



HAWK HIGHLIGHTS



IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

- **Friday, March 9 at 6:30:** Final Movie Night of the dark season! *Coco* will be showing!
- **Friday, March 16:** Early Dismissal for Teacher Work Day and Report Cards will be sent home.
- **Tuesday, March 20 at 9:30:** Annual Music Concert! All are welcome.
- **Tuesday, March 20** is also the first day of **Spring!** At 2:00pm we will have our traditional celebration with syrup on "snow" (shaved ice) and an all school dance session outside.
- **Wednesday, March 21:** PTO Meeting at 6:30
- **Thursday, March 22 at 6:00:** Coffee, Pie, and Academic Information Night
- **Thursday, March 29 at 6:00:** Family Math Night!
- **April 16-20:** Spring Vacation

HAWK HIGHLIGHTS ITEMS FROM MRS. MADDEN

"The Hawk Highlights" is our bi-monthly school newsletter that is sent home with students or sent via email.

Por favor llame a la oficina de la escuela si necesita este boletín traducido.

Here is the NEW address for our district's homepage:

<http://www.northamptonschools.org/>

And the NEW address for our school's site:

<http://www.northamptonschools.org/project/rk-finn-ryan-road-school/>

SCHOOL SAFETY

The continued tragic and violent events which occur at schools around our nation shock and sadden all of us. We grieve with the families and hold our own families closer as a result. It is a challenge for us all to find the words and actions that will comfort and reassure our children in the midst of such tragic violence. I have attached an article, [*Helping Children Cope with Tragedy \(Cómo Ayudar a los Niños a Enfrentar una Tragedia\)*](#) I hope that all of you also received the district communication from Superintendent, Dr. Provost.

Here at R.K. Finn Ryan Road School, staff members have heard very little conversation or questions from students, and we have not brought the recent Florida event into classroom discussion, as we try and be sensitive to the desire of many parents to shield their children from these horrors. However, questions sometimes come up in classrooms as these types of events occurring in schools often create fear and anxiety in children. If that happens, teachers will have developmentally appropriate discussions that address feelings of fear and confusion for children. We will let them know that keeping our school a safe place is our number one priority, and review our safety procedures with them. Our Ryan Road staff works hard to create a safe and caring community. Procedures we have in place include single entry access and sign-in for visitors, exterior cameras, evacuation and lock down procedures, and a vigilant and well-trained staff. We take the responsibility of keeping our children safe very seriously.

On March 14, many students in the United States are planning a National School Walkout at 10:00, which will last for 17 minutes to honor the 17 people killed in the Florida shooting. According to [Women's March Youth EMPOWER organizers](#), the walkout is a call to Congress to "pass legislation to keep us safe from gun violence at our schools, on our streets and in our homes and places of worship." We will not be participating as a school and will not discuss the event unless students bring it up with questions. However, if any students speak to their teachers or to me about wanting to participate, I will make sure to honor their feelings.

As always, please contact me with questions and concerns.



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MAIL CHIMP ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

If anyone wishes to be put on our electronic email list, please call the office or send a note to Administrative Assistant, Vanessa Keillor. Getting on this list allows you to receive school announcements electronically AND you would get the Principal's Weekly Update delivered right into your IN Box! Very exciting, indeed. The Principal's Weekly Updates can also be found every week on our school website.

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENTS AND INFORMATION

All of our students recently were given mid-year assessments in reading and math. If you would like to know more about these assessments, come to our Coffee (or tea), Pie, and Academic Information Night on **March 22**. We will also share information about our Co-Teaching/Inclusion practices. This event is sponsored by our School Council. See the flyer included in this edition of Hawk Highlights.

HOORAY FOR SPRING!

We will continue our tradition of celebrating the beginning of each new season together as a school community. We will join together on **March 20** to dance into the new season and enjoy "sugar on snow", which is an old New England spring treat of maple syrup on snow. We will enjoy our syrup on shaved ice...yum! The Vernal Equinox marks one of two days in the Earth's year when we have equal daylight and darkness. In the upcoming weeks we will all notice increasing minutes of daylight until we reach the Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year with the most daylight on June 21.

5TH GRADE TRANSITIONS TO JFK

It is hard to believe we are already talking about the transition of our 5th graders to JFK, but information sessions are upon us!

On **Thursday, March 8**, there is an Informational Meeting for parents/guardians from **6:30 - 8:00 in the JFK cafeteria**.

I hope our 5th grade parents are able to attend.

REAL NORTHAMPTON

invites you to a story-sharing event on **Sunday, March 18** from **3pm to 5pm in the JFK Community Room**. Come and build community through sharing something about your experience of race and racism in the Northampton Public School Community. Trained facilitators will create the space for everyone who wants to share. Everybody is welcome – students (6th grade and up), staff, teachers, caregivers and all identities. There will be food and childcare. RSVP's encouraged but not necessary here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XeaMrdEe65nNSVbYKIB3QKyM2On6ugCTT8KoqvN3Ud8/edit>



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MCAS TESTING THIS SPRING

Our students in grades 3, 4, and 5 will be taking MCAS tests this spring. The English Language Arts MCAS will take place in April, and the Math MCAS will take place in May. Our 4th and 5th graders will be taking the tests online this year. It is very important that students be present for testing and arrive to school on time. We encourage families to avoid making appointments for students on testing days.

It is important to remember that any test is only one measure of a child's performance at school. Teacher evaluations through the years, day-to-day work, and other types of performance assessments and projects are additional ways to evaluate learning. However, these tests are important, and we are doing all we can to prepare our students to take these tests with calm confidence.

Some parents have asked for more information about the new MCAS 2.0. Here is a resource link to practice tests that we will be using at school, but you can also take a look at them at home if you wish.

<http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/tutorial/>

(CBT references Computer Based Tests and PBT references Paper Based Tests.)

MCAS SPRING TESTING SCHEDULE

Grade 3 (ELA)
April 4 & April 11

Grade 3 (Math)
May 2 & May 9

Grade 4 (ELA)
April 3 & April 10

Grade 4 (Math)
May 4 & May 8

Grade 5 (ELA)
April 5 & April 12

Grade 5 (Math)
May 3 & May 10

Grade 5 (Science)
May 15 & May 17

Y.E.P (YOUTH ENRICHMENT PROGRAM)

Have a talent to share with our students or know someone who does? The Ryan Road Youth Enrichment Program (YEP) is looking for instructors for next session. In the past, we've had such classes as flag football, science experiments for kids, arts and crafts, games, martial arts, language clubs, and more. If you've got a special talent to share or an idea for a class you'd like to run, please contact Chris St. George (cstgeorge@northampton-k12.us) or Lindsay Whittier-Liu (lwhittierliu@northampton-k12.us) for details. And many thanks to our own Tim Walko (Matthew's dad) who took over our Floor Hockey class this past session. The kids loved it!



HAWK HIGHLIGHTS



School Council Sponsors
***Coffee, Pie, and Academic Information
Night!***

Everyone is welcome!

Thursday, March 22
6:00-7:00 in the School Library

School Council Members, Title 1 Teachers, Classroom and Special Education Teachers will provide information on school assessments and early intervention, inclusion, differentiation, and co-teaching.

Come, eat, and learn!

Childcare will be provided.
Call the school office if you need a ride.