



LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
RIVER BEND MIDDLE SCHOOL  
ANNUAL REPORT  
**2014-2015**



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## RBMS Contact Information

Address: River Bend Middle School  
46240 Algonkian Parkway  
Sterling, VA 20165



Website: [www.lcps.org/rbms](http://www.lcps.org/rbms)



<https://www.facebook.com/RBM.LCPS>



[https://twitter.com/RBMS\\_Official](https://twitter.com/RBMS_Official)

## RBMS Administration Staff

### Administrative Team

Principal .....Dave Shaffer  
Asst. Principal .....Dave Frenck  
Asst. Principal .....Eric Fritz  
Special Education Dean.....Debbie Agunsday  
Testing Dean.....Melissa Dober

### Main Office Staff

Bookkeeper.....Stephanie McLaughlin  
Secretary.....Gwen Pride  
Secretary.....Sue Engelmann  
School Nurse.....Paula Bailey  
Parent Liaison.....Kim Curl

### House A – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Counselor.....Veronica Williams  
Secretary.....Robin Byrd

### House B – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

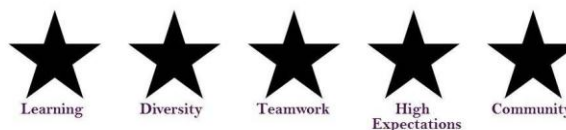
Counselor.....Janae Gwizdala  
Secretary.....Julie Bahun

### House C – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Counselor .....Sherri Robinson  
Secretary.....Truus Foard

## River Bend Middle School Mission and Values Statement

River Bend Middle School is a learner-centered environment designed to meet the needs of a diverse student body. Individual differences are valued through the appreciation and acceptance of each person's unique strengths. River Bend Middle School promotes high expectations in a challenging, safe, and supportive environment. Staff members use best practices to promote and involve students as both learners and teachers. Student and staff accomplishments are encouraged and celebrated. Students' best interests are taken into account when making decisions. The River Bend school community is based on core values that include responsibility, commitment, integrity, and accountability. These core values are key components in guiding students to become active citizens in a global society. This is achieved by ensuring an atmosphere in which risk-taking is encouraged in a way that is built on mutual respect, teamwork, consensus, and open dialogue. River Bend Middle School strives to create a welcoming atmosphere for students, staff, parents, and community members, which engenders a sense of belonging and a joy of learning.



## Administration Events

- Melissa Dober, Debbie Agunsday, Marquelle Adkins and Donna Webb went to Dallas, TX for the National SIOP Conference in July.
- Administration Retreat - August
- Team Leader Retreat - November 2014
- School Retreat at Dulles Golf – May 2015
- Dave Shaffer, Solution Tree Leadership Summit in April
- Eric Fritz, Nuts & Bolts Conference in June

## PTA

### Executive Committee

- President: Gwen Pride
- Vice President: Aladdin Al Katheri
- Secretary: Alicia Batts
- Treasurer: Missy Hooper
- Vice President (Treasurer Support): Sarah Giek

### Programs

- PTA meetings the first Tuesday of each month – September through June
- Spirit wear sales
- Meet and Greet
- Donuts with Dad
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Lock-in
- LEAP
- Muffins with Mom
- Volunteer breakfast

### Fundraising

- Silent Auction at the Cinderella performance - December 5 – 7
- Education Fund
- Spring Carnival

- Amazon Rewards partnership
- Student/Staff Basketball game at Potomac Falls High school
- Grocery Rewards partnership with Giant, Safeway, Harris Teeter, and Target
- Spirit (Restaurant) Night – monthly at Chick-Fil-A, Famous Dave's BBQ, Sweetfrog, and Firehouse Subs

### Staff Support

- Hospitality
- Copying
- Luncheons
- Birthday Recognition

## Fall fundraiser

The fall fundraiser was in conjunction with Great American Opportunities Company called Tastes to Treasure. This featured gourmet cookie dough from America's favorite recipes and over 600 magazines at up to 90% off the newsstand price. The kick-off assembly was October 14. Many students sold items and were able to win prizes such as candy or cash. Some students qualified to attend the Slam Dunk Show on November 10 and/or got to see a movie at the Alamo Theater on December 16.

## Raven Retreat- Outdoor Classroom Campaign

Fundraising began on the Raven Retreat outdoor classroom through the Brick Campaign and business partnerships. Bricks that were purchased included personal inscriptions. The purpose of this retreat is to provide students with a unique opportunity to work and learn outdoors, with a special emphasis on science, health, and the environment. Students will be able to plant annuals and conduct irrigation experiments, study soil, insects, water, and plant life. This space will

also be available for students to participate in silent reading, art lessons, and writing in a natural setting.

## Parent Liaison

The primary role of the Parent Liaison is to empower parents to become active participants in the education of their children. Our liaison works to facilitate parent-school communication and community agency referrals. The liaison encourages parent involvement in the school. She also works to foster trust between parents and the educational community.

### Programs

- **Backpack Buddy Program aka Backpack Coalition** - September 2012 – present. River Bend Middle School is one of the many schools in Loudoun County that participate in the Backpack Coalition program. We are fortunate to have been selected by a local group that provides free meals to students for the weekend. Students that receive these meals have been identified as needing the assistance and their parents have provided permission for receipt of the weekly food package. Each Friday package consists of a variety of foods to provide meals and snacks.
- **School Supply Program** - River Bend's Parent Liaison works to maintain an on-going inventory of school supplies that may be needed throughout the year for many of the students. Efforts are made at the end of the school year during locker cleanout to obtain gently used or unused supplies. Contributions are also received via our local Staples Office Supply store.

All supplies are stored by the Parent Liaison and provided to students upon request from the guidance counselors, teachers, and parents.

- **Giving Tree** - River Bend Middle established a Holiday Giving Tree in December 2014. It gave our staff an opportunity to pause and remember "the true reason for the season". We have so many people right here in our own community that are dealing with major financial struggles and will not be able to provide those special gifts that children enjoy during the holiday giving time. Our school has adopted 10 of our student's families. The Giving Tree was decorated with colorful mittens with each family's wish lists. In addition, there were mittens available to purchase grocery gift cards to supplement our backpack buddy program for the holidays.

### Donations

- School supplies were donated by Staples in September.
- Clothing donations are ongoing via staff, student families, and Outreach Committee.

## Business Partners

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation and thanks to our 2014-2015 Business Partners:

- Barakat Orthodontics
- H. H. Gregg Appliances and Electronics
- K & H Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance
- Kravitz Orthodontics

- Lake Center Dentistry
- M/I Homes
- Maid Brigade
- Papa Johns - Great Falls Plaza
- Parcel Plus
- Saba Orthodontics
- Samson Properties

Also a special thank you to for your contributions to our Staff Appreciation Week:

- Barrel Oak Winery
- Bowie Baysox
- Clyde's Willow Creek Restaurant
- Dulles Golf
- Potomac Nationals

## Counseling Department

- **Homework Club** - met every Thursday after school from November -April. Students were able to complete their homework in an environment that provided available resources.
- **Student Interest Survey** – Information collected is used to identify possible groups and develop classroom guidance lessons that help students enhance appropriate social skills and develop academic planning skills.
- **College Week** – In December. Several activities were planned during College Week including: spirit days, playing various college “fight songs” over the sound system, trivia contests, students practiced writing college application essays in English classes, and calculated G.P.A’s in math classes. Grade level assemblies were held and students meet current college students to hear about college life, sports, and the application

process. During Resource classes, 8th grade students met with a high school counselor and college representative to hear about college preparation and what can be done in high school.

- **Panther "Prep" Night** (for rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders) – This event was held at Potomac Falls High School in January. Students were given information on course offerings, attended an athletics presentation, were given college and career information, and attended “A College Coach Is Looking for YOU!” lecture by a former NFL player. This program is designed to prepare students for their transition to high school.
- **Rising 6th Grade school visits** in February for all elementary feeder schools.
- **Rising 6th grade Parent Information meetings** in February 2015 for all elementary feeder schools.
- Our 6th grade counselor introduced the children to the 16 career clusters; information that will be expanded upon during their time in 7th and 8th grades.
- **CAMPUS** – A program available to college bound rising 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who may be the first in their family to attend and may need assistance navigating the college admission process.
- **Contact point for Thomas Jefferson High School of Science and Technology and Academy of Science.** Assist students with application process.

## Anti-Bullying Initiate

- **Bully Prevention lessons**-Students learned the signs of bullying, tips on bully prevention, and how to report bullying as



well as how to identify the various types of harassment and how to seek help. All students were provided with information about internet safety and cyber-bullying.

- **Mark Brown Anti-bullying Assembly**  
October 23, 2014

#### Peer Ambassador Program

- **Open House/Back to School Night-** Helped parents and new students locate classrooms and other areas within the school, assisted new students with opening lockers and understand how to read their schedule.
- **New Student Buddies-** During the year, ambassadors paired with new students. They assisted with their locker, direct them to classes, answer questions about River Bend and introduced the student to friends and classmates.
- **Rising 6th Grade Tours:** Assisted with elementary school transition by giving tours of building and answering questions about RBMS.

#### Clinic

- Hearing and Vision screening
- Diabetic recertification for staff
- Epi-pen training
- AED drill for the Emergency Response Team.
- Blood borne pathogen film
- Preceptor for GMU and Shenandoah nursing students
- Providing shadowing opportunity for LCPS substitute nurses to complete substitute training.

#### Library

- Library Orientation for all grades – September
- Teen Read Week - October 12-18, this is a national adolescent literacy initiative to encourage teens to be regular readers and library users.
- Scholastic Book Fair - Week long fundraiser to support library programs.
- Virginia Reader's Choice activities
- Battle of the Books - Sponsor-Mrs. Kuhn, meetings after school on Thursdays, October through June. Competition in April.
- Book Recommendations for a Friend on Valentine's Day and visited by a public librarian.
- March Madness Book Tournament in collaboration with Reading Specialist
- Teen Tech Week – in collaboration with Technology Department in March
- Author visit in April by A.B. Westrick author of Brotherhood
- Hosted the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Poetry Slam
- Library Club – Sponsored by Mrs. Kuhn, meetings on Wednesdays, October through June.
- Book Talks on many new books in collection.

#### Special Education

- Lunch n Learn 4-part series in February – March. Local restaurants donated lunches for 10-12 students. Students gave up their lunch for an extra academic review session and were able to enjoy lunch in the classroom.

- BASI Q-Global: Implemented new, more in depth individualized testing for annual IEPs.
- Best Buddies: Group of Girl Scouts from River Bend Middle School who join together to socialize and befriend students with Intellectual Disabilities.
- Celebrated Autism Awareness month: April 2015 and raised \$386 as a donation for the Autism Society.
- Created Friends at School Together Club: Students on the Autism Spectrum meet weekly to socialize and become friends.
- Created the Special Education Procedures Manual: This is a binder for Special Education Case Managers that sets expectations, encourages consistency, and gives examples of proper form completion and procedures.
- Hosted Panther Panel for Rising 9th Graders - April 17, 2015. Panther Panel is a club that is made up of students at PFHS who have disabilities who are willing to present information to groups, parents, and younger students about what it is like to have a disability, and more importantly, how to be successful in school. Students who have an IEP or 504 plan can join. Students gain confidence by talking about their "special abilities" that make them successful in school.
- Professional Development - Held monthly case manager meetings and teacher's aide training from October through December. Brought in guest speakers from LCPS to discuss specific topics (i.e. Assistive Technology, AIM, FBA/BIP, etc.).

## English

- African American Read-in
- English Wednesdays
- **DEAR** –October 17 and November 17
- **River Bend Spelling Bee**  
29 students competed in this year's spelling bee. 7<sup>th</sup> grader Jean-Paul Staelens De Pomar won in the 26<sup>th</sup> round with the word "epidemiology." He advanced to the Regional Spelling Bee held in March.
- **Loudoun First Responders Foundation Essay Contest**  
7<sup>th</sup> grader Heeran Karim is recognized for her winning essay in support of promoting and establishing a "National First Responder's Day." She will receive a \$250 check to be used for her future education.
- **River Bend Reads Challenge -**  
In keeping with our commitment to reading, English students were challenged to read as many books as they could during each quarter in a friendly grade-level competition. In total, students read upwards of 2000 books per quarter.
- **25 Book Challenge**  
6<sup>th</sup> grade students have been challenged to read 25 books each quarter. A multitude of students have met this challenge, with many completing the challenge several times over!
- **Poetry Slam**  
During the month of April, 6<sup>th</sup> grade students showcased their poetic skills in River Bend's annual Poetry Slam. Parents and staff were treated to poetry readings and book displays.



- **March Madness Books Bracket**

River Bend had its own March Madness! During the month of March, River Bend held a voting contest to determine our favorite book of 2015. Voting started with the top 16 most checked out books from our school library. From there, students voted for their favorite book in each pairing and narrowed it down to one lucky winner: The Fault in Our Stars by John Green!!

## Math

- **Math Lab** – This program was created for students to receive additional remediation and math instruction. Students were matched with a Math teacher to work with during their Resource time.
- **SOL Review**
- **IXL subscription** – All students were given a subscription to IXL.com to use for additional practice and review of math concepts at school and at home.

## History

- Geography Bee
- Veterans Day Ribbons – November 2014
- African American History Month morning announcements – February 2015
- Student Government Elections - October
- Classes engage in a WWI trench warfare simulation in February 2015.
- 6th Grade - River Bend/Smarts Mill video conference in May. Students discussed their performance assessment task using internet conferencing.

## Science

### Sixth grade Science projects were:

- Created atomic structures
- Used a pendulum to explore kinetic and potential energy
- Modeled the diameter and distance of the planets
- Modeled the reasons for the moon phases
- Tested water as the universal solvent
- Practiced reading measurement tools
- Created the layers of the atmosphere

### Seventh grade Science projects were:

- Cell city projects - the students made real-life connections to create analogies of the cell organelles to a city.
- Performed DNA extractions
- Made DNA paper model and/or DNA ornaments
- Performed adaptation labs - students were to complete tasks without their thumbs demonstrating the opposable thumb adaptation.
- Modeled different bird's beaks using various science tools to demonstrate survival of the fittest
- Used photometer to measure how spines on a cactus help the cactus
- Designed and researched an animal phyla research project in which students researched various animals and their characteristics in each of nine major animal phyla's

### 8<sup>th</sup> grade Science projects were:

- Students constructed parachutes when studying air resistance

- Constructed Rube Goldberg machines to reinforce simple machines and energy transfer
- Constructed roller coasters when studying kinetic and potential energy
- Superhero Project - students designed a superhero based off the properties of an element on the Periodic Table
- Broom Ball when studying inertia
- General labs students enjoyed – pH testing, separation of a mixture, hands-on with simple machines

**S.T.E.M. Camp** – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Camp for students that are interested in programming robots, building, and solving real life problems. Held at River Bend June 22-23.

## Foreign Language

- German 1 and 2 went on March Field trip to Euro Bistro, a local German-Austrian restaurant. Students were able to sample authentic German cuisine.
- German 1 and 2 attended a concert of the popular pop-rock group ARTIG in early October. ARTIG was on their US tour and visited four school districts, Loudoun County being one of them.
- German 1 and 2 End-of-Year Auction
- September 2014, movie night and ice cream social for Latin students from Seneca, River Bend, Dominion, and Potomac Falls
- Latin Olympika and Ludi at Riverbend High School in Spotsylvania – October 4, 2014
- National Gallery of Art for Sterling Area Latin Students gathering – October 19, 2015
- Latin Certamen kickoff – October 2014
- Latin I students participated in the Flint Hill Certamen – January 2015. The focus was on Latin grammar, derivatives, Roman History, and Greco-Roman Mythology.
- February 2015, students participated in the National Mythology Exam and the Classical Literacy Exam.
- French pen pals: The French II students of Madame Wegeng have been communicating since November, with French students in two middle schools near Toulouse in the south of France: Collège Jean Jaurès in Castanet and Collège Condorcet in Nailloux: The students hand wrote letters in their target language. The focus of their letters, besides the obvious cultural aspect, is the language as an authentic opportunity to apply what they learn in class, vocabulary as well as structure, in order to increase their production in the target language. The last letter is in their native language in order to address reading comprehension.
- March 2015, held a Certamen attended by about 100 students from public, private, and home schools – including several RBMS students.
- March 2015, students participated in the National Latin Exam.
- March 2015, students participated in the Classical Association of Virginia's Latin tournament, English essay contest, and Latin essay contest.

- April 2015, held a movie night and ice cream social for Latin students from Seneca, River Bend, Dominion, and Potomac Falls.
- Spanish 1 participated in the first River Bend Middle School spelling bee contest- Concurso de Deletreo.
- Latin Awards:
  - On the Level Two Grammar test, Joanna Tan placed second and Fletcher Ramee placed third. Honorable mentions were earned by Alexander Rice and Jared Tyranski.
  - Taylor Margeson earned a third place for her English essay on the importance of fresh water for the development and culture of ancient Rome.
  - Fletcher Ramee earned an honorable mention for his LATIN (yes, he wrote in LATIN) essay on the anger of the goddess Juno.
  - As a result of their hard work, River Bend was awarded a plaque for overall school performance.

Other Latin contributions by Andrea Weiskopf:

- September 2014, attended the Fall Meeting of the Classical Association of Virginia.
- October 2014, wrote Latin II questions for the Kick off Certamen.
- November 2014, wrote reading comprehension test for the Virginia Junior Classical League's annual convention in Richmond.

- November 2014, coordinated the VJCL modern myth contest.
- March 2015, assisted in judging the English Essay contest (high school level)
- April 2015, wrote Latin IA questions for the State Finals Certamen.

## English Language Learners

**Parents as Education Partners (PEP)** – is a parent outreach program designed to educate and empower ELL parents to become decision makers and advocates for their children's education.

**Imagine Learning** – online program for English Language Learning students to practice English vocabulary and reading skills with songs, videos and games.

## Unified Arts

### Art

- Digital Art show, October, 2014 "What I Like About Loudoun County", 4 students participated
- Art show, February 23-May 20, Twenty-four students displayed their art work at George Washington University.
- Art show, April 9, 2015 during the Chamber Music Concert
- Digital Art show, April 27, 2015, [www.lcps.org](http://www.lcps.org)
- Art show, May 18-October 16 at Countryside Starbucks.

## Technical Education

- Rocket launch
- 3-D Printer

- Manufacturing 8 and Tech ED 7 construct candle holders for Christmas and Mother's Day gifts.
- Manufacturing 8 construct Abstract Mirror's for Father's Day gifts.

### Family and Consumer Science

- Provided a Thanksgiving luncheon for the staff.
- Staff Cookie Exchange on December 18, 2014
- 7th grade FACS students made holiday cookies for all staff @ RBMS.
- The 7th grade FACS students baked and frosted tie dye cupcakes for the 8th grade semi-formal.
- Host PTA luncheons

### Keyboarding

- Students use "My Digital Life" to earn a certificate for digital citizenship. This is an interactive computer program completed through 7 modules.

### Health and Physical Education

- Staff after school conditioning, Monday and Wednesdays, October through May.
- Pound Fitness – A multi-functional, cardio Pilates, and core workout. Students used ripstix, funded by Donerschoice.org, to hit beats while working out.
- Spring Fling – an activity for 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Students form teams, come up with team name and color, and compete in fun activities to earn points.
- Fishing program – students were introduced to fishing techniques. They

learn how to tie knots and cast a fishing rod.

### Spectrum

**Thomas Jefferson Test Prep Sessions** – four sessions offered October-December. These study sessions were to help prepare students for the TJ entry exam.

**Continental Math League** - CML is a national competition that lasts for five months. Each month, students compete by solving six detailed, high level reading/math problems. The top six scores for each grade level are submitted as River Bend's team scores. Round five of the Continental Math League, coordinated by Ms. Hoover, took place in March.

- National Leaders: two students, Kevin Chung and Arvind Ravipati, achieved perfect scores on the CML for the entire year, achieving National Leader status.
- The highest-scoring students at RBMS in 6th and 7th grade for this year are:

#### 6th Grade

- 1st place: Raghav Krishnaswamy
- 2nd place: Garrett Moreau
- 3rd place: Abigail Duke

#### 7th Grade

- 1st place: Kevin Chung, Arvind Ravipati
- 2nd place: Lawrence Phan, Andrew Zhang
- 3rd place: Ryan Chiang, Anthony Panagides

**"It's All Write" Short Story Contest** - Two RBMS 8th graders earned countywide recognition in the

2015 "It's All Write" Short Story Contest with the Loudoun County Public Library. These stories were written as a part of the students' independent studies in Spectrum. Addison Weinbrecht - Third Place for her piece "Welcome to the Club" and Zora Grace - Fourth Place for her piece "The Streets Will Run Pink".

**Certified Wildlife Habitat** - A team of four eighth grade students collaborated to design a certified wildlife habitat for hummingbirds to be a part of the RBMS Outdoor Retreat. Jared Tyranski, Austin Moore, Jack Dyson and Daeton Graves researched the hummingbird and its habitat and needs. They created a suitable blueprint/plan, a budget and a persuasive letter. They presented their proposal to the administrative team. The addition of the certified wildlife space will preserve the hummingbird's natural habitat, provide food and shelter and a learning opportunity for visitors to the Outdoor Retreat.

## Music Department

### Band

- Hosted National Public Radio's "From the Top" series at RBMS as a partnership between LCPS and the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation
- 8th Grade students attended the PFHS Marching Band Expo in Panther Stadium on October 1, 2014.
- 8th Grade students attended a PFHS football game to be "part of the marching band" on October 17, 2014.
- All-District Band - 14 RBMS students selected from LCPS by audition:
  - 8th GRADE: Abby Asuncion, Christian Rodriguez-Velasquez, Amaan Usmani, Alisha Jain, Isaac Duke, Andrew Gerhart, Austin Moore, Sydney Ong, George

Ardura, Alex Rice, and Jonathan Zeng

- 7th GRADE: Sorayah Melendez and Ryan Chiang
- 6TH GRADE: Aubrey Duelm.

Special congratulations to Abby Asuncion, Amaan Usmani, Isaac Duke, Austin Moore, and Alex Rice on their appointments as First Chair players, meaning that they earned the highest possible placement in their section. District Band Weekend: February 5-7.

- Advanced Band performed a "Pre-Assessment Concert" at PFHS in front of mock judges for feedback on March 4, 2015. Mock judges included LCPS and FCPS band teachers, and the State Executive of the Virginia Music Educators Association.
- Advanced Band received straight "Superior" ratings at District Concert Assessment on March 14. This is the highest achievement rating possible for a band.
- Hosted District Jazz Auditions on March 11, 2015.
- Hosted four "Instrument Test-Drive" nights for rising 6th graders in January and February.
- Four RBMS students selected for the 2015 District Jazz Band: Andrew Gerhart, Alex Rice, William Strickler, and Adam Moldover. William Strickler and Adam Moldover earned the first chair position in their sections.
- River Bend Jazz - Meetings after-school on an alternating Wednesday/Thursday schedule. Membership by audition. This group performs at school functions, 6th grade Spring Concert, and winter and spring jazz recitals.

- Winter Jazz Recital and food drive - December 8, 2014.
  - Instrument Test Drive Night for all rising 6th grade students that are thinking of taking band next school year. Students got the opportunity to try out instruments, have questions answered, and meet the band instructor.
  - Spring Jazz Recital - June 2, 2015
  - River Bend Jazz earned straight "Superior" ratings at Jazz Assessment on April 24, 2015. The band also earned awards for "Best Rhythm Section", "Best Brass Section", "Outstanding Soloist", and "Top Band of the Event" from judges.
  - Chamber Music Ensembles - Meetings after-school on an alternating Wednesday/Thursday schedule. Membership by audition. Students choose or write their own music, assign parts, run their rehearsals, and plan performances.
  - Chamber Music Festival - April 9, 2015
  - Chamber Music Ensembles performed at the "Taste of Our World" event at Countryside Elementary School on April 29, 2015.
  - All Chamber Music Ensembles earned "Superior" ratings at District Solo & Ensemble Assessment on April 18, 2015.
  - The United States Army Band Tuba Euphonium Quartet visited River Bend on Tuesday, May 5. The group gave a concert of classical and contemporary literature followed by an open discussion with attendees. River Bend students involved in the Chamber Music program were able to hear and learn from these fantastic performers.
  - PFHS Band Boosters sponsored an after-school Private Lessons Program for RBMS and PFHS students. Faculty includes military and local professional musicians. Mr. Mills was Co-Director of this program.
  - Advanced Band performed at PFHS for a combined Spring Concert with PFHS Bands on April 15, 2015.
  - Mr. Mills directed the Potomac Falls Summer Band Academy from July 7-18, 2014, incorporating 19 LCPS band programs, 35 faculty, 30 assistants, and over 150 students. SBA 2015 set for July 6-17, 2015.
  - Advanced Band joined the 8th grade music divisions for an all-day Music in the Parks Festival in Williamsburg, Virginia and at Busch Gardens on Saturday, May 30, 2015.
  - Assigned "Musical Creativity Project" for all band students during the 4th Quarter.
  - November 12, 2014 - Advanced Band Fall Concert
  - January 15, 2015 - Intermediate Band Winter Concert
  - February 12, 2015 - Gold Beginning Band Winter Concert
  - February 12, 2015 - Purple Beginning Band Winter Concert
  - March 4, 2015 - Advanced Band Pre-Assessment Concert
  - May 15, 2015 - Advanced Band Spring Concert
  - June 9, 2015 - Intermediate Band and Chamber Music Ensembles Spring Concert
  - June 11, 2015 - Gold Beginning Band Spring Concert
  - June 11, 2015 - Purple Beginning Band Spring Concert
  - All concerts were preceded with at least one after-school rehearsal.
- ### Chorus
- Ten sixth grade students from River Bend participated in the LCPS Sixth Grade All-County Performance on Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.



- River Bend's Select Choir, RAVEN CHOIR, sang the National Anthem at the Washington Wizards game on Tuesday, December 16, 2014.
- Chorus 8 Concert, January 14, 2015
- Chorus 6 and 7 Concert, February 21, 2015
- Eight River Bend Seventh and Eighth graders were members of All-District Chorus 2015.
- Five Students represent River Bend Middle Choral Program at ACDA All-Virginia Middle School Honors Choir in Tyson's Corner, Virginia on Saturday, April 25, 2015.
- Chorus 6 and 7 Concert, May 27, 2015
- Chorus 8 Concert, June 4, 2015

## Guitar

- Guitar 8 Concert – December 17, 2014
- Guitar Festival - RBMS hosted the annual LCPS Middle School Guitar Festival for the second year in a row. During this event, students from across the county come to RBMS for workshops and coaching with clinician Kami Rowan, and guitar building workshops with master Luthier, Jason Pickard. The event culminates with a concert featuring a large ensemble (45 students who have auditioned to participate) and a small groups from schools across Loudoun.
- Ten of the 46 students accepted to this year's LCPS All County Guitar Ensemble came from RBMS. Please congratulate the following students: Adam Moldover, Brady Hurlich, Bennett Hamilton, John Le, Carlos Olivares, Sam Courtney, Evy

Mitchell, Emely Melendez, Kenya Lopez, and Alex Karapatkov.

- Eighth graders, Carlos Olivares and Amaya Johnson, participated in a very high level guitar competition held in DC. Students from across the mid-Atlantic region participate in this event. Applicants are required to learn professional level solo guitar music and perform for an audience and panel of judges. I'm proud to say that both students played exceptionally well and Carlos even won \$200 in prize money.
- Several RBMS students competed in the annual Aguado Guitar Competition. RBMS won 1st AND 2nd prizes in the group division. We also took 2nd AND 3rd prizes in the solo division. The group included Carlos (guitarlos) Olivares, Sam Courtney, Allie Batchvarova, John Le, Brady Hurlich, and Anthony Panagides.
- Guitar 7/8 concert, June 10, 2015

## Strings

- Strings 8 Concert, January 29, 2015
- Strings 7 Concert, May 28, 2015
- Strings 6 Concert, June 3, 2015
- Strings 8 district Orchestra Assessment in March

## Staff Awards and Recognition

- In the spring and summer of 2014, RBM's Dr. Kossler contributed to a commercial recording of the "Complete Recorded Works" by Dr. Miroslav Loncar. This recording will be released on the Canadian record label "Les Production D'Oz" later this year. The recording

features Dr. Kossler and other LCPS guitar instructors performing an original ensemble piece titled "Summer Salsa" as well as Dr. Kossler's solo recording of Dr. Loncar's "La Margheritina". Dr. Kossler's solo album, "Guitar Recital" was also released independently in 2014.

- In September, Melanie Nunes represented River Bend and LCPS as she presented at the FLAVA (Foreign Language Association of Virginia) conference in Williamsburg, Virginia.
- Rachel Binger performed as choir member with The City Choir of Washington under the direction of Robert Shafer on Sunday October 12, 2014, December 14th, 2014, March 15, 2015, and May 10, 2015.
- On October 24th, Lauren Poehner and Sarah Giek were presenters at the VMSA (Virginia Middle School Association) conference at JMU.
- Nicole Jordan was named the 2014 Virginia Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Teacher of the Year. She received this award in November at the annual VAHPERD convention in Williamsburg.
- James Madison University's School of Music honored John Mills, band teacher, with its Outstanding Early Music Educator Award. The award citation notes that Mills has collaborated with the JMU faculty on research and has presented for two years at the Virginia Music Educators Association (VEMA) on his innovative teaching of composition at the middle school level.
- Stan Ezrol received the 2015 "Teacher of Promise" by Shenandoah University.
- Dr. Kossler was a featured artist in the Marlow Guitar Series held at Westmoreland Congregational Church in Bethesda, MD. He was the only American guitarist to be featured during the 2014 concert series. The morning following his performance, Dr. Kossler was the featured guest for an hour long interview on Tom Cole's WPFW show in Washington DC.
- Diane Crain nominee for 2015 Virginia Middle School Association Teacher of the Year.
- Gwen Pride was nominated as the 2015 Virginia Middle School Association Non-teaching Educator of the Year.
- In May 2015, Andrea Weiskopf received the Angela P. Lloyd Book Award from the Classical Association of Virginia for excellence in teaching and active participation in the Virginia Latin community.
- Jarred Boehner – nominee for Shenandoah Teacher of the Year in Special Education
- The Sterling Lions Club nominated Erin Pinero and Cheryl Fuchs for the Lions Clubs International Outstanding Leo Club Advisors for 2015.
- The Virginia House of Delegates passed House Resolution No. 229 sponsored by Delegate Tag Greason commending John Mills for his service to music education in Virginia.
- The National Association for Music Education published on their online blog

"A Climate for Creativity" written by John Mills. This article provides strategies for engaging students at the highest possible level of development.

- Lavanya Penmetsa was the River Bend Middle School Substitute of the Year.

## Student Awards and Recognition

- In celebration of National Arts in Education Week, September 7th - 13th, a Creative Art Challenge was opened to students across the county. Students in grades K-12 had the opportunity to send an original photo and an original quote describing the photo representing one of the "Most Significant Places, Spaces or Memories they had of Loudoun County!" Stephanie Illetschko, Rashad Tafwed, Joanne Tan, and Keith Pham's art work was selected and displayed on the LCPS website.
- River Bend is among one of the Top 10 schools that received the Honor Roll award this year at the Mathematical Association of America's Math Competition. Congratulations to Kevin Chung and Manu Onteeru for receiving Distinguished Honor Roll, Arvind Ravipathi and Adam Maldoover-Honor Roll, and Raghav Krishnaswamy-Achievement Roll.
- Elizabeth Bernice Baucom won Honorable Mention in the Patriot's Pen Youth Essay Contest. This event is sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1177 in Leesburg.
- The River Bend *Ravenclaws* project garnered the 1st Place award for best Research Project at the First Lego League Reston Regional Division 2.
- Seventh grader, Heeran Karim, was recognized for her winning essay in the Loudoun First Responders Foundation Essay Contest. She received a \$250 check to be used for her future education.
- The Math Counts club participated in the Thomas Jefferson Intermediate Math Open in November. The TJIMO is run by the varsity team of Thomas Jefferson High School. The program is designed to mathematically challenge middle school students in the areas of complex math and problem solving. The winners from River Bend were: Manu Onteeru - Problem Solving Activities, Anthony Panagides - Algebra, Kevin Chung - Geometry, and Alisha Jain's team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> overall.
- The First Lego League's team, the *Cascades Thunderbots*, led by Pranav Sukumaran, won second place in the Manassas tournament in November. They worked over a three month period designing a robot, programming the tasks, and researching for the project.
- Jean-Paul Staelens, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, was first place in Districts for the Spelling Bee.
- On February 9, 2015, Catherine Hunter was our principal for the day.
- Will Salzman was presented the 2015 Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Award in the Outstanding Youth Volunteer category. Will works about 20 hours a month on the Feed the Street project providing food items, coats and jackets and toiletries to the homeless.

- Arvind Ravipati, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, was first place in Districts for the Geography Bee.
- American Education Week Essay awards: 6<sup>th</sup> grade Honorable Mention - Ron Nickle, 7<sup>th</sup> grade Honorable Mention - Manu Onteeru, 8<sup>th</sup> grade Honorable Mention - Faris Lopez Campos, and 1<sup>st</sup> Place - Abigale Duke.
- The RBMS Math Team placed 2nd in the state for the national Math League Algebra I Competition and placed 20th nationally.
- Harmony Writing Contest winners are: 6<sup>th</sup> grade Kiran Bajaj, 7<sup>th</sup> grade – Sachin Navaratne, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade – Kyra Breslow and Jessica Hazlett.
- The Academic Challenge team place first in Districts: Joanna Tan, Jack Dyson, Elizabeth Hur, Dana Altarace, Christian Rodriguez Velasquez, Kyra Breslow, Nick Haddad, Alice Shlykov, and Fletcher Ramee.
- Carson's Scholars award was awarded to Dana Altarace.
- Social Science & Global Studies Outstanding Student of the Year for 7<sup>th</sup> grade was awarded to Manu Onteeru.
- Students that received the Malone Awards for 2015 are: Math – Nicholas Haddad, Science – Kyra Breslow, Music – Madeline Beckelhimer, and Art – Joanna Tan
- The Sterling Ruritan Award was given to Jamie Lewall.
- Sterling Lion's Club Scholastic Achievement Award was given to Kenya Lopez and John Le.

- Ben Lacy Leadership Award was given to John Lee.
- Student Government officers for the 2014-2015 school year were: President – Madelyn DeCarli, Vice President – Pablo Vasquez, Treasurer – Killian Quirk, and Secretary – Sydney Ong

### RBMS Activities and Events

- Back to School Night
- Fall Pictures
- Spirit Week
- Teacher Rewards celebration presented by Walmart. Gift cards and school supplies were donated.
- River Bend partnered with the National Public Radio (NPR) and the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation to bring the NPR show From the Top to our school on October 22, 2014. This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for our 7th and 8th grade students in music. NPR broadcast on 250 stations nationwide to an audience of more than 700,000 listeners.
- Quarterly Honor Roll Assemblies
- Quarterly Awards Ceremonies
- Quarterly P.B.I.S. Raven Rally
- Little-Known Secrets of Paying for College presentation by Brock Jolly giving strategies on saving for college, overview on financial aid, and the college admissions process.
- PTA Silent Auction, December 5-7, 2014.
- Food Drive – November
- American Education Week

- Ugly Sweater contest and Staff holiday gathering.
- RBMS Spelling Bee
- National African American History Month, February 1-28
- Friendship Week- February 9-13. Our students and staff wore a "Hello My Name is..." name tag each day to promote making new friends, saying hello to each other by name, and supported our initiative for administrators and staff to learn everyone's name. The students read a daily quote about friendship on the morning announcements. This was an effort to develop a community Spirit among our students and staff. The week tied into National Make a Friend Day (February 11th), an unofficial holiday and leads up to Valentine's Day on Saturday the 14th.
- Honor Roll and Name Game, all grades, February 11-13, 2015
- James Madison University student visits.
- Washington Redskin, Darrel Young, stopped by for a surprise visit in April.
- Activities Fair at PFHS – rising 9th grade students visited the high school to get information on extracurricular activities available to them next school year.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Semi-Formal Dance - Student Government sponsored a neon them dance after school.
- Critters Don't Litter program presented in April
- End of year Awards Ceremony, June 8 2015
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade/faculty Basketball, June 10, 2015
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Lock-in, June 13, 2015

- Middle School Summer Enrichment Program – held at RBMS for remediation and enrichment in Math and English.

## School Play – Cinderella

River Bend Middle School presented Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella on December 5, 6, and 7, 2014. The play was directed by Renee J. Crawford and Musical Direction by Rachel Binger. Over 50 students were involved, as well as numerous adult volunteers. The tickets sold out, and the show was well received by the community.

## Committees

River Bend teachers met monthly in various committees to focus on areas to improve climate, culture, and experiences for our staff and students. Some successes for each committee are as follows:

### *Business Partnerships*

Cultivates relationships with area businesses to secure monetary donations for school improvement and coupons/gift certificates for student and staff awards. The school worked with over 20 area businesses to support our school and students to improve our landscaping, provide awards to student achievers, provide various supplies to classrooms, and sponsor next year's student agenda, among many others.

### *Climate/Hospitality*

Plans morale-improving after school events. Provides feedback to administration on ways to enhance climate in the school. Celebrates staff, plans monthly staff breakfasts and luncheons, organizes holiday party, and recognizes teacher

birthdays, secretaries, custodians, cafeteria workers, and counselors, etc.

### *Equity*

Plans and leads professional development for the staff. Finds opportunities to highlight equitable practices and identify areas of need/development. Strategizes to better incorporate all diverse groups in honors, clubs, etc. Presented at a faculty meeting and educated the staff on the various cultures of our students. Different ways of connecting to our students were highlighted.

### *Health and Wellness*

Carries out the LCPS Benefits initiatives, organizes softball league, and plans other health events/programs. Meeting held after school during third quarter on Monday and Wednesdays. Throughout the year, the committee disseminated information about the county Health and Wellness Passport initiative. Near the end of the year, many teachers and staff trained and participated in a 5K race.

### *Literacy*

Seeks ways to encourage and highlight reading in school. Leads faculty, parent, and/or student book clubs. Educates teachers on improving reading across all content areas. Students were able to hold a “book swap” due to the committee’s organization. In addition, students were able to see and discuss what books teachers were reading as signs outside each door were posted. This committee also hosted individual a Parent and Teacher book Club.

*Outreach*-The Outreach Committee meets once a month after school to plan events that would benefit our families in need and community

members. Works with Parent Liaison to provide for families in need (backpack buddies, Holiday food or gifts, etc.). Works with Parents as Educational Partners (PEP). Many of our schools needy families were impacted during the holidays as River Bend had a “mitten tree” in which staff were able to buy presents. The committee also led a very successful food drive. Also, they hosted PEP Nights and organized a sports equipment drive.

### *P.B.I.S.*

Leads staff on the understanding and implementation of the program, develops recognition activities, and analyzes behavior data. With the help our student leadership team, positive behavior was rewarded through quarterly Raven Rallies and store.

Other programs supported by P.B.I.S. were: the Expect Respect process and the anti-bullying slogan campaign. The task was given to each homeroom to choose an anti-bullying slogan. Students chose a slogan, made posters, and hung them in the hallways. A school-wide vote was held to choose the best slogan. Ms. Collin’s 7<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom won with, “Stop it! Drop it!” Ms. Collin’s homeroom was rewarded with a pizza party.

### *Public Relations*

Works to highlight positive aspects of the school and write articles for publication on LCPS website and RBMS’ website, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Many of the events occurring throughout the year were promoted on the school’s website. In addition, one article about NPR’s “From the Top” program was featured on the county’s main page.



### **Safe School Ambassadors/Anti-Bullying**

Serves as a Family Group Facilitators to help facilitate and lead our SSA program while also developing anti-bullying programs and awareness.

### **School Beautification**

Seeks ways to improve the appearance of the school both inside and outside. Creates consistent signs, plants flowers, sponsors “trash-free” lunches, etc. The committee added cheer and highlighted holidays throughout the building and year. Some examples include Veteran’s Day ribbons, snowflakes, refreshed the paint on the planters outside of school and added birdhouses outside the school.

## **Clubs**

**Academic Challenge**-Sponsored by Ms. Hoover and Hickey, meetings after school every other Wednesday, October until competition. Academic Challenge is rigorous academic-based competition between all 15 middle schools in Loudoun County.

Nine River Bend students participated on the team: Nick Haddad, Alice Shylkov, Kyra Breslow, Fletcher Ramee, Dana Altarace, Jack Dyson, Joanna Tan, Alex Rice, Christian Rodriguez Velasquez. The competition took place at Belmont Ridge Middle School Saturday May 2, 2015 from 8am-noon.

**Anime Club** - Sponsored by Mrs. Cook, meeting after school on Wednesdays.

**Boys Running Club**-Sponsored by Ms. Jordan, meeting after school on Wednesdays and Thursdays, October through April. Students trained during the year by going on runs typically

1.5-3.2 miles long. Many participated in local 5k races.

**Creative Writing Club**-Sponsored by Mrs. Bettarelli, meeting after school on Thursdays, October through June. Students’ activities included: publishing, writing contests, writing poetry and stories. Meetings held on Thursdays, October through May. There were regular opportunities for the students to enter writing contests and information for them to possibly have their work published. On April 23, 2015, the students gathered in the River Bend Auditorium after school to share their poems and stories with family, friends, and staff. A celebration for the club members was held afterwards.

**Debate Club** – Sponsored by Mr. Tompkins. The RBMS Debate Club offers a fun and engaging atmosphere for our students to explore topics and issues that are of interest to them. 7th and 8th Grade students meet weekly to discuss the pros and cons of current political, social, and economic issues of the day. This is a student driven club that offers the opportunity to research a particular topic from all angles, and all viewpoints. In teams, students learn how to gather information and relevant data, and then craft an argument either from a proponent or opponent viewpoint.

**Friends @ School Together**- Sponsored by Mr. Frenck, Kurt Goodfriend, and Mr. Boehner, meeting after school on Thursdays, January through June. Kids on the Autism Spectrum meet weekly to socialize and enjoyed becoming friends with each other.

**Girls on the Run**–Sponsored by Ms. Svitek and Ms. Poehner, meeting after school on

Wednesday and Thursdays, September through November. Students train during a nine week period. The program also encourages positive emotional, social, mental, and physical development. The program ends with a Girls on the Run NOVA 5K on November 23, 2014.

*Habitat Club*-Sponsored by Mr. Nawrot, met after school on the first Thursday of each month, October through June. This club is designed for middle school students who enjoy nature and are interested in learning about the local plants and animals in our area. We spent our time this year establishing a healthy habitat around the school grounds for wildlife or going on nature hikes. This year we have observed a significant increase in the spotted salamanders population compared to the past 3 years.

*Junior Panther Dancers*- Sponsored by Ms. Jordan, meeting on Wednesdays, October through April. Students learned a hip hop and jazz routines. The Jr. Panther Dancers performed at Potomac Falls with the Panther Dancers during basketball games.

*Knitting Club*- Sponsored by Mrs. Barbaccia and Mrs. Bailey, meeting after school on Wednesdays, October through December and on Thursdays, January through May. Projects include: scarfs, potholders, and any projects that interest the students.

*Leo Club*-Sponsored by Ms. Pinero and Ms. Fuchs, meetings after school during the year June through October. LEO Club is a community service club. Year-long projects include collecting soda tabs to recycle with the proceeds benefiting the Ronald McDonald House Charities, collecting Campbells's Labels for Education to benefit the

Boys' Home in Covington, Virginia, collecting eyeglasses to be re-purposed via the Lions Club International giving the gift of sight to needy people around the world. Other projects were:

- Trash pick-up around River Bend, removing three large bags of recycling and two large bags of trash.
- Made Cat toys and beds in April and donated to the Loudoun Animal Shelter. Loudoun Animal Shelter representative educated the LEOs about the shelter and the part each of them can play in helping animals.

*Math Counts Club*-Sponsored by Ms. Pearson and Ms. Onreetu, meeting on Thursday mornings, October through June. Students learn higher level math, while solving complex problems cooperatively with their team mates. Participation is from all grade levels, with the top performers become part of the competition team. These teams then compete at the county and state level.

The participants have successfully completed the year with incredible achievements. They took second place in Bull Run Regional Chapter, received a special recognition in the American Math Competition, and received a 5<sup>th</sup> place in the Loudoun Math Regional Competition.

*Morning Announcement Team*-Sponsored by Mrs. Paulovich, meets daily, September through June. Team members read the morning announcements for a live school TV broadcast.

*Multicultural Club* – Sponsored by Mrs. Hyatt, meeting after school on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of month, October through June. The purpose of

the Multicultural Club is to celebrate diversity at River Bend. Activities include: sharing information about other countries and cultures through the morning announcements and other celebrations.

*Novel Club*-Sponsored by Mrs. Goodrich and Mrs. Weinbrecht, meeting on Wednesdays, October through June.

*Odyssey of the Mind*- Odyssey of the Mind - Sponsored by Ms. Hoover, meeting on various days throughout the week. Days and times of meetings are determined by teams and coaches, typically November through June. This is a team, creative problem-solving activity in which students develop a solution to a long-term problem and also practice spontaneous problem-solving skills for an annual competition amongst teams from other schools. Regional, State, and World competitions held in the Spring/early summer.

*Pokémon Club*-Sponsored by Ms. Stewart, meeting after school every other Thursday, December through June. Students traded cards, held Pokémon battles, held Pokémon trivia challenges and watched Pokémon videos.

*Robotics Club*-Sponsored by Mrs. Pride and Ms. Fields, meeting after school on Monday and Thursdays, October through November. The Robotics Team presented to our faculty, research on the impact of incorporating various learning styles into lesson planning and assessments.

*Science Olympiad*-Sponsored by Mr. Norman, Club Coordinators – Stephanie Groot and Renu Onteeru, meeting at various times, October through June. Science Olympiad

challenges students in various events across several fields of study. The group consisted of 15 students on a team to compete in 23 events. Students are often divided into groups of 2 or 3 within their team and often compete in multiple events. Students placed in the regional tournament were:

- 2nd Place - Daniel Hayden (8<sup>th</sup>) and Ryan Chiang-7<sup>th</sup> in Air Trajectory
- 6th Place - Ryan Chiang (7<sup>th</sup>) and Vivek Chundru-7<sup>th</sup> in Crave the Wave
- 6th Place - Kiran Bajaj (6<sup>th</sup>) and Arvind Ravipati (7<sup>th</sup>) in Road Scholar
- 6th Place - Sophia Groot (8<sup>th</sup>) and Sanil Jain (7<sup>th</sup>) in Wheeled Vehicle

### *SOAR/AIM-Successful Outstanding*

*Achieving Ravens*-Sponsored by Mr. Fritz, meetings every two to three weeks after school on Wednesdays and with field trips outside of school. Develops leadership qualities and accountability with 6th grade girls. SOAR members focus on personal, social, behavioral, and academic goals throughout the school year. Activities this school year included:

- Claude Moore Recreation Center, January 28, 15. Activities were: rock climbing, swimming, and picnic lunch.
- Visited Hemlock
- White elephant gift exchange with attached lesson on thank you notes.
- Created blankets for people battling cancer.
- Lesson on taking care of yourself inside and out with focus on positive speech and setting goals.
- Friendship bracelets project
- Baked brownies for teacher appreciation week.

*Soccer Club*-Sponsored by Mr. Eirich and Mr. Fisher, meeting after school on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursdays, December-March. Ten teams were formed to play in this after school league. This year's champion was the Red Phoenix.

*Student Government*-Sponsored by Mrs. Hickey, meetings after school every other Thursday, September through June. Students in all grades elected a Student Government Association (SGA) replacing the previous SAC to better represent student interests, to invite more participation and have the students create the events they want at the school through elected officials (i.e., dances, grade level parties, etc.).

Elections took place in October through all social studies classes.

Elected officers are:

President - Madelyn DeCarli  
Vice President - Pablo Vasquez  
Treasurer - Killian Quirk  
Secretary - Sydney Ong

Programs supported by SGA were:

- Friendship Week
- 8th grade Semi-formal neon dance in May

*Yearbook Club*- Sponsored by Mrs. Jordan, meeting Monday, October through June. Student participants took photos at special events during the school year to be entered into the 2014-2015 yearbook. Students also help create pages featured in the school yearbook.