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## F.C. Reed Middle School 2025 - 2026 Board of Education Report

April 2026

*Board of Education members, please RSVP to Principal Truesdell by April 30, 2026 if you plan to attend Grade 8 Honors Night on June 4, 2026. Thank you!*

### **Academics:**

April has been a significant month for academic programming at RMS, highlighted by the successful administration of both national and state assessments. All eighth grade students participated in the PSAT 8/9 on April 15. Over the next several weeks, students will work with Ms. Hughes to create their College Board accounts so they are prepared to access their scores later in May. Students will also continue building familiarity with the platform as they transition to BHS and prepare for future SAT testing. Thanks to the dedicated work of our test proctors, monitors, supporting administrators, and support staff, the assessment was executed smoothly, resulting in a seamless and well-organized testing experience for students.

M-STEP testing is currently underway, with all grade levels participating across April and early May. Testing has been smooth, supported by clear systems, staff preparation, and consistent communication with families. I would also like to recognize Mrs. Bredice for her outstanding work coordinating test make-ups, helping us maintain a high level of participation across our student population.

As we move into the final stretch of the school year, RMS will begin spring benchmark assessments using Aimsweb Plus to measure student growth and inform planning for the 2026–2027 school year, including scheduling, intervention supports, and instructional alignment. We will also begin preparing seventh and eighth grade students for end-of-year exams, which are scheduled for June 3–5.

It is important to recognize the sustained effort our students have demonstrated throughout this extended testing season. From PSAT to M-STEP, and with upcoming benchmarks and final exams, our students have shown focus, resilience, and a commitment to doing their best. This is a heavy stretch of academic testing, and they have continued to rise to the occasion. We are proud of the way they have approached these challenges.

In addition to assessment efforts, RMS successfully completed its Human Growth and Development instructional unit during the April Encore rotation. This programming was delivered in partnership with a certified health educator from the Children's Advocacy Center of Southwest Michigan. Thank you to Jami Roden for her work with our students! The lessons were well-received and aligned to state expectations for health education. Notably, only one family opted out of the program, reflecting strong family support and confidence in the instruction provided.

## **Behavior:**

Student behavior trends at F.C. Reed Middle School continue to show positive stabilization following the February peak. March demonstrated a strong improvement, with behavior incidents decreasing to approximately 1.32 per day. April data reflects continued progress, with incidents averaging approximately 0.53 per day to date. This marks the lowest monthly average of the school year and represents a significant reduction in overall behavior incidents.

Incident location data continues to show that the majority of behavior events occur in classrooms (105 logs), which remains consistent with previous reporting trends. Hallway incidents (19 logs) remain comparatively low, reinforcing that supervision structures and hallway expectations continue to be effective. Other locations, including the commons (9), transportation (10), and cafeteria (4), show relatively minimal incident frequency, suggesting that systems in shared spaces are functioning well.

Analysis of behavior subtypes highlights several consistent trends. The most frequently reported behaviors during this period include Disrespect (24), Horseplay (22), Technology Violations (17), Disruption of the Educational Process (16), and Insubordination (13). These categories continue to align with typical middle school behavioral patterns and remain areas of ongoing focus for staff.

Of note, technology-related behaviors remain elevated and continue to warrant attention. The middle school Building Leadership Team (BLT) is exploring potential system-level adjustments, including restricting access to certain non-instructional websites during the evening (ex: Youtube.com), to better support student engagement and reduce misuse.

The RMS Multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Team has continued its work throughout this period. No new threats and student management cases have been added to the team's caseload this month.

As we move into the final months of the school year, our continued focus will remain on prevention, consistency, and early intervention. The data suggests that our current systems are having a positive impact, and we will continue reinforcing expectations, supporting staff, and responding proactively to maintain a safe, structured, and supportive learning environment at RMS.

## **Mental Health:**

Supporting students at RMS means intentionally addressing social-emotional needs alongside academic growth. This spring, one of the most impactful efforts has been the continued expansion of the Hive Closet, led by Ms. Hughes (School Counselor) and Mrs. Cooper (School

Social Worker). Through support from the Berrien Community Foundation Golden Acorn Classroom Mini Grant, the Hive Closet now provides clothing, food items, hygiene products, and other essential resources for students and families. The program operates quietly and respectfully, ensuring students can access support while maintaining dignity and privacy. By removing barriers outside the classroom, we are better able to ensure students arrive each day ready to learn and fully participate in school. This work was recently highlighted in the spring edition of Community Buzz.

Our mental health team has also continued delivering intentional, school-wide social-emotional learning. The Words Matter initiative provided all students with structured lessons focused on the impact of language, including the differences between teasing and bullying, as well as the harmful effects of slurs and stereotypes. These lessons reinforce expectations outlined in the RMS Code of Conduct and have contributed to increased student awareness, stronger peer accountability, and ongoing conversations centered on respect. Student-created anti-bullying posters remain displayed throughout the building as visible reminders of these expectations.

During March and April, counseling lessons shifted toward future planning and student development. All students engaged in career exploration through Xello, identifying personal interests, strengths, and potential career pathways. This work extended into real-world experiences for our eighth grade students through Career and Technical Education (CTE) field trips to St. Joseph High School and Lakeshore High School. These visits provided valuable exposure to post-secondary options and hands-on learning opportunities as students prepare for high school and beyond. At the same time, Ms. Hughes has continued to emphasize kindness and positive peer interactions in her final round of classroom lessons, reinforcing a supportive school culture as the year concludes.

Mrs. Cooper has continued to strengthen supports for our most at-risk learners. She recently completed a rigorous three-day training through UCLA in the Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®), an evidence-based social skills program designed to support students who struggle with peer interactions. This training will enhance our ability to provide structured support in areas such as building and maintaining friendships, conversational skills, conflict resolution, and navigating peer dynamics.

In addition, Mrs. Cooper has continued to lead targeted small group interventions, which are now concluding for the school year, and is preparing for expanded summer services to ensure continued support for students and families beyond the academic calendar. She will also continue supporting Bridgman Elementary School students through the end of the year to help ensure a smooth transition as the district welcomes a new BES School Social Worker.

As part of this work, Mrs. Cooper successfully reestablished the “Blessings in a Backpack” program at BES, which will provide weekly packaged food support for approximately 50 students through the remainder of the school year

Looking ahead, RMS will begin its transition work with incoming fifth grade students, who will visit the building on May 12–14 as part of the orientation process. Our team will also begin working with families in May to support course selection and scheduling for the 2026–2027 school year.

Overall, RMS remains committed to a comprehensive, student-centered approach to mental health that prioritizes access, proactive support, and strong transitions for all students.

### **Student Voice Report:**

RMS continues to prioritize student voice as an important driver of school improvement and culture. During the month of March, we received six student feedback responses across grades 5–8, reflecting a mix of operational suggestions, student experience preferences, and policy-related considerations. This feedback continues to provide valuable insight that informs both immediate adjustments and longer-term planning.

Students shared ideas to improve the daily student experience, including interest in more environmentally friendly practices such as replacing styrofoam lunch trays, as well as increased opportunities for outdoor or active recess, especially during indoor days. These suggestions will be reviewed as part of ongoing conversations around student wellness, engagement, and operational feasibility.

Another detailed response focused on student cell phone access. This feedback reinforces the importance of clear and proactive communication with families as Michigan’s new state law regarding school cell phone policies is implemented. It will also help inform future updates to the RMS Code of Conduct to ensure expectations are clearly defined and consistently understood.

In addition to new feedback, we continue to act on input gathered earlier in the year. One recurring theme, particularly from new students, was difficulty navigating the building and locating classrooms. In response, the administration is piloting a new directional signage system (thank you to Mr. Veldman for leading this effort). These signs extend perpendicularly from classroom walls and clearly display teacher names and room numbers, improving visibility for students and visitors while also supporting building safety. This initiative reflects a direct connection between student feedback and actionable improvement.

Overall, student voice at RMS continues to serve as a meaningful feedback loop that strengthens decision-making, enhances the student experience, and supports a responsive and student-centered school environment.

### **Extracurricular Activities:**

As a reminder, the RMS Grade 7/8 Washington, D.C. trip, led by Mr. Milligan and Mrs. Smiertelny, will depart from campus on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 5:00 PM. Students are scheduled to return on Monday morning at approximately 11:00 AM. This trip continues to be a valuable enrichment opportunity, providing students with real-world connections to their social studies learning.

In addition, several Appendix C clubs and activities are active during the month of April for the 2025–2026 school year. These include the BPS Drama Club (Ammerman), RMS Yearbook Club (Korson), RMS Student Council (Milligan), RMS Garden Club (Smiertelny), RMS Chess Club (Smiertelny), and RMS Choir Club (Ammerman). These extracurricular opportunities provide students with meaningful ways to stay engaged, build relationships, and explore interests beyond the classroom.

### **Athletics:**

Boys and girls middle school Track and Field, along with girls soccer, are in full swing this spring. Both teams have done an outstanding job navigating unpredictable weather conditions, and I would like to recognize our coaches for their flexibility and commitment to keeping practices consistent, whether indoors or outdoors, to ensure students remain prepared, engaged, and invested in their seasons.

We currently have 42 student-athletes participating in spring sports, with 38 meeting academic eligibility requirements.

### **RMS Weekly Bulletin:**

[April 20, 2026 Edition](#)

[April 13, 2026 Edition](#)

[April 6, 2026 Edition](#)

[March 23, 2026 Edition](#)