

# PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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

Welcome to the nineteenth 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) re-teaching definition and strategies; (3) recapping growth mindset; (4) news from the Office of Talent Development; and (5) math instructional tips for teachers.

Thank you for your continued support! Have a wonderful weekend!

### Re-Teaching Defined

(By Anne Bellert, Southern Cross University, School of Education - 2015)

**Re-Teaching** can be generically described as post-instructional actions or strategies initiated by teachers to support students who did not learn **content, concepts, or procedures** from "first" teaching and learning activities. Optimally, re-teaching is a **second-chance** opportunity for both teachers and students, as teachers can **refine** and **target** their **instruction** and students can try again to learn the content, concept, skill or procedure. "Re-teaching is an important skill that teachers have that makes a huge difference when students are confused or giving up" (Saskatoon Public Schools, 2013).

What is Re-Teaching?

**Effective Re-Teaching** occurs as part of regular instructional routines rather than as a 'stay behind' or homework activity. Effective re-teaching is implemented as **close to the time of initial instruction** as feasible and not as an end-of-week or end-of-unit catch-up activity. To be effective, re-teaching should be rewarding rather than punitive in character (Kutscher, 2008) and should be presented to students as a **positive opportunity to learn** successfully. This will require that the teacher present information **incrementally, in small chunks, with regular checks** for understanding. Further, students should not be selected to participate in re-teaching lessons if it is not feasible that they can achieve, with **scaffolding**, the predetermined instructional goal. In such circumstances, working on **individual program goals or adjusted tasks** would be more appropriate.

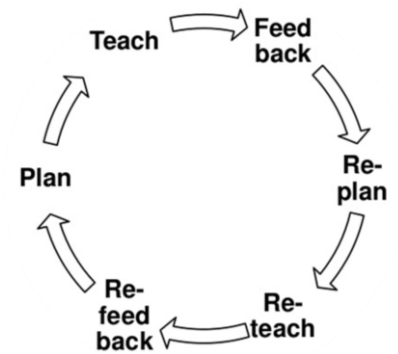
What is Effective Re-Teaching?

## What strategies and approaches are used in effective re-teaching?

**Effective re-teaching** requires a sub-set of strategies and approaches closely aligned with the purpose of the re-teaching lesson and the needs of the learners. **Time efficiency**, for both teachers and students, is implicit in this process as students need to **learn each instructional goal** relatively **quickly** so they can further participate in **planned teaching and learning sequences** alongside other students, and because time constraints for teachers are considerable. Effective re-teaching requires **direct instruction** and **strategy instruction**.

Direct instruction and strategy instruction activities in a re-teaching lesson necessarily start by making **connections** to what the learners **already know**, then utilize instructional techniques, such as: **modeling and demonstration**; use of **manipulatives, graphic organizers**, and effective teacher **questioning**;

"chunking" new information into small components; providing more or **different explanations**; **re-working examples**; textbook revision; and, the use of **visual representations**.



The use of **"think-alouds"** should also be included in re-teaching lessons. This strategy, and others such as **"think, pair, share"** allow for **peer-learning** prospects, with careful teacher monitoring to ensure students are learning correct information from each other. Opportunities for students **self-monitoring**, of both **learning and learning behaviors**, can be effectively incorporated into re-teaching lessons.

An approach for implementing re-teaching often is to schedule re-teaching lessons at the same time as enrichment lessons.

**\*Look for more information on effective re-teaching in Volume 20.**

Re-Teaching	vs.	Re-Engaging
teaching the unit again	→	revisiting student thinking
addressing missing basic skills	→	addressing conceptual understanding
do the same problems over	→	examine the task from different perspectives
more practice: learn procedures	→	critique approaches, make connections
focus mostly on underachievers	→	engage entire class in mathematics
cognitive load usually lower	→	cognitive load usually higher

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.

## Ensuring Success with Marzano's Strategy

According to his research data, good effective teachers:

<b>Set goals.</b>	<b>Provide feedback.</b>
<b>Help students interact with new knowledge.</b>	<b>Provide students with simulations and low-stakes competition.</b>
<b>Engage with students, allowing them to talk about themselves and noticing when they aren't engaged.</b>	<b>Establish and maintain classroom rules.</b>
<b>Maintain relationships with students.</b>	<b>Communicate high expectations.</b>

*\*From Overview of Robert Marzano's Model of Teaching Effectiveness (By The Room 241 Team - October 31, 2012)*

### Components of Re-Teaching

In order for re-teaching to be effective the following must occur:

- ❖ **Assessment**
  - Formal or Informal
- ❖ **Data Analysis**
- ❖ **Plan of Action**
  - Environment
  - Strategies
- ❖ **Post Assessment**

When re-teaching is needed, teachers should:

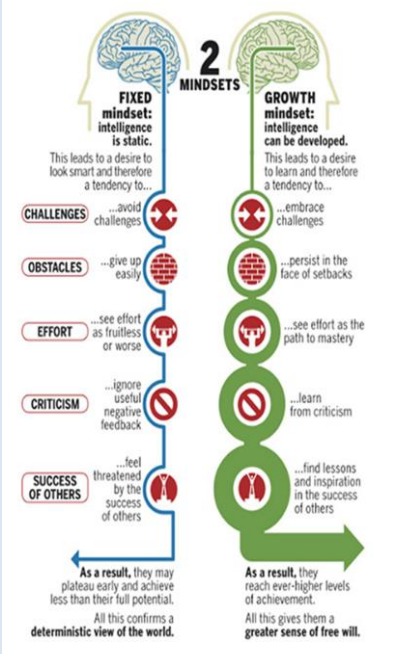
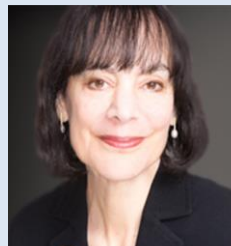
- **Deconstruct** the standard by breaking it down into progressive learning targets.
- **Understand** exactly where the student currently is on that progression.
- **Know** what steps are needed next for that student to continually meet grade-level standards.
- **Clearly communicate** the learning targets in student-friendly terms with the student.
- **Encourage** students to set goals for themselves as they are learning to develop self-efficacy.

## Carol Dweck on Fine-Tuning the *Growth Mindset* (Part II)

*Last week*, we covered Carol Dweck's views on the Growth Mindset. In this issue, we will expand upon an experiment conducted by Dweck's former graduate student, David Yeager, involving 18,000 incoming ninth graders.

- The researchers took a humble posture with the students, saying, *"We're experts on the brain and how students learn, but you're the experts on being a freshman in high school and we'd like your input for a program we're developing for future freshmen."*
- The researchers then taught students how the teenage brain is especially open to learning – it's a time of great plasticity that they can take advantage of to grow their brains by taking on hard tasks in school and sticking to them.
- Students were given testimonials from public figures talking about how a growth mindset was key to their accomplishments.
- Students were then asked to write a letter to a struggling freshman counseling him or her on the growth-mindset principle.
- Finally, students were asked about an area where they'd like to contribute to making the world a better place – their family, community, or society – and how they might develop their intellectual abilities to maximize their impact.

*"We're excited about this," Dweck concludes, "because we know the world of the future is going to be about taking on ill-defined, hard jobs that keep changing. It's going to favor people who relish those challenges and know how to fix them. We are committed to creating a nation of learners."*



*"How Praise Became a Consolation Prize"* by Christine Gross-Loh in *The Atlantic*, December 16, 2016. <http://theatlantic.com/2hFrAJC>

## News From the Office of Talent Development

### 1. Professional Learning Community (PLC)

From November 28-30, 2018, the Office of Talent Development and the Learning Forward team will offer differentiated services to school teams. There will be enhanced professional development at particular schools, face to face sessions for half a day, and school visits. These visits can be used for observations of PLC meetings, discussion of facilitation of PLCs, review of assessments or student work, or coaching and feedback around PLCs. For our next site visit, please select a timeframe and type your school's name in the comment area using this [doodle link](#). Our schedule will be created based upon your availability. *\*Note: November 27 is reserved for Middle School Leadership Teams.*



### 2. Coaching Cohort IV

Coach Academies are designed for designated teacher leaders, specialists, administrators, and/or coaches who work with their peers in an instructional coach setting. Currently, there are 150 ACPS employees trained in our Coaching practices! The next cohort is scheduled for: January 29-30, February 12-13, March 19-20, and June 4-5 (*PLMS Course #17772*).

Please note: there is an eight day commitment for this training. If you have any questions, please contact [Dr. Debra Lane](#) at 703-619-8313.



### 3. Standard Assessment Inventory (SAI)

As a school participating in the ACPS Professional Learning Survey, we are using the Standard Assessment Inventory (SAI) as one source of data to help focus our planning for improving student achievement and professional development. This online survey will take about 15-20 minutes to complete, and responses are completely anonymous. The SAI link (<http://bit.ly/ACPSSAI>) may be accessed from November 11-30, 2018.

#### Learning From Teachers:

*The Talent Development Team would like to go on the road with our Advisory and hear from the teachers. We will reach out to each school to schedule a time to hear from teachers about professional learning requests, ideas they may have that connect with our ACPS Strategic Plan, and any other concerns you may have at this time.*

*Please stay tuned! ☺*

## Instructional Tips for Teachers:

### Reasoning and Sense Making Routines in Math

#### 1. What do reasoning and sense making mean?

Sense making routines, sometimes referred to as number sense routines, are short daily opportunities for students to make sense of mathematical concepts. Reasoning and sense making refer to students' abilities to think about and use mathematics in meaningful ways. In any subject, simply exposing students to topics is not enough. Nor is it enough for students to know only how to perform procedures.

Reasoning is important in all fields - particularly mathematics. Mathematical reasoning involves drawing logical conclusions on the basis of assumptions and definitions. Sense making involves developing an understanding of a situation, context, or concept by connecting it with other knowledge. Reasoning and sense making are closely interrelated and should occur daily in every mathematics classroom. In classrooms that encourage these activities, teachers and students ask and answer such questions as *"What's going on here?"* and *"Why do you think that?"*

Often students struggle because they find mathematics meaningless. Instruction that fails to help them find connections through reasoning and sense making may lead to a seemingly endless cycle of re-teaching.

#### 2. What can you do in your classroom to ensure that reasoning and sense making are paramount?

You can make reasoning and sense making a focus in any mathematics classroom. A crucial step is to determine how reasoning and sense making serve as integral components of the material that you teach. Opportunities for reasoning and sense making habits can be integrated into every classroom by including a daily reasoning and sense making routine as a daily activator.



Which one does not belong?

There are a number of resources that teachers can access to implement these routines. Many of these ideas can be found embedded in the *ACPS Mathematics Curriculum* on Canvas.

<a href="#">101 Questions</a>	<a href="#">Number Talk Images</a>
<a href="#">3-Act Math Tasks</a>	<a href="#">Table Talk Math</a>
<a href="#">Dot Images</a>	<a href="#">Which One Doesn't Belong; WODB</a>
<a href="#">Estimation 180</a>	<a href="#">Would You Rather Math</a>
<a href="#">How Many? Counting Book</a>	

\*This month, try one of the strategies featured with your students. These resources can be used with all learners! For more information, please contact [Julia Neuffer](#) at 703-619-8100

### Your Feedback is Valued!

Do you have any topics of interest that you want featured in the *Pursuit of Excellence*? If so, please email [Sahar Wiltshire](#).

\*Please note: all *Pursuit of Excellence* newsletters are posted on [Canvas](#). Log in with your ACPS Google ID to access these newsletters.