

Teaching & Learning

May, 2018

To the real-life superheroes of our time,
Happy Teacher (Educator) Appreciation Week!

The dedication, determination, commitment, and selflessness you bring every day to inspire our students to be their best is amazing! Some days you're trying to change the world and other days you're just trying to make it through the day.

Thank you for all days



Noteworthy this Spring: Two-year-old Parker Curry was so awestruck by the towering portrait of Michelle Obama that every time her mother would try to get her to turn around to take a picture, she would not stop staring at it. CNN reported that Parker believes Michelle Obama is a queen, and she wants to be a queen as well. **Our rich [RIDES](#) (Reimagining Integration - Diverse and Equitable Schools) partnership with Harvard and work in-district this year, is just the beginning of explicitly recognizing inequities and increasing opportunities for ALL students in the WPS.**

Timeline of RIDES at WPS in SY'18:

Spring 2017: Invited by HGSE to work in a strategic partnership with Harvard's Reimagining Integration: Diverse and Equitable Schools Project

Summer 2017: The District formed a core team to plan for the partnership

September 2017: RIDES core team attended RIDES Launch at Harvard

October 2017: A larger secondary school team was formed with faculty representatives from both WMS & WHS

November 7th: Invited the larger WMS & WHS staff to contribute their ideas about the partnership in full-day PD

January - March: RIDES Team met to plan strategy

March 7: Superintendent Galdston & Assistant Superintendent McGuinness shared with elementary staff

April 7: Superintendent Galdston & Assistant Superintendent McGuinness presented at the Harvard RIDES Equity Conference

June 2018: An 'Equity' goal is included in our Strategic Plan with an action plan going forward

Recent Highlights in a Few of Our Schools, & Beyond...

1. **Watertown Students & Adult Volunteers Created a Mural of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Principles of Nonviolence** – 5-min video clip of the construction of the beautiful wall. On **Thursday, June 7th**, a ceremony officially unveiling the completed mural will be held behind the Boys & Girls Club. The

ceremony will begin at 3:30 p.m. and be attended by Dr. Bernard Lafayette, who has visited Watertown numerous times in the past few years to train Watertown students and adults in Kingian nonviolence. Dr. Lafayette was also a close friend of the late Dr. King.

2. **Watertown Community Education** - Did you know that Watertown Community Education now has a Facebook page? Like and follow their [Facebook page](#) for updates on the Before School and Extended Day Programs, Courses for Kids, Summer Explorations Program, Watertown Adult Education Courses, the Town Wide Yard Sale, and more!
3. Congrats to WPS' **Katie Swift** who was nominated in the Boston Sunday Globe's Salute to Nurses this May!
4. **Minding Your Mind** in MA presents the IndieFlix documentary "**Angst: Raising Awareness Around Anxiety**" at Newton South High School, Seasholes Auditorium on **May 17, 2018 from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.** This is a new film created to open up the conversation about anxiety, and provide tools, resources & hope (appropriate for ages 10 and up). [Register here.](#)



A great crew of **Lowell School boys** using a research-based online reading and academic language skills program available in 20 different languages
www.imaginelearning.com

5.



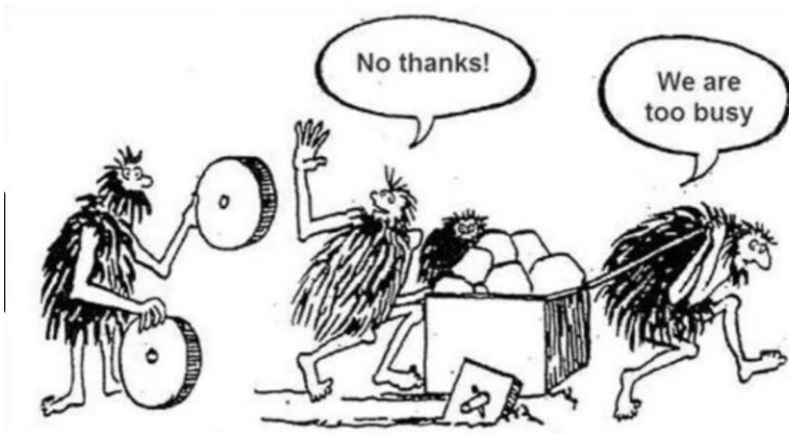
Flash from earlier at WHS: The students spent over a month researching the French Revolution and preparing for this event. The focus of the event was to debate (in the form of a trial) which social group in the French Society (Nobles, Clergy, Radical Mountains of the Jacobin party, Girondins, or the Women) should have been the sole drive or leaders of the French Revolution or should the Monarchy have retain their leadership role.

6.

Judge David Mastro with his **AP European History class** after its French Revolution trial (an annual daylong event)



The beauty of WHS's inclusive 'Reach' Music Class



At WPS, we are **not** interested in recreating the wheel rather, we are forging ahead by listening, studying, and mashing educational research with our talented staffs' expertise. We are focused on high leverage, impactful changes designed to support teachers' instruction and assessment thereby increasing positive student outcomes.

Below are a few high leverage new initiatives:

- **Responsive Classroom** is the research-based **social emotional learning (SEL) program** showing evidence of increased ACADEMIC achievement and social-emotional competencies, which was selected by the SEL Team for implementation during the 2018 – 2019 school year in grades K through 5. The Responsive Classroom approach rests on the foundational idea that these four areas of teaching —engaging academics, positive community, effective management, and developmental awareness—are interrelated and are crucial to student success. Here is the [parent information sheet](#) describing it.
- **Standards-Based Report Card (SBRC)** - To more accurately and effectively communicate student progress to parents and students, and to be clear and specific about the academic and pro-social standards (i.e., what all students need to know and be able to do in each domain), our SBRC Team has designed an excellent new K- 5 elementary report card for use in the 2018-2019 school year. *Presentation at May 21, 2018 School Committee Meeting, May/June site councils and/or PTO meetings.*
- **i-Ready Universal Assessment Tool** – This assessment tool will be used in grades K – 9 during the 2018-2019 SY for diagnostic assessments and progress monitoring. This single K–9 adaptive diagnostic for reading and mathematics pinpoints student needs down to the sub-skill level, and ongoing progress monitoring shows whether students are on track to achieve end-of-year targets.
- **ATLAS Curriculum Management Tool** - ATLAS is the curriculum mapping solution tailored to our district and paired with customized learning programs for innovative K-12 curriculum. We are continuing to align our curriculum and assessments to the MA State Standards in an effort to link student performance to our curriculum. During the 2018 -2019 school year, an overview of grade-level curricula will become available on our website. *Stay tuned.*



A glimpse of the beautiful **Watertown Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Presentation** in April 2018, hosted by the SEPAC Chair, Maria Baia, with award presentations by Michael Shepard and Michelle Fallon, honoring the following WPS educators:

- MaryAnn Billings**
- Emma Fallon**
- Anthony Fiandaca**
- Chad Foster**
- Ashley Gomes**
- Megan Griffin**
- Delanie Lombard**
- Holly Master**

A Few Resources for Faculty Members...

- PowerTeacher Pro [Training & Support Guide](#)

Two brief articles from *Learning to Write, Writing to Learn, April 26, 2018 | Volume 13 | Issue 16*

- [The Keys to Content-Area Writing: Short, Frequent, and Shared](#) by Nancy Steineke, If you want students to be better readers, writers, and thinkers in every content area, then writing every day in every class is key. Be sure to make that informal and spontaneous writing short, frequent, and shared.
- [Guided Self-Correction: A Positive, Focused Feedback System That Improves Writing](#) by Selina Ivy and Jim LeBuffe, Helping students improve grammar and syntax in their writing can be a tedious, overwhelming experience for students and teachers alike. Guided self-correction is a system for gradually giving students the skills to proofread their own writing.

For your planning purposes...

- **Friday, June 1** **WHS Graduation 6pm - 8pm @ Victory Field, 40 Orchard St**
- **Friday, June 22** **Noon dismissal, all schools**

Keep each other well,
 Theresa
Theresa McGuinness, Ed.D.
 Assistant Superintendent