

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

A Message from Dr. Terri H. Mozingo, Chief Academic Officer

Welcome to the first edition of the *Pursuit of Excellence Newsletter* for 2018. This edition will keep you updated about the latest developments in a variety of key areas (aligned with the ACPS Strategic Plan 2020), including: (1) trends, focus areas, and high-priority projects involving the Department of Curriculum and Instruction; and (2) special updates from the Office of Talent Development.

We are committed to providing personalized, team-focused, and time-sensitive services to all ACPS elementary, middle, and high school sites. Our department is committed to working in a collaborative manner with schools and families to ensure that every student achieves success. Our goal is to support the mission of ACPS to ensure that all students succeed by providing a cohesive and standards-based curriculum and ensuring that the written, assessed, and taught curricula promote the achievement of a diverse student population. Listed below are the department priorities within our plan and their alignment to other goal areas within the ACPS 2020 Strategic Plan Goals:

This newsletter will include some areas of focus for increasing student achievement, supporting teacher development, promoting effective leadership, and ensuring parent and family engagement.

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Department Priorities	ACPS 2020 Strategic Plan Goals					
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Analyze student achievement data to identify and implement instructional interventions to address identified "gap" areas, including interventions for rigor, engagement, and acceleration	X					
Implement the new Canvas learning management system, including expansion of the ACPS Lesson Exchange program	X					
Develop a division-wide Teaching and Learning Framework to reinforce the division's process for data analysis (planning-teaching-assessing-adjusting)	X					
Support teachers and administrators in implementing successfully the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)	X					
Align professional learning offerings with School Education Plan (SEPs)	X					
Use a project management approach to address problems of practice	X					
Integrate reading and writing in the content areas to support student literacy and overall achievement	X					
Continue to expand the implementation of Professional Learning Communities	X		X			
Continue to conduct "look-fors" and "walk-throughs" to provide non-evaluative coaching and feedback to teacher and administrators	X					
Implement strategies and best practices related to systemic coaching	X		X			

1. **Academic Excellence and Educational Equity:** Every child will be academically successful and prepared for college, work and life.
2. **Family and Community Engagement:** ACPS will partner with families and the community in the education of Alexandria's youth.
3. **An Exemplary Staff:** ACPS will recruit, develop, support, and retain a staff that is best for Alexandria's students.
4. **Facilities and the Learning Environment:** ACPS will provide optimal and equitable learning environments.
5. **Health and Wellness:** ACPS will provide access and support that enables students to be healthy and ready to learn.
6. **Effective and Efficient Operations:** ACPS will be efficient, effective, and transparent in its business operations.

ACPS 2020 Strategic
Plan Goals

Office of Curriculum Design and Instructional Services

6th Edition of Tips for Teachers

We are very pleased to share with you this sixth-edition of our ongoing series "*Tips for Teachers*." As a change of pace, we decided to take some time to reflect upon the previous year--and the new year facing us. What have we learned as a division? What insights and best practices seem most effective in promoting student achievement? To answer these questions, we have briefly summarized ten best practices proven effective in many of our schools for improving student achievement. These best practices are especially critical in addressing the needs of our richly diverse ACPS student population. Please enjoy this latest "Tips" and feel free to share it with your fellow administrators and teachers. All editions are available on the Curriculum website on Canvas (<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/canvas>).

ACPS Elementary Curriculum and Program of Studies Brochures

We are pleased to announce the availability of a new series of public relations brochures for all elementary schools. These brochures are organized according to the curriculum content available to students in each elementary grade level, K-5. We are committed to ensuring that you have a large quantity of each brochure, which can be used for parent orientation sessions, PTA meetings, and in-office publicity. The design of these brochures represents an update on previous versions, with all new brochures aligned with the most recent Virginia Standards of Learning. The brochures are currently translated into Spanish, Arabic, and Amharic. Andrew Watson, Fine Arts Instructional Specialist, delivered approximately 150-200 copies of each brochure to each of your school sites. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Watson at 703.619.8020.



The Secondary Science Fair is Coming Up!

Please be aware that we are *hosting two science fairs in the month of January 2018*: George Washington Middle (January 18th); and the city-wide science fair (Grades 7-12) at T.C. Williams (January 30th). *ACPS students at every secondary school have the opportunity to participate in the science fair at the classroom, school, district, region, state, and international levels. All secondary students enrolled in honors science classes are required to design and complete a science fair project. Additionally, students in comprehensive classes are also provided with the option to participate, but are not required to do so. There are curriculum materials posted in Canvas in the honors science courses to support teachers as they guide the students through this process. If you have questions about any of the science fairs hosted by ACPS schools, please contact the secondary science instructional specialist, Jennifer Lay (jennifer.lay@acps.k12.va.us) at 703.619.8021.*

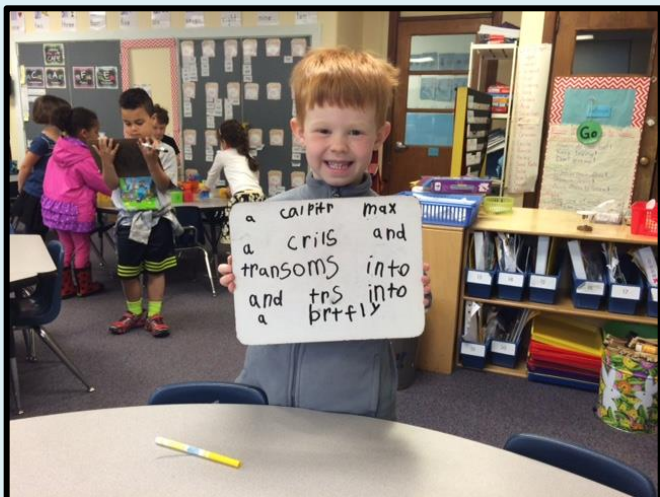
Imagine Math Overview (Data)

We are pleased to have available to you a comprehensive body of data concerning your individual school's usage of *Imagine Math*. This school-specific data includes: (1) data concerning lesson implementation; (2) data regarding time spent on the program; and (3) Lesson Helps (i.e., live tutoring and requested supports within the lessons, accessed by individual learners). For elementary schools, Julia Neuffer (Elementary Math Instructional Specialist) will be reaching out to principals to share the data and inquire into follow-up services she may provide. For secondary schools, Suzanne Futrell (Secondary Math Instructional Specialist) will do the same with secondary principals. Meanwhile, if you have initial questions, please feel free to contact Ms. Neuffer or Ms. Futrell at 703.619.8020.

Talent Development

A Visit from Dr. Deborah Childs-Bowen

As you know January is a great time to take stock, reflect, and regroup prior to the heavy testing period to be sure we are achieving our teaching and learning goals. Our *Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)* provide a great opportunity to *revisit, retool, and tune our practices* that support our desired outcomes for all students. Therefore, from **January 23-25, 2018**, *Dr. Deborah Childs-Bowen* will be providing an opportunity for principals and/or assistant principals to join together as "thought partners" in discussing where you are and where you desire to be with your PLC teams. This one hour session can be a *time to celebrate what is working, to solve problems specific to your needs, and a time to identify strategies and resources* to support your efforts. The link below is a google time sheet to sign up for a session with Dr. Childs-Bowen. Each school should sign up for one time slot by **January 18, 2018**. Please see link: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1DTynF5bWL1QXzC6Lh9mMKNMlqmt-jrKV1EwODfBGvC4/edit?usp=sharing>



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**TRUE LEADERS
DON'T CREATE
FOLLOWERS.
THEY CREATE
MORE LEADERS.**

@andrewjweissman

January 2 Professional Development Report

Within the PLMS system, there is a report in the reporting tab called "*Registration Report Jan 2nd.*" The purpose of this report is to let principals know where their staff attended on January 2, 2018. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Talent Development at 703.619.8028.

Every Student Succeeds

