holiday programs for setting the bar and momentum that builds for this festive event. It is a truly great experience. Dr. Nickerson and all members of the Windham Chamber Singers are stellar performers and have been recognized in the U.S., Canada and Europe. What other school groups have been broadcast on NBC and CBS?!

Attending a ceremony to see Ms. Kris Grant awarded the Maine Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year Award was not only a thrill for me

Sandy Prince
continued page 2

Just a few reasons to choose RSU 14

REAL School teacher Christine Caputo received a \$3,500 grant from Berlin City Motors that will support a stipend for a local chef to work with REAL School students in the culinary arts/school lunch program throughout the spring semester.

Windham Primary School's Kristen Grant was named the 2011 Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year by the Maine Principals Association.

The REAL School received a \$10,000 gift from an anonymous donor to help support the Teen Aspirations Program. This program helps students to identify personal goals and to engage in community-based activities to support those goals.

Three Windham Middle School students, Eric Webb, Sierra Yost and Elliot Clark, participated in the "Kick Start Maine" game show on WPXT, which aired on Nov. 10, 2011. The show features random trivia questions testing contestants' knowledge. Of the 50 contestants so far from schools throughout Maine, 18 have been from Windham.

Windham High School's Boys Soccer Team won the Western Maine Class A

Championship. They won the State Championship on Nov. 5, 2011!

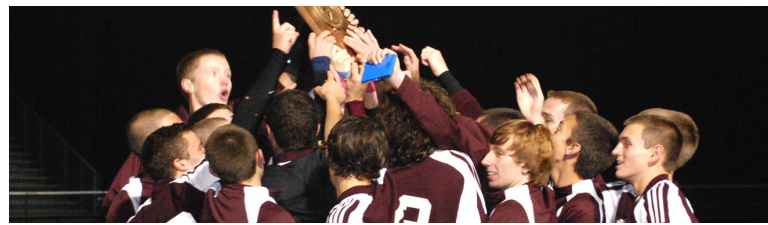
Colin Minte, the High School Boys Soccer Coach, was named Coach of the Year by the Southern Maine Activities Association. Minte was also named Coach of the Year for the State of Maine by the Maine Principals' Association. Quite an honor for a first-year coach!

Only three schools in the Class A Conference made playoffs in ALL fall sports and Windham High School was one of those three schools!

The first year of the High School Girls' Volleyball Team was a huge success. A strong foundation has been established with an 11-3 record. A special thanks to the girls and parents for their hard work.

School Nutrition Director Jeanne Reilly was featured in the September 2011 issue of School Nutrition magazine for her work to bring fresh, local foods to the program, along with her ability to meet some of the challenges associated with the nutrition program.

Windham High School students taking Advanced Placement courses has increased by 82 students over last year. We now have 229 students enrolled in AP courses.



Windham High School welcomes students from abroad

Seven visiting international students are giving students at Windham High School an experience in different cultures this year. The exchange students have made the journey from South America, Europe and Asia to stay with host families in the area and to experience an American education.

Exchange programs provide opportunities for students to learn about different cultures and learn from peers about what it is like to grow up in another country. The following is an excerpt from one of the visiting students' reflections.

"Windham High School is a really good school. It has many opportunities. Not only for citizens of America, but also for students from other countries. Being an exchange student is very

interesting. I'm happy that I have an opportunity to study in America; it's a great experience. The U.S. system of education is little bit different from the European one, but I'm lucky to discover it on my own.

"The WHS faculty helps me a lot with exploring other cultures and new systems of education. Teachers, people who work in the Academic Support Center and administrators have been very nice. They are very open and always ready to help any time with any questions. The students here are friendly, intelligent and awesome. I'm very thankful that I have such great people around me. It is really great that I have an opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, such as volleyball, swimming, the Outing Club and Interact Club. I am pleased that WHS has so many activities to offer. WHS is like a big family. Since the first week I felt like a member of this big, friendly family."

Studying the district's facilities

In 2007 and prior to the actual authorization of the new Windham-Raymond District, the Regional Planning Committee responsible for making recommendations regarding school regionalization--made up of community stakeholders from the two communities--had been reviewing facilities planning data. PDT Architects had provided the Windham School Department with a System-Wide Facility Study in 1997 and the same firm had provided the Raymond School Department with a Capacity and Facility Plan in 2007. In 2009, the newly elected School Board went to work very quickly in making the review of the district's facilities a priority for the 2009-2010 school year. PDT Architects was

contracted to develop a Long Range Facility Study for RSU 14--Raymond and Windham Schools. The study built upon the two previous studies and evaluated all seven buildings--K to Adult--within an evaluation matrix that addressed the following major categories:

- Design capacity
- Utilization
- Age of the building
- Site size
- Core facility size

The study also included a quality matrix that addressed four major categories:

- Condition of the building
- Student capacity
- Learning environment quality
- Building flexibility

Facilities
continued page 4

Not so typical lunch fare on the menu – yummy!



The Windham and Raymond foodservice staffs, shown here at a local foods training session last summer, have been working to provide healthier meals made from scratch in the school lunch program.

Fish tacos, homemade chicken tenders and homegrown coleslaw are among the healthy and delicious lunch fare students and staff in RSU 14 have enjoyed in recent months, thanks to a guest chef and the efforts of the foodservice staff.

Lunch fare
continued page 3



Lunch fare (cont'd)

Guest Chef Erin Dow, expert chef for the Guiding Stars Licensing Company and owner of Eatswell Catering, visits a different school in the district every month, bringing new recipes, made from scratch, including fish tacos with black-bean guacamole and crispy homemade chicken tenders with baby carrot "fries" and fresh vegetables served with Greek yogurt ranch dip. Next month at Windham Middle School she will prepare a "Super Bowl Blitz," buffalo chicken tenders and vegetarian nachos with black beans.

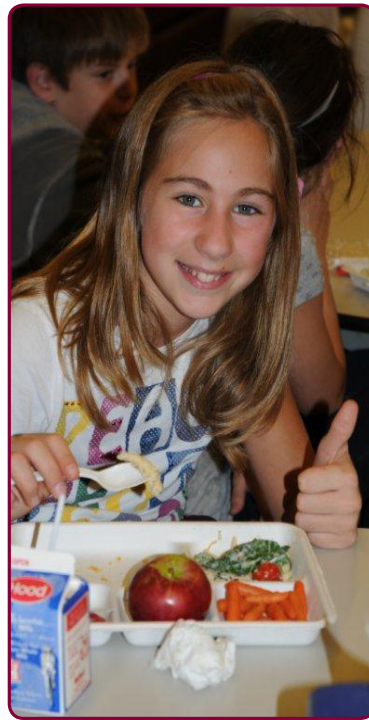
The idea of a inviting a guest chef to the district was first sparked by first lady Michelle Obama's Chefs Move to Schools Program, which connects local chefs to school foodservice programs. Dow's work is funded as a part of the Carol M. White Physical Education Program Grant, a federal grant of nearly \$1 million, which aims to help students make more nutritious food choices and participate in more physical education and physical activity.

In addition to Dow's efforts, and through the support of another grant, Communities Putting Prevention to Work, the school district has been working hard over the past year to increase the amount of local, healthy foods, and entrees cooked from scratch in the school nutrition program. The grant allowed RSU 14 foodservice staff to attend "Local Foods Bootcamp" last summer, where they were trained in food preparation methods and the benefits of using local foods. The district also received \$50,000 in food service equipment to support preparing more food from scratch, including the produce straight from school gardens. This fall, many children got a taste of coleslaw fresh from the garden, a true reward for their work over the spring and summer. The RSU 14 "Local Thanksgivng" meal featured on school food revolutionary Jamie Oliver's website. That meal featured local Maine foods, including baked acorn squash, baked apples and cranberry salsa.

The benefits of these changes and excitement around school lunch have been tremendous, says Jeanne Reilly, director of school nutrition for the district. "Not only are students trying new foods—and liking them," Reilly says, "but there has been a significant increase in school meal participation, at some of the schools as high as 40 percent. For previous generations

where school lunch featured a mystery meat, those numbers say a lot."

For more information and to see a video about guest chef days, please visit the school nutrition program's website through the district homepage.



Allison Drew at Manchester School shows her approval of a healthy school lunch.

In Brief Math stars

Jordan Small Middle School in Raymond hosted the 10th annual Pine Tree League Fall Math Meet in November and came out as the Overall School Winner. One hundred and thirty sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders from throughout the area competed for top honors in the areas of arithmetic, geometry and team problem-solving. The JSMS students who placed and scored points were: Dani Meader, grade six, second place; David Young, grade seven, first place; Lexi Walker, grade eight, first place; and Jeff Polard, grade eight, third place. Congratulations to all students who participated on a great math meet!

NHS Inductees

Thirteen students from Windham High School were inducted into the National Honor Society in December.

The National Honor Society, considered to be the premier honor society for high school students, was developed to recognize those who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership service and character. Students were selected by the faculty council.

Congratulations to seniors Lubov Barankevich, Clay Bolduc, Riley Dow and Georgia Noonan, and juniors Whitney Bolduc, Christian Coons, Meghan Fullarton, Tyler DeFosse, Nicolas Gleason-Bouree, Phoebe Hurd, Marybeth Noonan, Spring Pillsbury and Avery Topel.

Studying the brain

Adolescent brain development and what that means for the classroom has been on the minds of teachers at Windham Middle School as they participate in professional development sessions centered on the topic.

Eighth-grade teacher Ellen Bailey's work on her master's degree inspired her to share what she's been learning about middle-schoolers' thought processes and how to best increase their brain activity through specific learning opportunities.

"I was very intrigued to learn about the way neurons connect in pre-adolescents and about the pruning process during adolescence," Bailey says. "Essentially, adolescent brains are very inefficient when they first enter adolescence because there are too many synapses in their pre-frontal cortex. It means there is really too much brain activity, and there is very little focus on the more important functions."

Throughout adolescence, the brain prunes back unused neurons as the body assumes those neurons are not needed. That means, as Bailey explains, it is important for teens to be involved in a variety of useful activities, particularly those that involve the pre-frontal cortex as that is the area of the brain that is devel-

oping during adolescence. The pre-frontal cortex is involved in such activities as organization, risk assessment, planning ahead, and setting goals. It is important for students to do homework, set goals, plan and organize as those actions help keep neurons intact, she says.

Specific activities that promote growth in the pre-frontal cortex include breaking down a long-term assignment, such as a research paper, into smaller steps and setting due dates for each of those steps. "We engage in a lot of discussion about how cutting larger tasks into smaller, more manageable tasks is a tool that is useful in all sorts of life situations," Bailey says.

Other activities include in-class notebook organization, involving students in risk-assessment—such as having students assess the dangers of an open flame near an oxygen tank during a science assignment on the concept of pressure and volume—and giving students choices on how to best learn about a particular topic.

"Learning this information has helped me develop more patience and understanding with my students," Bailey says. "So, I decided to work with teachers at the middle school to develop some professional days devoted to adolescent brain development."

The professional development sessions have been based on three major topics. Last year, teachers focused on the adolescent brain research, its implications for the middle-school teacher and on brain-based learning strategies. This school year, so far, the teachers have reviewed research on adolescent brain development and brain-based learning strategies, as well as information on student motivation.

"I have found staff to be very interested in learning more about the teenage brain and how to use our classrooms as tools for increasing brain activity," Bailey says. "We still have work to do here, but have really laid a good foundation of understanding the importance of engaging our adolescents in a variety of brain-based learning tasks."

Facilities (cont'd)

The School Board established a Short-Term Facilities Use Advisory Committee during the 2009-2010 school year. The purpose of the committee was to develop a recommendation on how the district could better use its facilities to create operating efficiencies, operate buildings to capacity thus reducing operating costs, and minimize disruption to student population.

The School Board also authorized a school student enrollment study to ascertain projected enrollments out 10 years.

So how did these studies inform us and what data was derived from them?

Enrollment trends and projections summary:

Town of Raymond K-12 total enrollment numbers continue to drop from 662 today to 510 in 2022.

Raymond's live births continue to drop from a high of 49 births in 2004 to a low of 31 births in 2008.

Raymond's kindergarten enrollments continue to drop to a low of 33 kindergarteners in the Year 2015.

Windham's enrollment trends and projections remain relatively flat from 2012 to 2022.

The district's total K-3 enrollment rises slightly to a high in 2013, then to a relatively stable number of 920 +/- students from 2015-2022.

Last year, during development of the 2011-2012 district operating budget, the School Board made public the recommendations of the Short-Term Facilities Use Advisory Committee. After a series of public meetings during which the School Board took recommendations,

A culture of growth

Manchester School relies upon a culture of professional learning and collaboration to

the board decided not to pursue any changes in the current school grade configurations, school "lines" or the idling of any school buildings. However, there was informal School Board consensus that strategic planning for district facilities needed to be pursued.

This year, the School Board established the Strategic Facilities Building Planning Committee to continue this important work. The objectives of the committee are as follows:

1. Clearly understand the capabilities and needs of each building as relates to educational programming.

a. Understand current facility-design capacity, and realistic facilities input on maintenance.

b. Review the demographics of each grade, school and community to make effective decisions.

2. Analyze opportunities and possible future educational mandates—if you build it they will come—and create a vision of instructional programming that is inviting.

3. Optimize use of our current facilities in tandem with educational goals.

4. Work with ultimate long-term goal that the facilities/buildings meet our educational goals for our students.

The Committee also developed the following timeline:

FY 2011-2012—We will have clear understanding of the design capabilities of each building and enrollment demographics, and understand the district's capital plan. This will inform short-term plan strategies for the FY 2012-2013 school year—including possible transportation needs/costs.

personalize learning for all students. In February, teachers conduct an annual mid-year review of all students' achievement. This forum provides a focused opportunity to celebrate student progress and to discuss where additional

Fall 2012—Implement a short-term plan—serious, but no major changes may occur next year depending on what we learn.

FY 2013-2014—Should major changes be considered for September 2013, it is clear that we will need to engage in a dialogue with the communities this spring through the summer and next fall to be prepared to adequately budget.

The Committee has been meeting regularly since the beginning of this school year to formulate and bring recommendation to the School Board as they consider planning for the FY 2012-2013 district operating budget. In keeping with the Short-Term Facilities Use Advisory Committee purposes, a couple of themes have emerged from these meetings. They are as follows:

First, to better understand the possibility of delivering instructional programming differently, the committee has contracted with PDT Architects to look at the financial feasibility of converting Raymond Elementary School, Manchester Elementary School and the Primary School to K to grade 5 learning centers, as well as the cost of an addition to the Primary School to meet the anticipated enrollment increases at that site. These considerations will undoubtedly require thought into developing new school lines that do not fall along the geographic lines of the two communities.

Second, the committee has contracted with PDT Architects to look at the financial feasibility of housing all of our middle-level students in one school site.

I assure you that we are very interested in public opinion as we move forward with this very important work. For a more detailed history

of current events that have led up to this communication, please visit the district website. Please feel free to contact Superintendent Sandy Prince; Catriona Sangster, School Board vice chairman and chairman of the Strategic Facilities/Building Planning Committee; or me should you seek additional information or wish to share your thoughts.

Donn S. Davis

Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Winter 2012 LINK contributors

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Stephanie Joyce – district wellness coordinator

Carol Otley, grade 4 teacher, *Manchester School*

Jennifer Potter, grade 4 teacher, *Raymond Elementary School*

John Reidy – social worker, *Windham Primary School*

Tammy Webster – instructional interventionist III, *Windham Primary School*

Candace Wills – grade 3 teacher, at *Windham Primary School*

Sue Card – program director, *Sebago Education Alliance*

support is needed. Teacher teams, administrators, specialists and support personnel analyze individual student data, with an emphasis on reading comprehension and math computation/concepts, to identify what program adjustments are

necessary. Support then comes in the form of personal connections, enrichment, technology-based programs, opportunity for creative expression, and individualized intervention plans to maximize each student's learning.



Technology use at the high school

We live in an age where technology is growing and expanding at an ever increasing rate. On the heels of the holiday season, we are all familiar with the constant sales pitch by manufacturers as they try to convince us to purchase the “latest and greatest” piece of technology. If we step back to look at the purpose of all this technology, we quickly realize that all these gadgets are designed to let us communicate, gather information and make sense of the world around us. The explosion of technology has also brought many new terms and actions to everyday life. We are all now familiar with terms such as tweets, blogs and wikis, and at least one of the readers of this article will post their Facebook status while they are reading the LINK.

Teachers at Windham High School are using the tools of the digital age to enhance classroom instruction, support learners and prepare students for the 21st century. They have moved beyond using computers for word processing and basic research and are providing instructional opportunities that teach students how to effectively communicate in a digital world. Using social media tools, many teachers are now holding extra help sessions online with students outside of school hours. In one instance last year, students and their teacher gathered online on a snow day to hold an AP U.S. History class. Though the session was voluntary, the entire class logged in for this event. Another example of technology use at WHS involves the use of wiki spaces and Moodle for classes. With these tools, teachers can pose a question or topic for class discussion. Students log into the secure site and post their own response to the question as well as comment on the responses of others. Unlike a classroom discussion where several students can dominate a discussion, the use of online discussions ensures that all students have the opportunity to participate and share their views.

In addition to using tools for communication, there are also a couple of classrooms that are piloting the use of technology for instruction. The teaching technique is called an “upside down” format. In a traditional classroom, the teacher plans a lecture or series of activities for students to complete in class. For homework, students are assigned problems that support the work that was done in class that day. In the “upside down” format, the classroom teacher records the instruction for the topic being studied and assigns the video for homework. Class time is used for problem solving and supportive activities.

It is impossible to predict how technology will influence our lives into the future. When the current group of WHS seniors entered kindergarten, most of us were consumers of the Internet. We used it to check the weather, read about world events and research the best price for flights. The Internet has been transformed into a tool for personal and mass communication. The importance of proper digital communication cannot be stressed enough. The curriculum at Windham High School now includes lessons on digital citizenship and how to maintain an appropriate digital footprint, which includes all of the messages, photos and comments that we post online. In an era of open and archived Internet, digital footprints are searchable by colleges and future employers.

Education alliance (cont'd)

provided an annual “Tech Camp” for teachers from all grade levels and disciplines for several years now. “This experience not only increases teachers’ skills and knowledge of technology, but does so at a very low cost,” Card says.

The alliance collaborates on professional development in other areas as well. For example, four of the five districts use the same elementary math program, Everyday Math. “Last summer I organized a workshop for teachers new to the program or new to their grade level. The workshop brought together more than 40 teachers,” Card says.

“Feedback from teachers is very positive,” she adds. “They appreciate both the quality of these activities and the opportunity to network with teachers from other districts.”

Prince agrees. “The Alliance has assisted us with ensuring that our staff receive high-quality professional development with costs shared between the six districts,” he says. “This has been a real savings to us given these tough economic times.”

Districts also partner to receive lower rates on services. All districts purchased Blackboard Connect, a parent and community notification system; several share the cost of an educational software program; and at least two districts formed a partnership to contract for Virtual High School. Card adds, “With the recent hiring of an efficiency coordinator there will likely be more savings as he explores property and casualty insurance, workman’s comp and copier contracts.”

Card regularly meets with focus groups made up of individuals from the dif-

ferent districts with common positions or roles, such as business managers and special education directors, acting as a liaison between and among these groups, often bringing issues from one group to another. Card also meets with the superintendents and organizes goal-setting sessions and other planning events.

New programs planned for 2012 include a digital book club for teachers and administrators and a focus group for teachers in leadership roles.

Prince (cont'd)

but also for the students. This is the first year that the Maine Principals’ Association has provided this award, and we are proud that Ms. Grant was the first to receive this well-deserved honor.

As we wrapped up 2011 and rang in the New Year, a group of courageous Lobster Dippers from RSU 14 took a dip in the Atlantic Ocean. A gold star goes to John Dionne, Jack Fitch, John Keller and Mary Thornton, all RSU 14 employees. A gold star also goes to students Colby and Hunter Dionne and Emily Gagne, along with community members Ed and Emily Gagne, Jean Thornton and George Tanguay. The Lobster Dippers raised \$5,200 for Special Olympics of Maine.

Thank you again for your continued support and making 2011 such a success. I look forward to working with you in 2012 for another exciting year.

My best as always,
Sandy Prince,
Superintendent



Windham High School students Evelyn Gross, Emma Ogg and Jacob Desjardins enjoy the fall view from the top of Pleasant Mountain in Bridgton. They were among 35 students who participated in WHS Outing Club’s 6th annual Soup and Summit Hike in late October. At the top, the group enjoyed hot chocolate and soup and made their first snowballs of the season. Leading the trip were high school teachers Lindsay Hanson, Eric Hanson and Dominic Lambek.

Fourth-graders take hands-on look at the way birds survive

Birds are the finest example of animal adaptations in the world. Every body part, whether external or internal, is intended to allow their species to survive and thrive in their environment, and the students in Carole Otley’s fourth-grade class at Manchester School learn this in a very hands-on way.

Otley has her students begin by studying food chains and traits that each bird species possesses to survive. Next, they study the beaks and feet of birds, which

determine their environment, food of choice, and survivability. Otley then brings in four bird mounts from the National Audubon Society for the children to study, compare and contrast. The snowy owl test is the culminating activity for external adaptations.

The most exciting part of the students’ study, Otley says, is about internal adaptations. The class looks at how birds digest their food whole because they have no teeth. First, the students dissect owl pellets, the food the owl cannot digest, such as bones and fur, and so regurgitates it in the form of a pellet. Then, students make gizzards, which grind the seeds and food for the majority of the bird species. Students use gravel (yes, birds eat gravel),

blueberries, seeds, grass, leaves and moss to replicate what birds eat in the wild.

The culminating project involves collecting as many partridge gizzards as possible, which the children dissect to see what foods their particular partridge had been eating. (Favorites are apples, maple seedpods, clover and berries.) As part of the unit this year, one of the students’ grandparents contributed whole partridges so the class could dissect the crops and gizzards.

By the end of their study, the children truly understand the reasons for each individual animal’s adaptations, Otley says.

Helping those in need

Three instructional interventionists at Windham Primary School support the overall district mission of Success For All. The interventionists are educational technicians who directly support students’ success academically, socially and behaviorally.

At the beginning of the year, much of their work involves supporting students transitioning to school and the expectations of school.

The majority of the year they provide direct support to students so that they may experience continuous progress in their learning. They use data and knowledge of best educational practices to provide these interventions. Interventionists, recognizing that not all students learn the same way, support struggling learners through small-group and individualized instruction separate from

their classroom instruction.

As the school year closes, the interventionists’ role returns to supporting students transitioning to summer and a new grade.

Interventionists, who work at schools throughout the district, work under the umbrella of the Response to Intervention system, which is based on scientifically researched data points. Their use of these techniques helps students become self-sufficient and successful in order to live a happy, rewarding adult life.

Promoting good books

Fourth-graders in Jennifer Potter’s Class at Raymond Elementary School have been creating monthly book trailers with the help of district videographer Ian Clough. The goal in creating these videos—just like the movie trailers you see at the cinema only for books—is to promote books and reading while engaging students in technology.

Students have read and filmed book trailers for *Frindle*, *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*, and *Because of Winn Dixie*, among others. They analyze each text to determine character motivation and development, sequencing of events, plot development and theme. They also learn about the structural elements of trailers, figuring out how to peak curiosity and hook the audience. Lastly, says Potter, students have fun!

View the students’ trailers at: <https://rsu14.eduvision.tv/Default.aspx>

Access to technology helps RES students achieve ‘Success for All’

For the past two years, student growth at Raymond Elementary School has been reviewed and analyzed every six to 12 weeks. A team of teachers coordinates those efforts and then develops a comprehensive system of individualized interventions for behavior and academic skills growth.

In addition, technology has been incorporated into math and reading instruction for all students to promote mastery of certain skills. The results have been remarkable. Through use of the computers in the computer lab, the number of students who did not demonstrate “on grade level” math skills decreased by 10 percent in grade 3 and by 6 percent in grade 4. Computers are set up on a timer that gives students ten minutes to see how many math facts they can complete accurately. The students begin on level one and move up through the 10 levels until they reach 90 percent accuracy at each level.

Different grade levels focus on certain skills in sequence with the Everyday Math textbooks, and teachers are also supplementing that curriculum with the Rocket Math program.

In kindergarten and first grade, all students use the computer-based Lexia program to improve individualized reading fluency. One-third of the students in a classroom work in the Lexia lab, while the remaining two-thirds work with their teacher on targeted skills. Students rotate between the lab and the classroom every half-hour until each child has had the opportunity to work with the Lexia program. Each student’s literacy growth is analyzed to determine their needs for further direct instruction. These improvements in grade 1 literacy instruction have resulted in a 50 percent decrease in the number of students who need additional support and instruction in reading when they enter grade 2.



Joanna Clark, left, Allie Rand, Talia McKay and Amanda McKenna take a break during their field trip to Kettle Cove in Cape Elizabeth in late October. Forty-five high school students in Lindsay Hanson’s Environmental Science class took part to study species found in Maine’s rocky intertidal zone.