



Curriculum Update
December, 2018
Setting New Standards of Academic Excellence
Volume 2-No. 5

Over the past few weeks, as I have been in the schools and have had conversations with faculty and staff, I have been overwhelmed with emotion to hear of the graciousness and kindness of the APS community to our kids and families. This does not happen everywhere! Thank you for all those behind the scenes things you do for kids. It does not go unnoticed or unappreciated. THANK YOU!

#APSLEARNS

Our Professional Development theme for the year is *Pathways to Student Success*. In addition to our in-service days, book studies, and Twitter Chats, I have set up monthly themes with weekly sub-topics. These are similar to the Reimagine, Redesign, and Reinvent messages from last year. However, for the 2018-2019 school year we are offering PDP's if you write a brief reflection on what you learned and how it can be applied in your classroom or practice. You need to complete 20 write-ups to earn 10 PDP's and you will receive an additional PDP for every 2 entries you complete. [Attached is the document](#) you will use to record your entries to be submitted in June of 2019 for PDPs.

The following are topics on which you can reflect and submit your reflection:

- In our buildings we had a lot of conversations recognizing the diverse feelings of our students as they were heading into the holiday season, beginning with Thanksgiving. While many of us may have really enjoyed our break with friends and family, some of our students may have had a difficult week away from the safety and routines of school. Helping our students to cope when they are struggling takes empathy on our part, but what exactly is empathy? Check out [Jennifer Hogan's blog on empathy](#). As you and your students transition back to school and begin looking ahead to the winter break, look for opportunities where you can truly be mindful, listen with your heart, and empathize with your students (or colleagues!). What skills did you end up employing to help you in those moments?
- This time of year is full of happy moments and holiday cheer; however, as we scurry around to events, buying presents, preparing for festivities, it can also be tiring! Yet, despite how tired we

feel, we still have to bring our energy and enthusiasm when our students walk through the door. Research shows that by greeting your students at the door, you can increase student academic engagement. Check out this article on the latest research on [greeting students with a smile](#). This week's reflection is to greet your students with a smile or a special greeting every time they walk through your classroom or to take your current greetings to the next level. Reflect upon how this changes the culture and behaviors when you bring your extra enthusiasm and warmth as they enter.

- I know each of us is looking forward to the break after we “get through” this week. It is a time to relax, catch up with family and friends, do those things we never have time to do, and recharge. All of these are greatly needed and well deserved. I often use some of this time to sit back and reflect on the first half of the school year. What worked? What didn't? What can I improve on? Are my students getting it? As you sit back and reflect on your first half of the year ask yourself these questions as we prepare for the second half of the school year. Attached is a [great article](#) on the importance of reflection.

NEWS AND NOTEWORTHY



- Over the past month we have had social studies teachers from grades K-8 meet and rewrite the curriculum as a result of the new standards that were released this summer. This was no small undertaking and these will be rolled out to all staff over the next few weeks. The high school is in the process of looking at the changes while also looking at the sequence of courses offered.
- K-12 Math and Science teachers met to look at UbD documents and review identified issues in each building and grade level. It was very beneficial to meet for a full day and connect with teachers from other buildings. This type of PD and collaboration is so important and necessary for the success of our kids. ELA will be meeting in January to do the same.
- Make sure to check out Ashland PD to sign up for sessions for the PD Day on January 18th. They are available on a first come, first served basis. If you have not signed up for a session by December 21, you will be placed in random sessions.
- A survey has been sent out to all PreK-5 teachers to look at our current literacy program. From this survey we build a template of what we value most in a program as we begin our exploratory venture.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING LIBRARY



- [Project-based Learning: Are you focused on the project or the learning?](#)

- [Student-Made E-Books. A Beautiful Way to Demonstrate Learning](#)
- [Student Managed Social Media Accounts](#)
- [Why Executive Function is a Vital Stepping Stone for Kids' Ability to Learn](#)
- [Students Sitting Around Too Much: Try Chat Stations](#)
- [What Straight-A Students Get Wrong](#)
- [How Restorative Justice Helps Students Learn](#)
- [Learning First Articles](#)
- [50 Children's Books to Teach SEL Skills](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



- Ashland has teamed up with The Education Cooperative (TEC) to offer three web-based, self-paced courses available for you to access at your convenience. Each course offers 15 PDP's for which a certificate will be generated for those participants who score 80% or better on the course assessments. Upon completion of the course you will receive a certificate to use as proof that you satisfied the course requirements. Completion of these courses will satisfy the recertification requirements of 15 hours of ELL and 15 hours of SPED-related professional development. [Click the link](#) for more information on the classes.
- [PDI-Flex Courses on Classroom Management only \\$99](#)
- [Free Online Courses in Behavioral Health](#)
- [Free Online FlipGrid Course](#)

CURRENTLY READING



FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Hope and Wade King in their book write, “We want you to create not just lessons, but learning experiences and memorable moments for your students, which is how we define engagement.” I loved this quote when I was reading the book. It made me think about walking the halls of our schools and visiting classrooms and seeing a lot of this in action. Making the curriculum come alive to our kids creates those memorable experiences and truly enhances learning.

