



Raymond Resident  
Raymond, Maine 04071

## Grants

Teachers at the Manchester School have successfully obtained a number of grants to fund a variety of classroom programs.

- Donna Morton and Deb Luce received \$1,000 from the PTA for a visit from artist Mimi Carpenter. Donna Morton also was awarded \$200 from PROP's Communities Promoting Health Coalition for a project called Movement Matters, in which students wear a pedometer that the grant bought, and the mascot Marco the Moose walks around a map of Maine according to their daily steps. Another grant, for \$700 through Smart Technologies, went toward the purchase of the school's first Smart Board.

- Jean MacDonald received three pairs of adult snowshoes for a classroom project called "Winter Fitness, a Must"! from DonorsChoose.org grant.

- Vickie Clarke got \$900 from the 5-2-1-0 program after she wrote a grant explaining how the school would implement and identify areas from the 10-key, 5-2-1-0 Goes to School Strategies. The program promotes physical activity and healthy eating through use of the 5-2-1-0 message (encouraging 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily, limiting screen time to 2 hours per day, promoting 1 hour of physical activity daily, and avoiding sugar-sweet-

ened beverages.)

- Stephanie Lauer received a \$200 grant from the PTA for snacks for Homework Club.

- Pam Lanz had two \$500 grants approved from Wal-Mart. The money will be used for purchasing seeds, tools, building materials or promotion of the Manchester Gardens.

- Barbara Brown was awarded \$190 from Maine Historical Society to be used for transportation costs, allowing four classrooms of students to tour the Henry Wadsworth Longfellow House and view the Maine Historical Society exhibits in Portland.

- Teachers Jaime Pappalardo and Andrea Lavigne wrote an application essay for Schools That Shine, a program developed in partnership with WCSH 6 and neighborhood Dunkin' Donuts. The 500-word essay described an event that made the school unique. As a result, Manchester School was chosen to be featured on WCSH 6. A crew filmed at the school May 5. Chosen schools will be profiled in a public service announcement that will be broadcast on WCSH 6 for a month. Each school selected receives a \$1,000 cash grant from Dunkin' Donuts. The schools decide how the grant money is to be used.

- Students in Carol Otley's and Kelley Williamson's fourth-grade classes wrote a successful grant to purchase an Audubon membership for the entire Manchester School. The membership enables teachers to borrow posters, videos, and other resources from the Audubon Society for use in the classrooms. The grant was sponsored by the "Kids Caring for Community" bottle fund at Manchester School.

Phys Ed Teacher Wayne Martin was in Washington, D.C., March 10 to sit in on congressional hearings and discuss initiatives revolving around childhood obesity, including the Carol M. White PEP grant. The trip was paid for by Polar, a company that makes heart rate and fitness equipment monitors.

The REAL School's Teen Aspirations Program has received another round of grant funding for next year through the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group. The \$78,000 pays for a program facilitator's salary and activities and supplies for the students. Sarah Anderson's \$30,000 grant that supplements the Restorative Learning Program also received another year of funding.

From the Superintendent... Sandy Prince

## Difficult times produce tough budget

Welcome to our spring issue of the Windham Raymond School District (RSU 14) Link. I would like to begin talking about our proposed school budget.

As we all know, the state is continuing to suffer from declining revenue. As a result, Windham and Raymond will regrettably have a reduction in school subsidy of \$1,387,745.60 for the 2010-11 fiscal year. This presented a challenge for us, as each year we anticipate increased expenditures in insurance, fuel costs, unemployment insurance and debt services, and decreased MaineCare reimbursement. It would normally require between \$1 million and \$1.25 million to "open the doors" with the same programming from year to year.

Another impact of the challenges we have recently faced was the issue of curtailment. Gov. Baldacci issued a "cur-

tailment reduction" to all state agencies, including school systems, in the 2008-2009 school year and also for the current school year. The total reduction for RSU14 for both years was \$1,562,148. This had a significant impact on our plans and in both years we established immediate spending freezes, which prevented us from providing the proper resources for our students.

Given the dire financial times, the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors could not ask our residents to shoulder a significant tax increase.

The proposed 2010-11 budget now stands at \$36,943,642.44, a 3.93 percent decrease from our current budget. Reductions total \$1,513,216.89. Preliminary tax implications would be 42 cents per \$1,000 of property valuation in Windham, or a 5.6 percent hike on the school side; and in Raymond, 54 cents per \$1,000 of property

valuation, a decrease of 6.6 percent on the school side.

During the past year we eliminated 19 positions and the proposed budget calls for an elimination of 42 additional positions across the district, from support staff to administrators. We have trimmed our operating budgets as far as they can go without significantly impacting teaching and learning. The Board of Directors has the ultimate responsibility to adopt a budget for RSU 14 and place it before the two communities for review and a vote.

**The first public budget meeting is Wednesday, May 26, at 6:30 p.m., in the Windham High School Auditorium, where residents of Windham and Raymond will vote on the budget. This will be followed by the Budget Validation Referendum on Tuesday, June 8. Raymond residents will vote on June 8 between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. at Jordan Small**

*Sandy Prince, continued on page 3*



## Lending a hand

*Steve Garrett, a REAL School junior, finds easy affection from children during his humanitarian relief service trip to the Dominican Republic. See story, page 2.*

## Wellness Fair a chance to show off new resources

The Windham-Raymond community will have a chance to see first hand the impact of a major wellness grant, at the first i225 PEP Grant Community Wellness Fair, Saturday, May 22, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at Windham High School.

Last year, the district was awarded nearly \$1 million through the Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) grant, which during the next three years will fund major expansions to physical education, nutrition and wellness initiatives. The grant is paying for the creation of several Centers of Wellness to increase the opportunities for students to be physically active.

Wellness Centers are at Windham Middle School and Windham High School. Community resources are the DARE to Adventure Center for Community

& Adventure Wellness and the Parks & Recreation Center for Community Wellness. The interactive fitness showcase at the fair will include free sessions of yoga, Zumba, rock climbing and other demonstrations. The keynote will be a brief video message from former President Bill Clinton and "Ask the Experts" will be a Q&A with the PEP Grant Leadership Team.

PEP-funded projects throughout the schools are marketed with the brand "i225." The National Association of Sport and Physical Education recommends that students receive at least 225 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity during the school week.

The Centers of Wellness will provide increased opportunities for students to do just that through the creation and expansion of the weight room, cardio room, rock wall, outdoor adventure program, fitness arcade, and more. The grant will also provide a nutrition navigation system in cafeterias, in addition to a modern digital wellness lab.

## WHS adding online classes to curriculum

Online learning classes will be offered starting next year at Windham High School. In partnership with Virtual High School, a nonprofit organization that offers content-rich, credit-bearing courses to students across the country and across the world, Windham students will have the opportunity to participate in a high-quality online education.

The current Virtual High School course catalog contains more than 190 semester and full-year classes that include Advanced Placement, Pre-AP, core classes and high-interest courses for students. The classes are taught by certified teachers who have gone through extensive professional development on how to teach in an online environment.

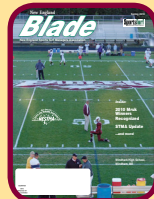
Students will receive their assignments each Wednesday and will be required to have all work completed by the following Tuesday. In addition to their individual work, students are expected to participate in online discussions and group work with their online peers and teachers. Virtual High School will give Windham High School access to 50 semester seats or 25 seats for year-long classes. Seats will be assigned on a first come-first served basis. The catalog can be viewed at <http://www.govhs.org/Pages/Academics-Catalog>.



## Honors and accomplishments

• Windham High School's stadium football field has been recognized with a Field of Excellence award, according to Michael DiDonato, grounds coordinator. The award is given by Pioneer Athletics, a manufacturer of athletic field marking paint and equipment. The award was created in 1998 and 370 athletic fields from across the nation have been honored.

• Norma Richard, Raymond Elementary School principal, has been named Maine Music Educator's Principal of the Year.



The award-winning Windham High School football field was featured on the cover of New England Blade, a trade publication

• The four members of Windham High School's freestyle relay swim team are New England champions following a victory in the 400 freestyle earlier this year. They are Lance Webster, Nathan Paluso, Jake Shoberg and Nick Sundquist. Coach Peter Small was named Maine Interscholastic Swim League coach of the year for the third year in a row.

• Aileen Pelletier, a second-grade teacher at Windham Primary School and the chairperson of the "Go Green For Technology" committee at the school, was awarded the Eco-Excellence Award for the town of Windham on March 16. Peter Allen, a teacher at Manchester School, also won the award, which is sponsored by EcoMaine and given to recipients who have made a significant impact to promote "green" activities in their community.

• Donna Morton, Grade 4 teacher at Manchester School, was recently given the Golden Apple Award by Nassau Broadcasting based on a parent nomination letter. The award recognizes those who are "dedicated to the intellectual and emotional growth of Maine's children and young adults."

• The district's recycling efforts have moved ahead with strong programs in the Manchester, Middle and Primary Schools. Recycling has also been started in the cafeteria at the Manchester School and during breakfast at the Primary School.

• Last month, 10 high school students participated in the annual Athlete Leadership Summit sponsored by the Southern Maine Activities Association league. Each school sends students and at the end of the day, the students vote on the school they feel deserves the Sportsmanship Award for the year. Windham High School was chosen by all the student athletes for this year's award.



## Honors in Augusta

Sen. Bill Diamond of Windham reads a congratulatory message from the Maine State Legislature to the championship Windham High School football team when the members visited the State House in February. Jack Mallis, who was awarded the 2009 James J. Fitzpatrick Trophy, was also cited.

## Windham students lend a hand



REAL School senior Nick Fanning befriends some children during his humanitarian relief service trip to the Dominican Republic.

Two Windham REAL School students, senior Nick Fanning and junior Steve Garrett, and Martin Mackey, their teacher, spent a week in the Dominican Republic in a humanitarian relief service trip, working in some small villages amid sugar cane fields and in the city of La Romana.

Partnered with the nonprofit humanitarian organization Seeds of Independence, the Windham group helped a team of American doctors with medical aid for Haitian refugees and Dominicans in make-shift clinics. They also distributed clothing, school supplies, and sports equipment to the poor Haitian immigrant children and families who work in the sugar cane fields.

The group also helped with construction at

Good Samaritan Hospital – painting, constructing walls, tiling, and installing windows – working alongside local Dominicans and Haitians to complete multiple projects, despite the significant language barrier. The Good Samaritan Hospital is the only hospital in the Dominican Republic that serves the Haitian laborers.

"It's was worse than I thought it'd be," Garrett told the Lakes Region Weekly. "It definitely opens your eyes and makes you appreciate different things like electricity, running water, and everyday things we take for granted."

With help from the Regional School Unit 14 schools and communities, they also collected 250 boxes of donated food and supplies that were carried overland into Haiti to provide relief for the victims of the recent earthquake. They returned to Maine in early April.

"I think it was a catalyst for positive change for our students, just seeing people with so little. Yet, they were content," Mackey told the newspaper. "It was a pretty profound experience."

## Positive behavior honored, reinforced

The staff at Raymond Elementary School has been finding creative ways to recognize the positive behaviors seen every day.

Music, library, art, computer and gym teachers each created awards for their subject area. These awards, the Golden Note, Golden Book, Golden Art, Golden Mouse and "Jim" Bear, have been given weekly to the class that best exhibits I CARE behavior. The class proudly displays the award, which they get to keep for the week. So far, every class has received an award at least once and some classes have received more than one.

Students who do something that goes above and beyond required behavior have been receiving stars, which are displayed on a bulletin board outside of the main office. Students who receive stars are then given a chance to have their name drawn in a weekly drawing.

The student chosen is the "STAR" of the week and gets to have a special activity alone, with a friend or with their entire class. Some of the special things they have chosen to do include extra gym time with a friend or whole class, lunch with principal Norma Richard or another special person. One student even chose to spend some special time with a favorite kindergarten teacher. More than 450 stars are on display.

Another recognition students receive is the "I caught you following the I CARE rules" slip when they put a token in the jar for an I CARE behavior. These slips can be taken home so their parents know they have received a token that day. When the jar is filled with tokens the students get to participate in a whole school activity. So far this year the token jar has been filled twice, and students have enjoyed a Wacky Wednesday and a Beach Day.

## Staff members announce retirement

Eleven staff members in Regional School Unit 14 are retiring at the end of this school year. They are: Carol Thurlow, Manchester School noon aide, 34 years. Leah Campbell, Windham Middle School teacher, 31 years. Regina Minott, Windham Primary School teacher, 26 years.

Joyce Greenacre, Windham Primary School teacher, 23 years. Linda Mirone, Raymond Elementary School teacher, 22 years. Linda Peters, Windham Primary School library tech II, 13 years. Norma Richard, Raymond Elementary School principal, 13 years.

Steve Merrill, athletic director, 12 years. Peter Allen, English as Second Language teacher, 4 years. Trisha Blanchard, Windham Middle School teacher, 30 years. Donna Moreau, Windham High School librarian, 13 years.

## Strategic plan nears adoption

After many months of work, the five-year Strategic Plan for Regional School Unit 14 is just about complete. The initiative, which involves stakeholders from both the community and the schools, maps out goals and objectives for RSU 14 for the next five years. It starts with this: The mission of the Windham Raymond School

District is to ensure success for all learners. Some time later this month or in early June, the RSU 14 Board is set to adopt the plan. Those who are interested can access the complete document at [www.windhamraymondschools.org](http://www.windhamraymondschools.org).

## The ABC's of EPS, the state funding formula

Confused about EPS? Here are excerpts from a report by the Maine School Management Association that explains the Essential Programs and Services funding formula:

When the Essential Programs and Services funding formula was adopted by the Legislature in 2003, it was designed to ensure all schools had "adequate" resources to provide a core education and was never intended to define everything school districts had to pay for a comprehensive program.

The formula attempts to break down a basic education into component parts – from teacher salaries to supplies. It defines what it should cost to make sure each child in the state meets the standards in eight content areas outlined in the Maine Learning Results, spanning English and math to physical education and visual and performing arts.

Left out of the mix is the lion's share of the cost for school sports and other extra-curricular activities and there is no allocation for the school lunch program.

The formula also favors larger schools, according

to some administrators, because small schools cannot meet the student-to-teacher ratios defined under EPS, particularly for specialty classes like foreign languages, nor can they achieve the economies of scale needed to operate and maintain their buildings on what the formula provides.

What the formula does is to say that regardless of where a child lives, he or she should have access to a core set of programs.

In 2005, EPS was incorporated into a bill – known as LD1 – that the Legislature passed to honor a citizen referendum to have the state pick up 55 percent of the cost of education. That goal has never been met.

It is now used annually in a report produced by the State Planning Office that says school districts are the worst offenders of over-spending because they exceed EPS-defined costs.

In reality, a majority of school districts were over EPS when the cap was adopted and that trend continues, with 80 percent over in fiscal year 2007, and 82 percent in 2008.

In fiscal year 2009, the report says, 88 percent exceeded EPS, but that was after the Legislature altered the funding formula to save \$36 million in order to help balance the budget. To save that much on the state side, the Legislature cut the cost of education as defined by EPS by \$66 million.

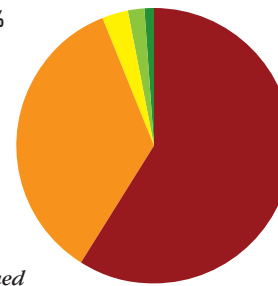
School districts, on the other hand, not only had to start with a base that most already were exceeding, but increases in EPS have been limited.

In fiscal year 2007, the total cost of education as defined by EPS was increased by 2 percent over the previous year, and in fiscal year 2008, it went up 3 percent. In fiscal year 2009, however – the year the Legislature cut education aid to help balance the budget – EPS was cut by 1 percent.

The argument that schools are overspending if they are over EPS is being invoked more frequently in these tough economic times. The irony is the formula was developed to make sure districts were spending enough on education, not to serve as a spending cap.

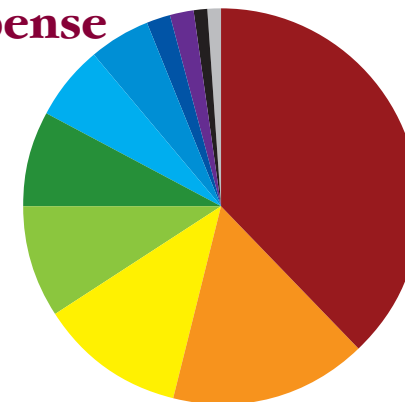
## Revenue

- Tax Commitment 59%
- State Subsidies 35%
- Stabilization 3%
- Tuition and Other 2%
- Carry Over 1%



## Expense

- Regular Instruction 38%
- Special Education Instruction 16%
- Facilities 12%
- Debt Service 9%
- Student & Staff Support 8%
- School Administration 5%
- System Administration 2%
- Other Instruction 2%
- CTE Instruction 1%
- Total all other expenditures 1%



## Budget continued

Middle School and Windham residents will vote on June 8 between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. at Windham High School.

This is the third year that the school budget validation process has been in place and under law, districts will ask residents to vote at the ballot box on whether they want to continue the validation referendum for another three years. If voters decide to discontinue the process, its reconsideration is prohibited for at least three years. After that time, a majority vote of the Regional School Unit Board or a written petition filed by at least 10 percent of the voters voting in the last gubernatorial election can put it back on the ballot, according to proposed language that is also in the pending state budget.

I want to mention our continued collaboration among the Board of Directors, the Raymond Selectmen and the Windham Town Council. The Board of Directors early on in the process met with the two groups to explain our budget challenges and to demonstrate our intent to be responsible to the needs of our taxpayers and the children we educate. In addition, we thank our legislative delega-

tion for working so hard on behalf of the residents of Windham and Raymond.

Please check our website at [www.windhamraymondschools.org](http://www.windhamraymondschools.org), where you can review budget documents, including efficiencies, school consolidation benefits, and why this has been a banner year, educationally and otherwise, for RSU 14. These documents, coupled with the proposed budget on the website, should give you a thorough understanding of how residents of RSU 14 continue to get good value with the proposed 2010-11 budget.

If I can assist you further with understanding the proposed budget, please feel free to give me a call.

## Project boosts love of poetry

Perhaps your student has come home from school, excited about poetry, reciting poems, or telling you about Longfellow, the Maine poet who grew up in Portland? If this is the case, your child is probably taking part in the Windham Raymond Poetry Project, a year-long professional development opportunity for teachers to bring more poetry into the classroom.

The Poetry Project has been led by Anne Riggs, Literacy Specialist, who recently worked at Manchester School as the standards-based teacher.

The big idea behind the Poetry Project is to support teachers in developing a community of students who love and appreciate poetry through regular sharing of poems in their classrooms. From silly poems by Shel Silverstein to classics by Maine poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, teachers read poems aloud regularly, and students have been developing their own anthologies by collecting copies of the poems they love. Once students are hooked on poetry, teachers use poetry as a literary form to support the learning of poetic concepts and critical reading skills such as vocabulary, fluency and various comprehension skills.

In addition to her work with 14 teachers from Raymond Elementary School and Manchester Elementary School, Riggs has been collaborating more closely with three teachers, Jennifer Breton from Manchester and Ann Jolda and Jani Cummings from Raymond Elementary. Breton and Riggs have been using poetry as the text for literature circles with fourth-grade gifted and talented students. In Raymond, Cummings' first-graders and Jolda's fourth-graders have been improving their reading fluency with Riggs.

Because of the success of the project, plans are under way to continue and extend it next year to include more teachers.