

# PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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

Welcome to the fourth 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 including: (1) trends, focus areas, and high-priority projects involving the Department of Curriculum and Instruction; (2) updates from the Office of Curriculum Design and Instructional Services; (3) updates from the Office of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID); and (4) updates from the Office of Talent Development.

### Staying the Course!

This latest version of our department newsletter is an affirmation of all the positive achievements that schools and our central office have produced since our academic year began. Our collective commitment to ensuring that every student succeeds—coupled with the numerous examples of innovation and differentiation to serve the needs of our diverse student population—is a powerful reminder of the importance of education in our country today. For this edition, we've chosen the theme of "Staying the Course!" Specifically, we hope that school-based and central office staff members will remember how critically important they are in helping to transform the lives of our ACPS students.

As we exit our benchmark assessment window and move toward SOL testing time, it is also essential that everyone remember to be good to themselves, to take time to restore their energy, to have fun with family and friends, and to realize that in spite of competing priorities and converging deadlines, this is a truly wonderful community of learning. Here are five quick reflections as we move toward spring and summer:

1. The whole learner—the head, the heart, and the body—is critically important.
2. Students must have opportunities to move and investigate the content they are studying in multiple ways and modalities.
3. The great teacher is a great coach and facilitator.
4. We are all in this together as a community of learners.
5. You are deeply appreciated and highly valued.

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 **A Message From Dr. Mozingo**
- 2 **Updates from Curriculum Design Office**
- 2 **Updates from AVID Office**
- 3 **Updates from Talent Development Office**



#### ACPS 2020 Strategic Plan Goals

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.

## Office of Curriculum Design and Instructional Services

### 9th Edition of Tips for Teachers

We are very pleased to share with you the ninth edition of our ongoing series "*Tips for Teachers*." This latest edition explains the importance of revisiting research on effective schools and teaching and learning. Please enjoy this latest "Tips" and feel free to share it with your teachers and fellow administrators. All editions are available on the Curriculum website on Canvas (<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/canvas>).



### Preparing for Read Across America Day

All schools are encouraged to share how they are celebrating *Read Across America* this week! This year's national *Read Across America* theme is "Celebrating a Nation of Diverse Readers." The official *Read Across America* day is Friday, March 2, 2018. The National Education Association (NEA) has a plethora of ideas, free lesson plans, and resources available here: <http://www.readacrossamerica.org/>.

In addition, @ACPSReads and @LibraryACPS have worked with @ACPSk12 to sponsor a division-level Twitter campaign to drum up enthusiasm for literacy. Staff who tweet literacy-related posts with #ACPSReads will be entered in a contest to win free books and classroom supplies. The Twitter campaign runs all week. Principals are encouraged to join in the fun.

Meanwhile, here are suggestions for school-based staffs to participate in this important process: (1) Ask students and staff what their favorite/current book is, and take a #shelfie photo with it; (2) Include #ACPSReads in every literacy-related social media post this week. Make sure to get a diversity of students and their reading materials; (3) Pop in on a school library lesson or English Language Arts lesson and capture a photo; (4) Thank guest readers on Twitter; (5) Read a fun poem each morning to the school; and/or (6) Post a poll on Facebook or Twitter or a list on Facebook.

Please share with us your success stories in helping your students and parents become a part of *Read Across America*! For questions, please contact Suzanne Lank via email ([Suzanne.lank@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:Suzanne.lank@acps.k12.va.us)) or at 703.619.8020.

## Office of AVID

Thank you to all School Leaders for supporting the *2018 AVID Elective Recruitment Campaign* this spring. Please be reminded that all elementary school counselors will support the process by having 5th grade teams nominate 5-7 students for AVID 6 at George Washington Middle School and Francis C. Hammond. Jefferson-Houston will be leading their own on-site AVID 6 recruitment process.

Each elementary school has selected an interview date and will host a panel of staff who will interview the selected 5th grade students. Due to limited seating in the 6th grade elective, we will not be able to select all students, but students can always interview for AVID 7 next year. Please be reminded that we will be looking for eligible 6th-9th grade students for this elective who have a desire to attend college.

We have more than 550 students in the AVID elective and want to reach our annual goal of a 10% increase, which will finally get us to our five year goal of 600 students. For AVID school-wide sites, please continue the great work of aligning professional development with staff-targeted best practice instruction, and for spreading the college-going mission across your school for ALL students.

Support #ThisIsAVID!



## Office of Talent Development

### Mentoring Program at ACPS

Over the past two years, ACPS has been working to enhance the mentoring program across all of our schools. Each year, close to 200 new teachers arrive and are assigned a personal mentor to help guide them through their first school year. This year, in particular, we have focused on clarifying the role of the mentor to be an instructional partner. *The Office of Talent Development* is currently following the Santa Cruz Model Framework around Mentoring.

We have been fortunate to receive a generous grant from the Apple Federal Credit Union Foundation. Mentors should be learning partners, facilitators of learning, and critical friends that can help a new teacher understand their own goals as well as a partner to achieve them. To learn more about the mentoring program, reach out to any of the school-based Mentor Coordinators. Also, please feel free to contact Talent Development Specialist Cory Kapelski via email ([cory.kapelski@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:cory.kapelski@acps.k12.va.us)) or at 703.619.8189.

### Calendar Report Instructions

In response to requests for a comprehensive *professional learning calendar*, the Office of Talent Development has created a dynamic reporting tool that can provide valuable information about previous, current, and upcoming professional development opportunities. To access and use this report, please follow the steps listed below:

- 1) Log into PLMS at <https://acps.truenorthlogic.com>
- 2) Click on the tab at the top of the page for "Reporting"
- 3) Click on the report titled "Roster: Calendar Report"
- 4) From here you will have two fields in which to search
  - a. **Class Date** will allow you to select the date, or range of dates for your search. This information will include information for the entire division.
  - b. **Sites** will allow you to limit the results to only your school site.
- 5) Click "Search" to get your data.

This report can be used for past dates as well as future dates. This report will also provide the most up-to-date information in PLMS. The information will be continuously updated according to what has been entered into the PLMS catalogue and registrations up to the minute. For questions, please contact Cory Kapelski at 703.619.8189.



L  
E  
A  
D  
E  
R  
S  
H  
I  
P

“A leader is one  
who knows the  
way, goes the way,  
and shows the  
way.”

John C. Maxwell

