



Curriculum Update
Summer, 2018
Setting New Standards of Academic Excellence
Volume 2-No. 1

A few weeks ago I visited 6 colleges in 3 days with my son. It's a crazy time in our lives as those parents who have already done this know all too well. Regardless of the schools we visited, the tours that we took, or the people we talked to, 3 "buzz words" were recurring themes everywhere: Collaborative, Innovative, and Critical Thinker. As I thought back to my visits of Ashland's schools and classrooms last year, I was happy to know that these are things that I saw on a regular basis. Although these "buzzwords" may change over the next few years, I left these tours knowing that we are ahead of the curve in preparing students to be college and career ready upon graduation. As we start the 2018-2019 school year, I wanted to say thank you for what YOU do for our kids. Your hard work and dedication has them prepared for that next step regardless of what it may be.

#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.

NEWS AND NOTEWORTHY



- During the 2016-2017 school year we completed self studies in both [ELA](#) and [Health and Wellness](#). Attached are links to our action plans for implementing the recommendations of the committee. I am very proud of the work we have been able to accomplish in just one year. I am also confident that we will continue to make great gains in the upcoming years.

- Thank you again to all those that helped out with our Math and Science self-studies. These have been presented to the School Committee and an action plan has been created to help resolve the recommendations by teachers. Both of these are posted on the website for you to look at. We will begin implementing these in the fall.
- DESE has been in the process of rewriting the [Social Studies Curriculum Framework](#) over the last few years. [The Board](#) voted earlier in the summer to adopt the changes. They are giving schools until June of 2020 to adopt the changes. These will need to be in place for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. We will begin setting up an implementation plan in October of this year.
- 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.
- 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.
- I am excited for all the summer work projects teachers have submitted over the last few weeks. We had 41 teachers work on 14 projects throughout the summer. The work that was done will help students as we come back to school in August.
- Title 1 Camp was a huge success. This year we had over 45 students attend camp to strengthen their Math and ELA skills. This is a great resource for our students and families. Thank you to all the teachers that worked to make this possible.
- The week of August 13th we had 30 K-5 teachers participate in Responsive Classroom training. This is the premier SEL program for elementary students. We are committed to having every teacher trained over the next three years.
- We have just launched a [mentoring website](#) for our new teachers. If you feel it is missing something, just let me know.
- Over the summer I made a few changes and updates to the [Curriculum Website](#). I hope you find the new information useful.
- The Burlington Science Center has but their entire [K-5 curriculum online](#). It is a great, and free, resource for teachers.
- The Commissioner has published a back to school [web page](#) for schools, teachers, and parents. Lots of useful information for all.
- All mandated training will be done online this year. Each building principal will share specific details with you. Attached is the link to the [training](#).
- Below are some good resources as you start off the school year:

5 Questions to Ask Your Students to Start the School Year by George Couros

1. What are the qualities you look for in a teacher?
2. What are you passionate about?
3. What is one BIG question you have for this year?

4. What are your strengths and how can we utilize them?
5. What does success at the end of the year look like to you?

6 Questions to Consider as You Start the School Year from @thomascmurray

1. What will you do on day 1 that has your kids running back on day 2?
2. If students saw the classroom design before the first day of school, what type of learning experiences would they expect?
3. How will you make learning personal and authentic for your students?
4. How will you take ownership of your own learning?
5. How will you help build a dynamic, kid-centered school culture?
6. How will you intentionally build relationships with and between your students?

[First Days of School: It's Always Awkward in the Beginning:](#)

[Back-to-School Tips: Setting a Positive Tone from Day One](#)

[Recalibrate your school's opening during #1st3days](#)

[Best First Week of School Ever](#)

[50+ back to school ideas, activities, and icebreakers](#)

[Build Student Trust by Sharing Stories on the First Day](#)

[Icebreakers that Rock](#)

[#1st3Days](#)

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING LIBRARY



Links to useful articles coming in the next edition.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

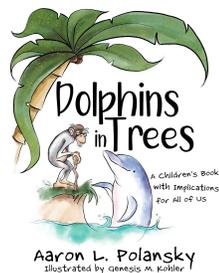
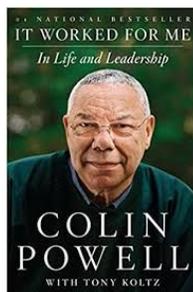
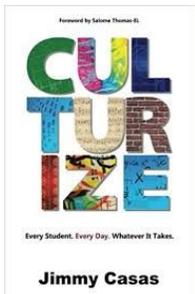


- DESE is offering a series of PD opportunities and PLCs in various disciplines. They all look really good. Here is a [link](#) to the information.
- [Teachers 21](#) is offering SEI endorsement courses at various locations throughout the State.
- DESE has established a Mathematics District Leaders Network. This network will support PreK-12 math district leaders and coordinators to come together to engage in discussions relevant to math and their role as leaders within their districts. This network will provide participants an opportunity to share resources and strategies for implementing the 2017 math standards, discuss math instructional materials, and connect with leaders from across the

Commonwealth. Participants will come away with shared and deeper understanding on a variety of topics, including but not limited to: instructional strategies for special populations (e.g. students with special needs, English learners, etc.), progressions of concepts within the standards, assessment and its impact on instruction. There will be both in-person meetings and online opportunities to network throughout the year. [Click on the link](#) to register if you are interested. The network is now full, but they are taking names to start another group.

- Attached is a copy of our [PD Plan](#) for the year. As we approach each day and event I will send out additional information.
- For teachers who need to be SEI endorsed attached is a [link](#) to some opportunities available over the next few weeks. As a reminder, every needs to be have the SEI endorsement for their next round of certification. If you are unclear as to what you need to do to be endorsed here is a [FAQ](#) from DESE.
- [Peer Observation and Collaborative Coaching course](#)- WSU for Effective Instruction.
- [PDI Courses](#). Use “newsd” code for additional 10% off.

CURRENTLY READING



FOOD FOR THOUGHT



BACK TO SCHOOL WISDOM:
Nº 01
“YOU’RE OFF TO GREAT PLACES.
TODAY IS YOUR DAY!
YOUR MOUNTAIN IS WAITING,
SO GET ON YOUR WAY!”
DR. SEUSS

QuotesIdeas.com

Harry Wong writes about the 7 things kids want to know on the first day of school, they are: Am I in the right room? Where am I supposed to sit? What are the rules in this classroom? What will I be doing this year? How will I be graded? Who is the teacher as a person? Will you treat me as a human being? The first 5 are easy to do. Spend some time on the last 2, build those relationships, talk to kids, build that sense of community. We cannot get these first few days back and doing these small things are critical to setting the stage for a great school year.

