

September 21, 2018

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

This week, our devoted physical education teacher, Mrs. Piper Cronin, is certainly deserving of the RJH spotlight. Piper is not a typical physical education teacher, as she gives new meaning to the subject with her out-of-the-box approaches that ensure our students are exposed to modern and innovative ways to stay fit. It is clear with Piper's lessons, she sees the health of the whole child in order to instill lifelong habits.

Piper has led a life dedicated to service. Before embarking on her journey as a teacher, Piper served in the armed forces as a translator and interrogator, which surely has equipped her with the skills necessary to handle a middle school population! As a member of the United States Army, Piper has been stationed abroad where she served our country with great honor. After the military, Piper transformed her passion for service by becoming an educator and has been a part of the RJH community for well over a decade.



As a seasoned physical educator, Piper understands the needs of the middle school child and creates meaningful lessons that both engage and excite our RJH students. In Piper's classroom, students have the opportunity to learn about physical fitness in a unique way. She strengthens students' understanding of themselves, as well as builds their confidence, by utilizing the rock climbing wall, exploring circus acts, and creating original dances. Piper takes physical education a step further by combining physical awareness with emotional understanding. She works closely with community organizations, such as New Heights, a youth group that offers experiential learning opportunities, to give students the experience of performing routine sports activities through the perspective of those who are physically challenged. Students walk away from her class with both emotionally and physically aware of their community.

With her passion for teaching, coaching, and mentoring, it is no wonder that Piper received the New Hampshire Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award. Her ability to create an environment of structure, wellness, and empathy make her a vital asset to our school.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOWLs: This year, your child will have a HOWLs (Habits of Work and Learning) grade for each of the following categories: respect, responsibility, and perseverance in every content

area. These new categories will be graded on a scale of 1-4, so PowerSchool will reflect that new grading system for HOWLS only.

As a school, we are currently working to have PowerSchool calculate this new grading system properly, so please bear with us. For now, we suggest that you look solely at the numbers in the grade book rather than the calculated percentages or letter grade. Our school-wide expectations are that students earn a 3 or better.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding a specific class, please feel free to reach out to a specific teacher.

Pick of the Litter: On Wednesday, September 26th, we will all be traveling to the Portsmouth Music Hall to see a showing of the documentary “Pick of the Litter”. RES students in 4th and 5th grade will also be joining us. We are excited to be able to have these students join us as they will be part of our school next year. Please remember to send your child’s permission slip in.

Thank you to the PTA for funding this event!

5th Grade Transition/School Reconfiguration Announcement:

This is the first of weekly announcements to keep the school community updated on weekly progress the Committee is making. These announcements are intended to be high-level so that you may stay informed throughout the process. This week:

- Documents from the Committee's first meeting as well as relevant research have been posted to a new tab on the Rye Elementary's School website called, "Middle School Transition". Please check this tab periodically for updated information.
- The Committee has formed three groups to tour Grade 5-8 schools and develop best practices. Group 1 will visit York Middle School on Fri, 9/21. Group 2 will visit Oyster River Cooperative on Fri, 9/28. We are in the process of scheduling Group 3's tour to Berwick Academy's middle school.
- Principal Lull has been visiting 4th grade classrooms and hearing students' concerns and wishes about the transition first-hand. It's insightful to hear their suggestions for Rye Junior High's playground equipment and ideas for special year-end graduation celebrations.
- Co-chairs and junior high guidance have begun developing various middle school models, examining the pros/cons of each potential structure.

A full read-out of the weekly work will be presented at the Committee's next meeting on Fri, Oct 5 at 7am **in the Rye Junior High Cafeteria**. Please note change of location in order to record this meeting for those who wish to watch it live or at a later time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

7th grade trip to Browne Center: Friday, 9/28

Grade 5 Transition Meeting: Friday, 10/5 @ 7am in RJH Cafe

Early Release for Students: Friday, 10/5

Columbus Day, No School: Monday, 10/8