

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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

Welcome to the thirteenth 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) transfer task alignment information; (3) welcoming our new Children's Garden Liaison; (4) Region IV GMU Math Specialist Cohort information; and (5) a special PD for EL Paraprofessionals.

Ten Ways to Build Trust Within Your School Community

High levels of trust are necessary for high levels of performance! The research findings of Megan Tschannen-Moran clearly support this assertion. Below you will find some ways to continue to build trust within your school community.

Ten Ways to Build Trust	
1	Make relationships a priority. We are in the people business and relationships are everything.
2	Show personal regard. Invest time in personally knowing others...their hopes, fears, dreams, and what they care deeply about.
3	Make daily deposits. Relational trust is built on a day-to-day basis.
4	Be a committed listener. Offer full presence to others.
5	Keep your promises. When you say you will do something, do it without fail.
6	Use reflective feedback. The language we use is a signal of trust in the relationship.
7	Promote thinking rather than advice giving. Asking reflective questions over telling mediates the thinking of the other person.
8	Articulate expectations and standards. Be clear about what you expect with regard to performance.
9	Trust others. Presume positive intent by believing they "can do!"
10	Celebrate successes. Say "thank you" on a regular basis to individuals as well as the collective group.

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.

Quarterly Benchmark Reminder

For the 2018-2019 school year, division-wide benchmarks will be administered in at the end of Quarter 1 and the end of Quarter 2. Please see the [ACPS Division Test Schedule](#) for the full schedule and a list of which courses have benchmark assessments. Benchmarks are aligned with the Sequence and Pacing charts posted in Canvas for each course. Students will access SchoolNet through their PowerSchool accounts. In SchoolNet, they will begin the benchmark assessment by entering the passcode found on the Curriculum and Instruction Canvas page.



Transfer Task Alignment and SOLs

The following content areas require [Local Alternative Assessments](#) in the form of performance assessments that are aligned to the updated criterion too.

Test Name	Required Performance Assessments	SOL Reporting Categories Covered
Grade 3 History	Unit 1: "Community Action"	Civics (RC 4)
	Unit 4-6: "Museum of Ancient Civilizations"	History (RC 1) Geography (RC 2) Economics (RC 3)
Grade 3 Science	Unit 1: "Simple Machines"	Scientific Investigation (RC 1) Force, Motion, Energy & Matter (RC 2)
	Unit 2: "Soil Investigation"	Scientific Investigation (RC 1) Earth/Space Systems & Cycles (RC 4)
	Unit 4: "Environmental Community Action"	Scientific Investigation (RC 1) Life Processes & Living Systems (RC 3)
Grade 5 Writing	Unit 3: "Can Kids Make a Difference?" on-demand writing task	Research, Plan, Compose, & Revise (RC 1) Edit for Correct Use (RC 2)
US History to 1865	Unit 3: "Era of Exploration DBQ"	Pre-Columbian Times to 1770s (RC 1) Geography (RC 4) Civics & Economics (RC 5)
	Unit 4: "Revolution DBQ"	Revolution & the New Nation (RC 2) Civics & Economics (RC 5)
	Unit 6: "Reform and Civil War DBQ"	Expansion, Reform, & Civil War (RC 3) Civics & Economics (RC 5)
US History 1865 to Present	Unit 2: "Modern America DBQ"	Reconstruction to Modern America (RC 1) Civics & Economics (RC 5)
	Unit 5: "World War II DBQ"	Turmoil & Change (RC 2) Civics & Economics (RC 5)
	Unit 6: "Post-World War II DBQ"	U.S. since World War II (RC 3) Geography (RC 4) Civics & Economics (RC 5)

*Please see attached memo for more information.

Welcome Our New Children's Garden Liaison!

We are excited to announce that ACPS has hired a new Children's Garden Liaison, Ms. Raena Mitchell! Ms. Mitchell comes to ACPS with a wealth of knowledge about gardens, a passion for growing plants, and previous experience as an elementary teacher. She is excited to help schools keep up their gardens and eager to facilitate a rich garden experience for our students.

This week and next week, Ms. Mitchell is visiting schools to learn more about the gardens and programs. Please join us in welcoming Raena Mitchell!

Region IV GMU Math Specialist Cohort

The divisions of Region IV are joining together to offer this opportunity for teachers to earn a Master's Degree in Mathematics Education Leadership from George Mason University. The Region IV Math Consortium is looking for 25 candidates from across Region IV to join. ACPS will qualify for a discounted tuition rate if there is a group of 20 or more.

Participants must agree to take all ten courses to complete this degree and work collaboratively with their peers. Upon completion, candidates will be eligible to apply for the VDOE K-8 Math Specialist add-on endorsement.

Attached to the email you will find more documentation regarding the upcoming cohort. Please see attachments.

For more information, please contact Dr. Courtney Baker via email (cbaker@gmu.edu) or at 703-993-5081.

Special PD Offered for EL Paraprofessionals

On Monday, October 8, 2018, there will be a special workshop for Kindergarten paraprofessionals working with emergent and bilingual EL students. Please see the table below for more information.

Course # 15601

Section # 18217

Course Title Professional Learning for Kindergarten Paraprofessionals Working with Bilingual and Emergent ELs

How can we effectively meet the needs of serving our Kindergarten English Learner students?

Course Description During this workshop, Kindergarten paraprofessionals will identify the best practices and principles of effective instruction for EL students and second language acquisition for early emergent bilinguals. Additionally, paraprofessionals will analyze teaching and learning processes that facilitate oral language development, as well as, student to student interaction and discuss how these can be incorporated into classroom instruction.

Location John Adams Library

Time (s) 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Suchenski via email (michelle.suchenski@acps.k12.va.us) or at 703-619-8039.