



Curriculum Update
November, 2018
Setting New Standards of Academic Excellence
Volume 2-No. 4

#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:

- The concept of flexible learning environments is nothing new to education. We have seen that in schools for years and elementary classrooms are great at creating these spaces. We have also spoken in recent years about increasing student agency. If we are giving students the opportunity for choice in what and how they learn, why can't we also give them choice in the environment they learn in? Watch this video on [flexible learning environments](#) and ask yourself the following questions: How do you learn best? Where at home do you do your work? Can you read and learn material sitting at the kitchen table, on the couch, on the beach? Or does all learning need to occur in desks and in rows? All of these are interesting to ponder.
- Marc Brackett, the Director for the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, says "We attribute feelings to children. Often times we don't ask a child how they are feeling." When was the last time you asked a student how they were feeling? What was the impact and result of asking them?
- There are 5 core competencies according to CASEL, they are:

Self-awareness: The ability to accurately recognize one’s emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one’s strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

Self-management: The ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

Social awareness: The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

Relationship skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

Responsible decision making: The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the wellbeing of self and others.

For this week, we will focus on self awareness. Read the [attached article](#), focus in on the section entitled, “When to Teach Self Awareness” and reflect on the following question: “Why is it important for us as educators to have a strong understanding of our own self awareness before we can teach this skill to our students?”

NEWS AND NOTEWORTHY



- In November and December teachers from each grade level in Social Studies, Math, English, and Science will get together for the day to look at UbD documents, work on the action plans for the self studies that were done in previous years, and work on building based curriculum initiatives. This is an awesome opportunity for K-12 teachers to all get together by discipline to work together and address identified issues. I am excited to see where this venture takes us.
- Our January PD Day will have two parts. In the morning teachers will pick from a menu of 50 minute sessions to attend. The afternoon will be building based PD. Over the next few weeks I will send out a list of workshops for teachers to pick from through Ashland PD.

- Three years ago the District did a self study of our ELA program. One of the action items was to look at our Prek-5 programming. The past two years we have made a concerted effort to use Journeys to fidelity. This program is 10 years old at this time. In December a team of teachers will begin the process of looking at and making a recommendation for a program in upcoming years.
- After the last PBIS meeting it was brought to my attention that there was some confusion and misinformation about the District's commitment to PBIS now that we have begun using Responsive Classroom. The trainer from RC this summer made it clear that the RC model is not to recognize and single out individual students publicly, but there are ways that students can still be recognized in a more private way that work with both the RC and PBIS approaches. Attached is an article that speaks to how the two can be [effectively blended](#). What we need to do is begin to look for ways to blend PBIS and RC in Ashland. To be clear, we are not doing away with PBIS. We have seen too many positive results since we implemented it years ago. Teachers have done a lot of work to set it up across the district and kids have become used to it; in short it has worked great. Over the next few weeks I will meet with members from the PBIS team to discuss ways to blend PBIS and RC.
- This month we finished a 7 week book study on *The Behavior Code*. Teachers earned 10 PDP's for this. I will offer another book study for staff in February for 10 PDPs. More information to come in January.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING LIBRARY



[A Grading Strategy That Puts the Focus on Learning From Mistakes](#)

[Writing for an Audience Beyond the Teacher: 10 Reasons to Send Student Work Out Into the World](#)

[Exhausted Educator, I See You](#)

[Podcasting in the classroom: A Byte-sized option](#)

[Grand Rapids Public Museum School](#)

[#relationshipsmatter](#)

[How I'm Going Gradeless in a Traditional Grades School](#)

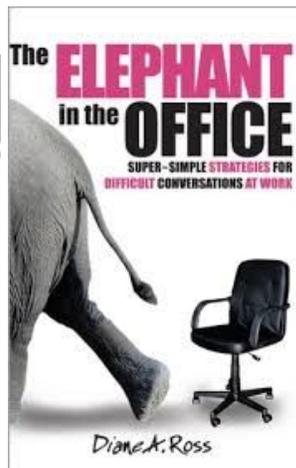
[Why School Counselors Matter](#)

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.
- **DESE Instruction Support Networks** DESE is providing a wide range of support networks for educators on various topics that are free. Please review these networks and discuss with your building principals if you are interested in attending any of them. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/networks.pdf>
- Last year I offered to cover the cost if any teacher was interested in becoming a level 1 Google Certified Teacher. I will be doing the same thing this year. All you have to do is take the test and pass it and I will cover the cost of the class. Below is a link to the web page. https://teachercenter.withgoogle.com/certification_level1

CURRENTLY READING



Still trying to make a dent in these. Not going so great this month.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



School Culture Matters

"Ask yourself what others are saying when they leave your classroom/school. Hopefully that they can't wait to come back."

- Jimmy Casas @casas_jimmy



www.bamradionetwork.com/quotED

People many times under estimate and under value the importance of building culture and relationship within a classroom. If you ask students which classes they loved and learned the most in, many times it comes back to a teacher that created a positive culture in the class and built relationships with students.

