

# Stepping Stones

Ripon Area School District \* Student Services Department \* November 2015



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“It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.”  
Confucius

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## Message from the Director

*Anne Lang*

Fall Greetings,

We hope that you find this second edition of our newsletter to be helpful. We have included articles about district policies, staff responsibilities, and a variety of articles to help your child grow.

As the holiday season approaches, it is a wonderful time to give back and help those in need or to help put a smile on someone’s face. This is a great opportunity to teach children to think of others.

Here is a list of Random Acts of Kindness your family can do for others:

- ❖ Leave a letter for the postman or bus driver
- ❖ Deliver hot cocoa to a neighbor
- ❖ Give away old toys or clothes to others
- ❖ Make happy notes on the sidewalk with chalk
- ❖ Take baked goods to a staff at the local Hospital
- ❖ Read inspiring stories to a group of children
- ❖ Donate books to a doctor’s or dentist’s office
- ❖ Bring a meal to a family in need
- ❖ Make “Be Happy” notes and put them in mailboxes
- ❖ Pick up trash around the neighborhood or park
- ❖ Volunteer at a local animal shelter
- ❖ Offer to watch someone’s children so they can take a break
- ❖ Let someone go ahead of you in line
- ❖ Help someone carry their grocery bags
- ❖ Go to a retirement or nursing home to visit someone who is lonely
- ❖ Send a letter or care package to a soldier
- ❖ Start a piggy bank for a cause
- ❖ Leave inspirational quotes around the community

As the season comes near, gifts are on our minds. What is an educational toy that I can give? What is a toy that they will actually like? Below are some links to educational toys for children with disabilities, many of these toys would work for any child:

- [https://www.fatbraintoy.com/special\\_needs/](https://www.fatbraintoy.com/special_needs/)
- <http://www.parenting.com/gallery/10-toys-great-for-kids-with-special-needs>
- <https://funandfunction.com/communicate/games.html>

## Parent Support

### *What is Response to Intervention (RtI)?*

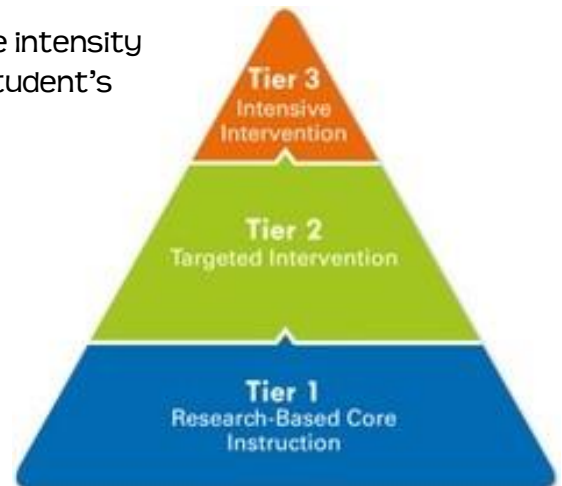
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RtI is an integrated approach that provides high-quality instruction for all students and is matched to individual student needs. It is based on a three-tiered model that monitors student progress in different levels of academic and behavioral intervention. By providing evidenced-based interventions to students, intensive services, RtI builds on requirement of the Federal and State laws. RASD uses data to:

- ❖ Identify students who are at-risk for poor learning or behavioral outcomes,
- ❖ Monitor student progress
- ❖ Provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness

There are four essential components of RASD RtI:

1. A school-wide, multi-level instructional system for preventing school failure;
2. Universal screening;
3. Progress monitoring of all interventions;
4. Data-based decision making for instruction and movement within the tiered system.



## Reminders

### *Keep your Contact Information Updated*

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Is the information in the school offices and on Infinite Campus current contact information? While trying to schedule IEPs or meetings will the staff be able to contact you?

We find that cell phone and household phone numbers frequently change. Double check that your mailing address is also correct so all mailings can reach you. The school district also uses emails to keep in touch with you. Is all of your information accurate? If not, please be sure to notify the office in writing regarding any change in contact information.

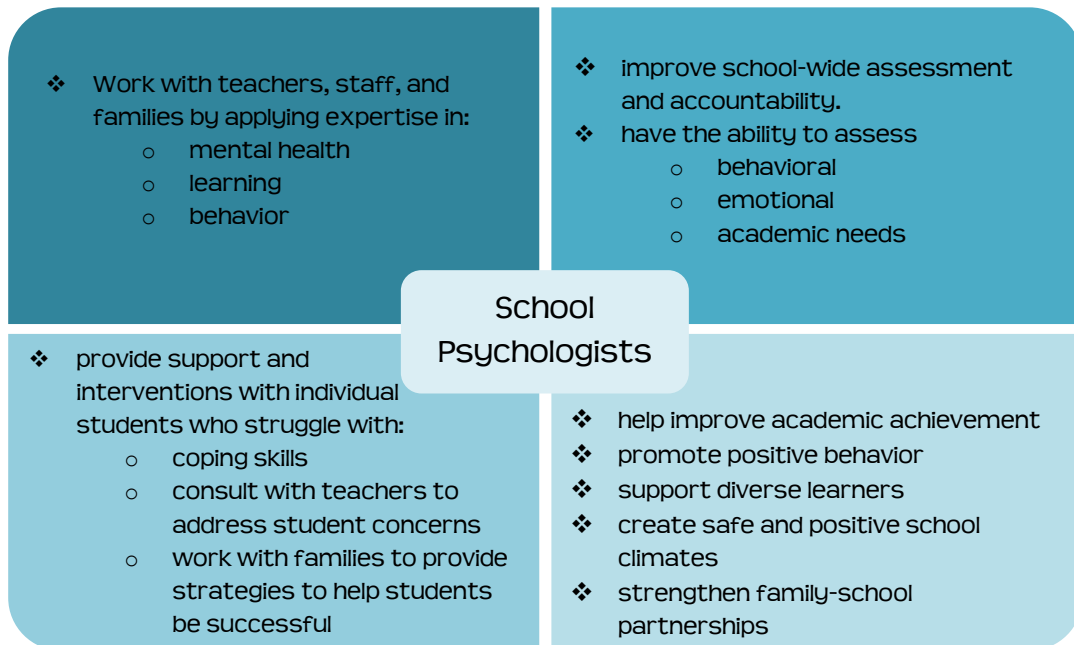
When it comes to scheduling IEPs we have a process of reaching you. By law we need to give three good faith attempts to contact you to schedule an appropriate time, date, and location of the meeting. Staff will call you to find a date/time that works the best for your family. Then an invitation will be mailed to your home. Please sign the form, let us know if you are able to attend the meeting, and return it in the envelope provided at your earliest convenience. After an appropriate amount of time an email will be sent with the invitation attached if no response is received. If you do not have an email address, the letter will be mailed again. The final attempt will be a phone call to confirm the time and date of the meeting. We will continue to try to reach you if time allows. If you receive another invitation after returning it, it is possible that it your signed form is in transition so don't fret if you see another.

It is critical to have your contact information up to date so we can reach you and you can stay an informed parent.

# Psychologist Responsibilities

*Kara Olson*

School psychologists strive to help all students achieve at school and in life. They work with teachers, staff, and families by applying expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior to help students succeed academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally. They have the ability to assess behavioral, emotional, and academic needs when students struggle. School psychologists provide support and interventions with individual students who struggle with coping skills, consult with teachers to address student concerns, and work with families to provide strategies to help students be successful. School psychologists help improve academic achievement, promote positive behavior, good mental health, support diverse learners, create safe and positive school climates, strengthen family-school partnerships, and improve school-wide assessment and accountability.



# Ripon Middle School and Catalyst Parent Connections

*Ashley Hinze*

Middle school teachers use multiple platforms to connect school to home. One of the main tools created to increase student success are Homework Calendars. Each grade level, at both RMS and Catalyst, provides information regarding what needs to be completed, as well as what was accomplished during class each day. These calendars are shared via the Ripon Area School District webpage, allowing for students and parents to access this tool at home. Work completion is a key component to content mastery and comprehension of the information being taught each day in the classroom. Middle school staff strives to connect school to home, providing Ripon Area School District students with every possible avenue to guide their success.

Homework Calendar Links:

Catalyst 6th-8th Grade: <http://www.ripon.k12.wi.us/schools/catalyst/resources.cfm>

RMS 6th-8th Grade: <https://sites.google.com/a/ripon.k12.wi.us/rms-411/>

Working together, we can accomplish greatness!

## Meet the Speech-Language Pathologists

*Jodi Kulick, Melissa Edinger, Katie Artymiuk*

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The Ripon Area School District has three full time Speech-Language Pathologists who provide services within our schools, including the 4PS programs.

All three therapists are a highly qualified team with a masters degrees and they are certified by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA).

Jodi Kulick currently provides services at Barlow Park Elementary and Journey Charter Schools grades Early Childhood through Second grade.



Melissa Edinger currently provides services at Murray Park Elementary and Quest Charter School, grades third through fifth and 4PS-Preschool Speech at Ripon Children's Learning Center.

Katie Nickel (formerly Artymiuk) currently provides services for students at Ripon Middle School, Catalyst Charter School, Ripon High School, and Lumen Charter School.



Their responsibilities include: providing speech-language therapy to students with a wide range of communication impairments, participation in district -wide screenings, provide assessment and diagnostics for students with possible communication disorders, case managing through Special Education Due Process Procedures, and serving as a resource to all staff members.

### Speech/Language Pathologists can be reached via email at:

Jodi Kulick: [kulickj@ripon.k12.wi.us](mailto:kulickj@ripon.k12.wi.us)

Melissa Edinger: [edingerm@ripon.k12.wi.us](mailto:edingerm@ripon.k12.wi.us)

Katie Nickel (Artymiuk): [artymiukk@ripon.k12.wi.us](mailto:artymiukk@ripon.k12.wi.us)

## Preschool Speech-Language Screening

*Jodi Kulick, Melissa Edinger, Katie Nickel (Artymiuk)*

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On September 24, 2015, an annual community-wide preschool speech-language screening was held in the district. There were three screening sites offered to families, with one of our speech-language pathologists serving each site. Sites included Pickett 4PS program, Barlow Park Elementary and Journey Charter Schools, and Ripon Children's Learning Center. Eighteen children were screened. An ad was placed in the local newspaper advertising the event, and appointments were taken for children whose parents were concerned about speech-language development. As a result of this screening, parents were provided with developmental information and appropriate referrals were made for further speech-language evaluation for several of the children screened.

# Age Appropriate Chores for Kids

Michelle Beres

A very important skill for young children as they enter school is being responsible for themselves and their belongings. Families can help children improve these skills by creating solid routines and asking children to complete age appropriate chores. Teach your child to follow the same routine each time they complete a chores. Below is a chart of age appropriate chores for different aged children.

Toddler (Ages 2-3)	Older Elementary (Ages 9-11)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Pick up toys (show them how)</li> <li>❖ Bring plate and cup to the sink after a meal</li> <li>❖ Straighten covers on the bed</li> <li>❖ Put dirty clothes into the hamper</li> <li>❖ Wipe up spills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ All Toddler, Preschool, &amp; Elementary jobs</li> <li>❖ Help in meal preparation</li> <li>❖ Clean toilets</li> <li>❖ Clean bathroom sinks, counters, mirrors</li> <li>❖ Walk dogs</li> <li>❖ Take garbage cans to curb</li> <li>❖ Mow lawn</li> <li>❖ Clean animal cages</li> <li>❖ Shovel snow</li> <li>❖ Help make/pack lunch</li> <li>❖ Change sheets on bed</li> </ul>
Preschooler (Ages 4-5)	Middle School (Ages 12-14)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ All Toddler jobs</li> <li>❖ Make the bed</li> <li>❖ Help put clothes in washing machine/dryer</li> <li>❖ Help put clothes away</li> <li>❖ Take out recycling</li> <li>❖ Load dishes into dishwasher</li> <li>❖ Dust</li> <li>❖ Feed animals</li> <li>❖ Water flowers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ All aged jobs</li> <li>❖ Clean showers/tub</li> <li>❖ Wash/dry clothes</li> <li>❖ Mop floors</li> <li>❖ Gardening/yardwork</li> <li>❖ Help supervise younger children</li> </ul>
Elementary (Ages 6-8)	For more ideas visit:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ All Preschool &amp; Toddler jobs</li> <li>❖ Set table</li> <li>❖ Wash dishes in sink</li> <li>❖ Put clean clothes away on own</li> <li>❖ Collect garbage around the house</li> <li>❖ Sweep</li> <li>❖ Vacuum</li> <li>❖ Get mail</li> <li>❖ Rake leaves</li> <li>❖ Put away groceries</li> <li>❖ Wash car</li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://lifehacker.com/the-chores-kids-can-do-by-age-group-1689862131">http://lifehacker.com/the-chores-kids-can-do-by-age-group-1689862131</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/parenting-challenges/motivating-kids-to-clean-up/age-appropriate-chores">http://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/parenting-challenges/motivating-kids-to-clean-up/age-appropriate-chores</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/chores-for-children">http://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/chores-for-children</a></p>

# Attendance Policies and Tips

*Britnie Meyer*

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In the State of Wisconsin, it is the law that all children attend school until the age of 18. Parents are required to send children between the ages of 6 and 18 to school whenever school is in session. The state law now also requires the parent or guardian of a child who is enrolled in a 5-year-old kindergarten class to cause the child to attend school regularly until the end of the school term.

State law does require that each school board establish written attendance policies specifying the reasons for which pupils may be permitted to be absent from school. It is not uncommon for parents to have questions about what is an acceptable excuse. Please feel free to contact your child's school for more information on their attendance policies or read the schools handbook (all handbooks can be found on the school district's website). The following are examples of excuses that may be acceptable:

- ❖ Illness
- ❖ Funerals
- ❖ Family emergency
- ❖ Religious holidays

Examples of unacceptable absences:

- ❖ Missing a ride
- ❖ Oversleeping
- ❖ Staying home to babysit
- ❖ Not feeling like going to school

attendance  
**MATTERS**

Law enforcement may issue municipal citations or fines when a student fails to have an acceptable excuse for being absent from school. Students are considered to be habitually truant when they have been absent from school without an acceptable excuse for any part of five or more days in which school is held during a semester.

## Tips to Improve School Attendance

- ❖ Make your child's education a family priority
- ❖ Tell your children how important it is to you that they get a good education.
- ❖ Insist that your children attend school and do their homework.
- ❖ Understand the school attendance policies of your child's school.
- ❖ Make sure your children obey curfew laws and get plenty of sleep at night.
- ❖ Encourage your child's independence by providing them with an alarm clock.
- ❖ Show your children that you care about them.
- ❖ Do not enable your child by calling the school to cover unexcused absences.
- ❖ If your child does not want to attend school, find out why. If there is a problem, try to work together with your child and/or the school to resolve it.
- ❖ If your child refuses to go to school, do not be afraid to ask for help. Talk to the school staff to determine the nature of the problem and what resources might be available to assist you.
- ❖ Give your child positive feedback and focus on their strengths.

# Reading Activities by Age

Britnie Meyer

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Reading is a fundamental to function in today's society. Reading helps develop the mind. Some children don't like reading, find it hard, or simply think it's boring. Keep your kids' reading with these activities from *Scholastic* for children ages three through thirteen. More guides to great books, book-related articles, and activities can be found at:

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/slideshow/milestones-expectations/parent-guides-to-raising-reader-ages-0-13>

## Ages 3-5

- ❖ **Fun with letters:** Children enjoying copying words onto paper. Write your child's name and have them copy it with stamps, stickers, or magnets.
- ❖ **Your child the author:** Take advantage of your child's chattiness, and begin writing a book together. Staple a few pieces of paper together, write out some of your child's sentences, have them illustrate, and read the story together.
- ❖ **What word starts with:** The letter-sound connection is one of the first steps to reading. Play a guessing game. "What letter does p-p-p-pirate start with?"

## Ages 6-7

- ❖ **Taking turns:** Let your child pick a book she would love to read, and take turns reading paragraphs or pages to each other.
- ❖ **Shopping adventure:** Shopping with kids can feel like a chore, but if your child feels like they are contributing it can change their attitude. Have them to read the shopping list and cross off the items.
- ❖ **Double diary:** As your child's writing skills increase, consider keeping a diary where you exchange notes to each other every day.

## Ages 8-10

- ❖ **Shopping together:** Challenge your child to think before demanding for something by reading the label and price information. Have them decided between a few items to see which is the most nutritional or the best price.
- ❖ **Audio books:** Pass the hours you spend in the car with a book on CD.
- ❖ **Board games:** Board games are a great way to firm up recognition of sight words, as well as spelling and vocabulary skills.

## Ages 11-13

- ❖ **Book club:** Start a book club with your teen and invite them to pick the book that you both read and discuss.
- ❖ **Reading rewards:** Reading for pleasure may be the last activity a teen may want to do. Try making a deal with your teen. If there is something that your teen wants make it contingent upon finishing a book.
- ❖ **Executive assistant:** Ask your child to research accommodations when going on vacation, buying new equipment, a new pet, etc.