

**From:** [Cohn, Gary](#)  
**To:** [EPS.Maillist](#)  
**Subject:** October is Stomp Out Bullying Month!  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 13, 2015 6:14:35 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
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Dear Colleague:

Did you know October is designated *Stomp Out Bullying* month by several national organizations on behalf of students across our country? This is was news to me, and welcome news at that!

And did you know our district's very first district wide Summer Reading Challenge not only helped establish a summer reading culture in our communities; it also included a *Stomp Out Bullying* focus?

As part of our Summer Reading Challenge launch last spring, fifth-graders were asked to read [Wonder](#) by RJ Palacio. *Wonder*'s main character is a boy with an extraordinary face. *Wonder* showcases a community's ability to learn empathy, acceptance, and love and is called by the author, "a meditation on kindness."

Did you know hundreds and hundreds of our kids read this book? *Wonder* was just one of dozens of books students got excited about during the Summer Reading Challenge. Families and district staff also found themselves caught up in the reading adventure. You too check out the book's trailer on [SchoolTube](#). Even that short minute and a half clip will grab your heart and inspire you to *Stomp Out Bullying*. Did you see social media posts by many of our colleagues sharing their reading adventures last summer – sometimes from far flung places around the world? Thanks to all who joined in the fun and helped affirm a summer reading culture.

Who knows what seeds of learning and inspiration were sown by so many of us reading and talking about books. (I read a number of books over break; a good one I find myself referring to the most is [Creating Innovators: The Making of Young People Who Will Change the World](#) ... largely because of the number of folks on our district staff who've read it and are talking about teaching innovation within our curriculum. I'll bet you've read a good book recently that keeps tickling at the back of your mind!)

A big shout out to our school librarians and the district literacy teachers and support staff who made our first ANNUAL Summer Reading Challenge so successful. Dr. Joyce Stewart and teaching and learning executive staff assistant Dianna Biggs spent hundreds of hours securing sponsors and incentives to encourage student readers so librarians, teachers, principals, parents, and our kids could participate in this antidote for the summer reading slide. The Everett Public Library even included a ["Book Talk"](#) about *Wonder* during one of the Everett city television regular broadcasts as part of their partnership with us.

In the *Stomp Out Bullying* week-by-week calendar, this week is designated as a time to make friends with someone you don't know. What better way to launch that

discussion than to talk about what you are reading – and encourage students to do the same.

Our collective efforts to keep schools safe places to learn, work, and grow are making a difference. *Our summer reading program is a brilliant example of blending a literacy support activity with a text that exemplifies the destructive power of bullying and the healing and growth power of eliminating it.* What a powerful combination and important life lesson.

Thank you for your part in making this first time out such a dramatic success. I hope the rest of your October is wonderful!

Gary



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