



Raymond Resident  
Raymond, Maine 04071

## Grants & Achievements

**Lillie Hanlon**, veteran REAL School secretary, has received the Commissioner's Recognition Award for her lifetime achievements in working with students at risk. Both Education Commissioner Susan Gendron and Gov. John Baldacci presented this award at the Blaine House.

Raymond Elementary School students will have increased opportunities to extend their learning outside with the help of a \$1,000 grant from Hancock Lumber. Special education teacher **Gail Keisman** is responsible for developing this grant and coordinating the construction of wooden platforms at the school pond site. Teachers and students will use these platforms during their pond ecosystem studies, as well as for dry and tick-free spaces for reading, writing and science observations.

**Rich Meserve**, a special education teacher at The REAL School, was a nominee for Maine Teacher of the Year. He was also recently presented with a Carnegie Hero Award for saving a child from drowning at Higgins Beach while on vacation last summer.

**The REAL School**, in partnership with the Windham/Westbrook 21st Century Community Learning Center advisory council, developed a successful grant proposal that will continue and expand the work that is being done in existing 21st Century programs. Westbrook and RSU 14 will share nearly \$300,000 each year for three years (with diminishing funds in years four and five) to support the Restorative Learning Program – an alterna-

tive to longer suspensions, expulsions, and truancy – that keeps students connected and moving forward in school.



Lisa Robertson and Tom Nash, adult education director.

**Lisa Robertson**, Windham Adult Education's Adult Basic Education teacher/coordinator, received the 2009 Outstanding Adult Education Teacher award at the annual Maine Adult Education Association awards presentation on June 25.

**Windham Adult Education** was selected by the Maine Governor's Council on Physical Activity as runner-up of a Maine Fitness Award in the adult category. The program was honored for the role it plays in supporting a healthy Maine through its adult education health and wellness programming, as well as Director Tom Nash's involvement with the Windham Wellness Team and other health promotion activities.

A \$2,000 grant from **Maine Adult Rural Technology Initiative** allows Windham Adult Education to integrate Wii gaming, SMART technologies and a new Mac Lab into classes such as Reading/Writing FUNDamentals, Math Lab, English for Speakers of Other Languages and all high school diploma classes.

## 'Dream come true': \$1 million grant to fund physical education revamp

**A** nearly \$1 million federal grant will have an enormous impact on upcoming physical education, nutrition and wellness programs – and especially on the health of the district's students.

Windham is among 73 public schools and community-based organizations in 25 states to receive funds in July from the U.S. Department of Education Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP). About \$480,000 is earmarked for the first year of the three-year grant.

According to Kim Bartholomew, who heads the health and physical education department at Windham High School, the target populations that will benefit from the grant are students in Grades 6-12 and the REAL School and Windham's DARE to Adventure Program, and those involved in town recreation programs.

Bartholomew was among a large team of Windham educators who worked hard for nearly two years on the grant proposal.

"It was a tedious but very rewarding professional challenge," said Jeff Riddle, the PEP grant team director and earth science teacher at the High School. He also has been deeply involved in several adventure-based physical education programs – "He's the guru of adventure programming," according to Bartholomew – including kayaking, rock wall climbing and more.

The Carol M. White Physical Education Program grant awards can be used to provide equipment and support for students to participate actively in physical education activities, as well as for staff and teacher training and education. And that's exactly what's happening.

New equipment the first year includes a digital wellness computer lab located in the former cardio room at the high school. Fifteen computers will be available for students to create their individual wellness portfolios. They can download information such as heart rate, nutrition assessments, goals and much more.

"To me, one of the most important pieces is that we're going to custom-design a computer program that will track each student's wellness from Grade 6 to 12. Imagine being a senior and

being able to look back on your history. It will be an amazing tool," said Riddle. "This measures the success of the grant. For each physical education class, each student will set goals and reach benchmarks and actually physically reach goals. The federal grant wants results, and that's going to be the really cool assessment tool that shows it."

Additionally, first-year funding will pay for a new weight-training facility at the High School; expansion of the rock-climbing wall at the High School with a goal to eventually open it up to the public, and training of more facilitators; sea kayaks, whitewater kayaks and trailers.

The community will benefit from new skateboards and skateboard safety equipment to be signed out; GPS devices and Windham Trail Maps to be signed out by community members to engage in Geocaching around Windham; and snowshoes, as well.

"The adventure aspect will skyrocket," said Riddle. "We're going to be having all kinds of

*Dream, continued on page 2*

### New title



*Priscilla Wood, who joined the Jordan-Small Middle School staff in 2002 after many years teaching sixth grade in School Administrative District 57, is now the technology integrator for the Raymond schools. She has taught science, math and social studies as part of the Grades 7-8 looping team and has been the lead teacher for the middle school Maine Learning Technology Initiative – laptop program – since its inception.*

From the Superintendent... Sandy Prince  
**Time to start envisioning**

### a new mission

**T**his fall issue of the **Windham-Raymond School Link** couldn't have arrived at a more fortuitous time. It is a new day and a new district. With approximately 3,350 students and 750 employees, the new community of Regional School Unit 14 – representing the merger of the Windham and Raymond school districts – is now the sixth largest school unit in the state. I welcome you to our new district and unquestionably see you as an important partner as we embark on a new year.

Given all the changes with this merger, the opening of school went exceedingly well. We appreciate your efforts with making such a smooth transition.

During the summer we hired 40 new staff members. I am confident that we have hired the most creative, talented and brightest among the pool of candidates and hope that you get acquainted with them over the course of the year.

October will be an important time for our Regional School District. We will be working with residents of both the Raymond and Windham communities in a collaborative process to elicit input on long-range planning for our district. Phase I of this process will be invaluable as we start to identify a new mission and vision for our organization. A diverse group of people will be asked to give input on shared values as we shape our district for the future. Our continuous efforts to sustain commitment, ownership and buy-in from our greater school community will enhance our partnerships with our stakeholders. Our goal is to have, by springtime, a Five-Year Strategic Plan that provides clarity on what our most important work will entail. Pushing toward the same agenda and cementing our priorities and goals from a collective group of community and school members will position us well for instructing students of the 21st century.

I look forward to keeping you informed on this planning process, which I see as one of the most important first steps as we move RSU 14 into the future.

Please check out our new Web site – [www.WindhamRaymondSchools.org](http://www.WindhamRaymondSchools.org) – as it is another important tool to keep you informed about all our events, initiatives and important notices. In the meantime, if I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

I thank you for your generous support of our schools.



### Responsive Classroom debuts at Windham Primary School

Recent staff training at Windham Primary School has included what is called the Responsive Classroom program. A teacher from each grade has received extensive training on how to implement the program, which focuses on maintaining a safe school environment and encouraging positive behavior by all students.

Teachers learned how to teach important social skills to students, such as problem solving and following directions. For example a Responsive Classroom teacher is trained on how to set strong classroom rules with students and role play working as a team. Those who participated share the information with their teaching team. The training is part of the Positive Behavior Intervention System implemented at Windham Primary School and throughout the district.

Also at Windham Primary School, Title I staff and administration are implementing a plan this fall to more efficiently address individual student academic deficiencies. Services for students struggling with reading and writing will address the specific diagnostic needs, and the type and amount of services will change as students make progress.

According to Dr. Kyle Rhoads, school principal, "the new plan complements the district vision of "Success for All."

### Raymond school sees upgrades

Jordan-Small Middle School in Raymond is beginning the new school year by focusing on a number of areas to improve the educational experience of its students.

For the first time, fifth- and sixth-graders have laptop computers assigned only to them, thanks to the federal stimulus funds. This will significantly enhance the school's new initiative to incorporate greater instructional use of technology.

Additionally, the school staff is working on revising the current student grading and reporting system that will give more specific information to students and parents than is possible with the current 0 to 100 scale.

As a result of parent and staff surveys last spring, and as a continuation of the work begun last year, teachers are working to incorporate literacy and study skills instruction within all subject areas to help students "learn how they learn." And the Student Assistance Team, newly created RTI (Response to Intervention) coordinators and the entire staff are implementing the expanded "lab" program to assist students who are not meeting standards.

### Middle-schoolers start year with new block schedule

There's a new schedule in place for the approximately 670 sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students at Windham Middle School.

The schedule, the same for all three grades, focuses on four academic blocks that specifically devote more minutes to mathematics and language. Students also have two blocks devoted to applied arts classes. The new schedule provides a block at the end of the day called GO Time (Getting Organized), which allows students to work on getting themselves organized to end the day and receive help with homework or material introduced during the day.

GO Time is also when all performing music groups meet. A major change from previous years is that students in all three grades meet together for rehearsals. By putting music in this block of time, students perform with larger groups. This also allows students to participate in all of the applied-arts programming.



Kim Bartholomew with her Healthy Schools Program Champion Award.

### Ongoing efforts pay off

Kim Bartholomew, head of the health and physical education department at Windham High School, has won a national award recognizing her ongoing efforts to help improve the health of Windham students.

She was honored with the Healthy Schools Program Champion Award, presented to her in New York City last month by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, an organization sponsored by the William J. Clinton Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. She was one of only nine individual honorees nationally.

Just starting her 26th year of teaching, Bartholomew describes herself as "passionate" about the subject of children and wellness. Others have noticed.

In nominating her for the award, Jean W. Plourde, former district school health coordinator, wrote: "Kim Bartholomew is an outstanding role model for both students and staff in the district." And according to the narrative accompanying her award, "Bartholomew has engaged students and staff in issues related to nutrition and physical activity on a daily basis. The result of her continued efforts has been dramatic and sustainable changes across the district over the years."

The focus of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation is child obesity. With a staff of eight and a physical education and wellness program that offers nearly 20 required and elective classes, Bartholomew says she has witnessed changes during the past decade or so.

"We're at the tipping point," she said, "where we are changing the epidemic of childhood obesity to healthy habits. We've developed a culture of wellness. We have a wellness lab. The kids are moving. That's different from the way it used to be. The kids are learning the benefits. I look at these other states and I see we are way ahead in Maine. I'm so proud of being from this area."

But she sees more challenges ahead.

"I'd like to see the younger kids more active," she said. "It's a habit. They have to develop it. Then it will be a lifestyle."

### Grant a 'dream come true,' continued from page 1

Middle-schoolers will benefit from a new fitness arcade, to be located in the old auxiliary gym, where students can enjoy such fitness games as Dance Dance Revolution at computerized stations.

"The overriding goal and reason the grant program exists is to get students moderately to vigorously exercising as much as possible per week," said Riddle. "If you can improve that percentage with new programming and equipment – and improved nutrition – then that's what [the Department of Education] is after."

Riddle said for the sixth- and seventh-graders, it is "absolutely vital to create interest in wellness and physical fitness. This grant will have such a positive impact in the Middle School."

According to Bartholomew, the nutrition portion of the grant includes adding the Guiding Stars program – similar to the Hannaford nutrition guide – first at the High School cafeteria, and then spreading to the rest of the schools in subse-

quent years. Staff development is a significant piece of the grant. According to Riddle, "in the next three years all physical educators on the Grant Leadership Team will be attending at least one national conference and a whole slew of professional development programs. That leads to competency, and then they can incorporate new things into the classroom."

An open house will be scheduled in March all three years of the grant to showcase to the community the programs. Riddle credited a number of people, including Bartholomew, Chris Howell and Steve McFarland, for help in working on the complex grant proposal. "They were absolutely priceless," he said.

Winning the grant is a major score for the district, and those involved are understandably proud and excited.

"This is the biggest grant that we have ever gotten," said Bartholomew. "It's a dream come true."

## Enhanced technology saves money, provides more data

A new student database, increased Internet bandwidth and more laptops for both students and staff are some of the technological efficiencies in Regional School Unit 14 schools this fall.

According to Bob Hickey, the Information Technology director for the school district, the database, called Infinite Campus, allows student registrations to be synchronized with state databases immediately. The software is accessible 24/7 via the Web and does not have restrictions of being run from inside the school network during school hours – teachers can even enter grades from home. Also featured is a parent portal to keep families in the loop on student progress.

"We will now have strong tools for creating advanced reports and we can graphically view and interpret our data for better tracking of student success," said Hickey.

Data conversion and training was ongoing during the summer. "It's a 'train-the-trainer' model, where we have trained building coaches, teacher coaches, registrars, clerical positions, nurses, counselors and administrators. All of these folks share and support the teachers in the use of this new software," said Hickey.

The software was provided at no charge from the state. Hickey said it would save roughly \$15,000 per year over paying for the software previously used. The system went live Aug. 10.

Other technology improvements that boost efficiencies include:

- An Internet connection installed in Windham High School expands bandwidth by 250 percent and quintupled the connection between Manchester School and the rest of the schools. Additionally, the Windham and Raymond schools now have a fiber connection to make the network integrated for efficiency and data sharing. The need for duplicate servers on each end of the district has been eliminated.
- The district has consolidated onto a single financial system called ADS and a single food services program called NutriKids. Every night, food services can quickly and easily upload their sales from any school.
- Details are being worked out between RSU 14 and the State MLTI program to upgrade the wireless networks in both Windham and Raymond Middle Schools. Additionally, we are working to implement an expanded wireless network in the High School. All of the wireless upgrades will be funded through the MLTI program (Maine Learning Technology Initiative from the Maine Department of Education) instead of paying for technology infrastructure upgrades with local taxes.
- Spam filtering and filtering of visited Web sites have been improved for protection of the students and staff.
- All staff now use the same financial program, eliminating the need to run two different accounting packages for Windham and Raymond.
- More than 600 laptops from last year's seventh- and eighth-grade deployment have been purchased and are headed to the lower grades at Windham Primary School, Manchester School, some Raymond locations and special education. The seventh- and eighth-grade students in both Windham and Raymond also get new laptops from the state this

fall, and high school teachers are getting roughly 100 new MacBook laptops from the state. This represents a lot of new equipment without local taxes shouldering the costs.

- The Adult Education Division has purchased 48 new laptops and carts. These will be for adult education functions and will be shared with high school students.
- The Web site was redesigned to reflect the new Regional School Unit district. It is built upon an efficient design that will help residents quickly and easily get to the information they need.

"Also," said Hickey, the Web site "helps to bond the two communities of Windham and Raymond with an electronic bridge that brings all services and information under one roof."

### Briefs

#### Tech camp

Some 200 professionals from Sebago Alliance attended the Sebago Alliance Tech Camp during the summer, a weeklong opportunity for professional development. Classes focused on different ways to integrate technology into teaching and curriculum.

The educators left with tools to build on what they learned so that, by the fall, they could integrate their skills into the classroom.

#### Resident rate for Raymond

Raymond residents will now pay the resident rate for Windham Adult Education, saving \$5 per course. Adult education is offering several enrichment classes this fall at Jordan-Small Middle School. There will also be a one-night academic lab set up for students needing assistance with completing their high school diploma or GED. Expansion of services

in Raymond will be determined by demand and enrollment data.

#### Achievement report online

The school district reports data to the public each year on everything from budget to student achievement results. In an effort to connect all the pieces and provide community members with greater access to their schools, a District Achievement Report has been developed and posted on the Windham Raymond schools Web site, www.WindhamRaymondSchools.org.

The report contains updated information, student demographics, school budget resources and spending data, district improvement plans, building improvement plans, school staffing, teacher quality data, historical student achievement data, and the annual No Child Left Behind report cards.

### Raymond kids go for Grab and Go

A Grab and Go breakfast – initiated last winter at the Raymond Elementary School – is available each morning from 8:25 to 8:45. Students select a choice of cereals or homemade muffins, fruit, yogurt, cheese or hardboiled eggs and milk to eat in their classrooms.

There is a strong link between nutrition and learning, and teachers have seen that the Raymond elementary students have

improved focus for their morning classwork after eating school breakfast.

Kim Williams and Sandy Cook, food service, are delighted with the number of children who participate, and encourage more to take advantage of this affordable and nutritious way to start the school day. The Raymond Wellness Committee helped initiate the breakfast program.