

# PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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

Welcome to the ninth edition of the *Pursuit of Excellence Newsletter* for 2018. This version will update you on 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) the Curriculum Column; (3) news from the Office of Adult Education; (4) information for educators interested in obtaining their Math Specialist K-8 degree and endorsement; and (5) accomplishments and updates in AVID.

### What Is New With Canvas?

It is with great excitement that we begin this “*Pursuit of Excellence*” with a curriculum update. As you will recall, we engaged in a curriculum audit during the 2014 school year. There were several commendations and recommendations regarding making the curriculum more user-friendly and gaining more teacher input in the curriculum.



We are proud to provide a status update regarding our progress in developing curriculum in Canvas to address these recommendations.

Last year, in collaboration with Technology Services, we adopted Canvas as our ACPS learning management system (LMS). Over the past year, we have begun to build curriculum and instruction content in Canvas, including course guides for all grade-levels and content areas. We are developing instructional guidance and resources for each curriculum unit to support teaching and learning in ACPS.

The work of curriculum development will accelerate this summer, with 140 teachers committing to help develop instructional resources. Teachers will collaborate with instructional specialists to create lesson planning resources, assessments, and other tools to help differentiate the curriculum for all learners.

We appreciate teachers’ willingness to contribute to the curriculum and look forward to working together this summer!

**Thank you for your continued support! Have a wonderful week!**



### 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.

# The Curriculum Column

## 12th Edition of Tips for Teachers

We are very pleased to share with you the twelfth edition of our ongoing series "Tips for Teachers." In this issue titled, "Science in the Summertime: Learning Outdoors!", you will learn some useful strategies to support outside science learning - especially in the summertime. Please enjoy this latest "Tips" and 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>).

### Sequence and Pacing Feedback for Elementary Schools: We Need Your Help!

Your help is needed in providing curriculum sequence and pacing feedback for the 2018-2019 school year. Please share this information with staff members that utilize the ACPS curriculum at your school. If a staff member works with more than one grade level, they may give feedback on multiple grade levels by submitting the form and then clicking the original link to begin the survey on a different grade level. Each subject area has its own survey and feedback will be collected separately.

To access this survey, you will need your ACPS email linked to your ACPS Google account. The survey will be active until 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 13, 2018. Please see below for the links to access each grade level and content area survey. Also, below you will find contact information if you have any questions or concerns regarding any of the content area feedback forms.

In advance, thank you for your support and valuable feedback!

## Adult Educators Attend COABE Conference in Phoenix

For the first time, Teri Barnett, the Director of Adult Education for Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), and six English Language Learner (ELL) and GED teachers were able to attend the Coalition of Adult Basic Education (COABE) in Phoenix, Arizona. COABE is the nation's premiere adult education conference and an excellent source for teachers to network, learn, and expand their instructional practice.

This year, the conference's theme was "Expanding Your Horizons and Soaring to New Heights". From March 25-28, 2018, approximately 2,000 adult education teachers and administrators came together to learn best practices and receive training for the valuable work they do every day to ensure that the 1.5 million adult learners across the U.S. receive the instruction and support they need to complete critical programs. There were twenty-eight session strands, comprised of more than 350 interactive breakout sessions, which provided highly engaging and state-of-the-art professional learning.

ELL teacher Marina McGuigan says, "The COABE Conference gave me the opportunity to interact with colleagues, who teach Adult ELL, from across the country. The conference and the sessions motivated me to use ideas, techniques, and resources that I have not considered and in some cases was not aware of. Attending the conference is an inspiration to become a better, more creative, and professional teacher of ELL."

## GMU Math Specialist Interest Survey

Region IV divisions in Virginia are working together to begin a cohort for educators interested in completing a master's degree program to earn a Math Specialist K-8 degree and endorsement. The program will be through George Mason University and will be extremely flexible. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please fill out the survey by June 15, 2018. Click link below for survey:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe7SZ3A8F5q\\_p4dxBrP\\_Rjz9YGO8WodsbN66epU5QY-0rH26Q/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe7SZ3A8F5q_p4dxBrP_Rjz9YGO8WodsbN66epU5QY-0rH26Q/viewform)

Content Area	Link to Feedback Form	Contact
English Language Arts	<a href="https://goo.gl/forms/4nKoAmzMNkLHBnxw1">https://goo.gl/forms/4nKoAmzMNkLHBnxw1</a> (Links to an external site.)	Suzanne Lank <a href="mailto:suzanne.lank@acps.k12.va.us">suzanne.lank@acps.k12.va.us</a>
Math	<a href="https://goo.gl/forms/rM2IIRb2gfKD2vP42">https://goo.gl/forms/rM2IIRb2gfKD2vP42</a> (Links to an external site.)	Julia Neuffer <a href="mailto:julia.neuffer@acps.k12.va.us">julia.neuffer@acps.k12.va.us</a>
Science	<a href="https://goo.gl/forms/2aMwbwztmyfV45e63">https://goo.gl/forms/2aMwbwztmyfV45e63</a> (Links to an external site.)	Jennifer Lay <a href="mailto:jennifer.lay@acps.k12.va.us">jennifer.lay@acps.k12.va.us</a>
Social Studies	<a href="https://goo.gl/forms/VdtCmPev5VKixFqJ2">https://goo.gl/forms/VdtCmPev5VKixFqJ2</a> (Links to an external site.)	Sarah Whelan <a href="mailto:sarah.whelan@acps.k12.va.us">sarah.whelan@acps.k12.va.us</a>

LEADERSHIP

I never thought in terms of being a

**LEADER**

I thought very simply in terms of helping

**PEOPLE**

-John Hume

## Accomplishments in AVID

### ACPS-GMU Early Identification Partnership: Celebrating Student Success and Updates

Recently, rising 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who applied for the George Mason University - Early Identification Program (GMU-EIP) have been hearing about their acceptances. Many of these students will be the first generation in their families to attend college. From the thirty students who applied, thirteen students from George Washington Middle School, Francis C. Hammond, and Jefferson-Houston have been accepted into the college readiness program and will receive wrap-around support until they graduate in 2023. Through EIP, students are provided with opportunities to meet weekly with college-age mentors during after school sessions, participate in weekend workshops with their parents, and attend a SOL preparation course during a three-week summer academy on the GMU campus.

This year, T.C. Williams will have five seniors being honored for program completion: Ceariah Britt, Veronica Buabeng, Tijea Cook, Janaka Miles, and Jose Castanaza. Three of the five seniors have been awarded significant scholarships and four of the five seniors plan to attend a Virginia college while one senior will join the military. Thank you to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade counselors and teachers who nominated and supported the new online student application process this year.



### AVID Updates and Senior Class of 2018 Success

On May 2, 2018, the AVID 12 elective course at T. C. Williams celebrated the graduation of forty AVID graduates. More than half of the graduates received one or more scholarships, fifteen received an award from the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria, and 100% of the class has been accepted into one or more colleges or universities. As a group, they have amassed more than \$3.2 million in scholarships.

We are proud to share that 80% of the graduates have been enrolled in the AVID elective since 9<sup>th</sup> grade or middle school. Thank you to all our AVID elective teachers, AVID site team members, and the administrators at Francis C. Hammond, George Washington, Jefferson-Houston, and T.C. Williams, who have committed to making AVID Schoolwide happen.

Recruitment for the AVID elective courses concluded for grades 6-12 and final lists are being compiled. Thanks to all elementary school counselors who recommended students and guided the rising AVID 6 interviews during February and March. To date, sixty-five of the eighty students recommended have been enrolled.

Kudos to Cora Kelly and Patrick Henry who also have committed to the AVID Elementary Model by planning and implementing college and career events for students and staff this year.

In other news, more than thirty staff members will attend the AVID Summer Institute for an intense three day training as they train staff across their schools.

Be on the lookout for a number of AVID sponsored sessions for all schools on August 29, 2018.

