



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

This past weekend I got to take my son to a football game at the University of Alabama. Seeing a big time football game has always been on his bucket list and getting to see the number 1 team in the nation and an SEC game was a win all around.

What I realized during the weekend was the game was so much more than just a game or three days away. All of us, regardless of what we do in Ashland, spend so much time at work and invested in making sure that the students in our schools have what they need to be successful that at times we don't have enough time for our own children. I am 100% guilty of this. The two of us got to spend time together - real time. It was great to connect, laugh, talk, see the awe of flying, travel, the stadium, the campus, the south through his eyes. We did not talk about homework, cleaning his room, or chores during the weekend. We just lived in the moment and enjoyed the time together. Monday, when he got up and went to school he said, "thanks for a great weekend, love you Dad." That was worth all of it.

We are a month into the school year, summer is fading into a distant memory, and we are fully back into the swing of things. Thank you for what you do for our children here in Ashland, all of us appreciate it. But take the time every once in awhile to spend that quality time with family and friends. This weekend reminded me of how important that is.

#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 will be similar to the Reimagine, Redesign, and Reinvent messages from last year. However, for the 2018-2019 school year we will offer PDPs 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.

- [Rita Pierson](#) did a TedTalk a few years ago called “Every Kid Needs a Champion”. During this talk she speaks to the importance of teachers connecting with students and making every student feel valued and important. What will you do to make certain that each child in your class knows that they matter and that you care for them?
- The attached video shows [penguins working together](#) to stay warm. They want to make sure that everyone survives the winter and no one is left behind. We are two weeks into the school year, what have you done in your classrooms to make certain that you have created a sense of community? Do all your students know that they will not be left behind? How have do you as a teacher know that this message was delivered and clearly received by students?
- Brent Coley hosts a regular podcast called Teaching Tales. [Episode 51](#) is entitled “What Students Remember”. As you listen to the podcast think about a positive impact you have had on a student. What happened? How did the student feel? Why was it important to establish that relationship?
- Denver teacher Kyle Schwartz asked her students a few years ago, “[I wish my teacher knew...](#)” This simple question has gained a lot of traction in the last few years and has served as a prompt in classrooms across the nation to start the school year. Watch this short video and reflect on how practices and relationships in your classroom have changed as a result of knowing a student’s story.

NEWS AND NOTEWORTHY



- The Mindess School will begin using iReady this year. This is a progress monitoring program that will provide teachers with instant feedback on student progress and areas of concern. Students are in the process of finishing up their first assessment after which teachers will begin to develop an intervention plan for students.
- Our curriculum documents are now posted K-12 for all subject areas on the website. This month I also met with our ELA, Math, and Science vertical teams. We will spend the year putting in place many of the recommendations of the self study, making certain that our UbD documents are living and breathing documents in the school, and analyzing common assessments across grade levels.
- DESE has announced the launch of a new page on their website: doe.mass.edu/candi/impd. The *IMPD* in the URL is for *Instructional Materials* and *Professional Development*, two crucial and complementary levers for strengthening curriculum. Right now the page offers two types of resources—quick reference guides and curriculum heat maps—focused mainly on ELA/literacy, math, and STE.
- It has been great to be in the Warren and the Mindess schools and see Responsive Classroom in action. Teachers and students have embraced it. I have had the opportunity to attend several

morning meetings throughout the month and have loved watching the students reactions and the connections they are making. We will continue training staff over the next two years until everyone has been trained. The feedback to date has been beyond words.

- All mandated training is done online this year. Each building principal has shared specific details with you. Attached is the link to the [training](#). This should have been completed on September 21. If you still have not completed it take a few minutes to go through the training and submit the form.
- Check out www.awesome-table.com. It is a cool website to “jazz up” spreadsheets. Some may argue that spreadsheets in and of themselves need zero jazzing up, but it is still worth a quick look.
- DESE has an updated [Standards Navigator](#) version of the now-retired Curriculum Frameworks Search. The Navigator presents the state's academic and vocational-technical standards in a dynamic, searchable format with links from specific standards to relevant resources such as student work samples, quick reference guides, and definitions of terms.
- [Family Guides to the Standards](#) are designed to facilitate content-rich communication and collaboration between schools and students' families. Available in English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, and Chinese (simplified characters), the guides articulate grade-level expectations for ELA/literacy, math, and STE (HSS coming in 2019) in accessible, jargon-free terms. They also include conversation starters for home and school. Attached here for your use are some simple messages and images promoting the tools in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING LIBRARY



[5 Things You Can to to Bring Computer Science to All Your Students](#)

[10 Tips for Teachers Using the Station Rotation Model](#)

[Emotional Regulation for Kids With ADHD](#)

[Build the Foundation, Not the Ceiling](#)

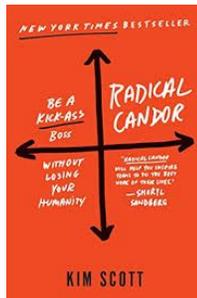
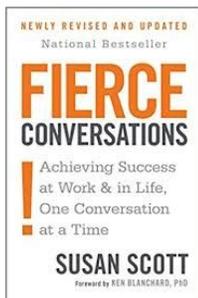
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



- DESE is offering a series of PD opportunities and PLCs in various disciplines. They all look really good. Here is a [link](#) to the information.
- [Teachers 21](#) is offering SEI endorsement courses at various locations throughout the State.

- Attached is a copy of our [PD Plan](#) for the year. As we approach each day and event I will send out additional information.
- [Peer Observation and Collaborative Coaching course](#)- WSU for Effective Instruction.
- [PDI Courses](#). Use “newsd” code for additional 10% off.
- We are starting a book study the week of October 8. We will be reading Jess Minahan’s book *The Behavior Code*. You will receive either 10 or 15 PDPs based on whether or not you decide to complete the final assignment. These can be used towards your SPED requirements for recertification.

CURRENTLY READING



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

