

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

A Message from Dr. Terri Mozingo
Chief Academic Officer

Welcome to our "Closing of Schools" edition of the *Pursuit of Excellence* Newsletter! We are very excited to close out an excellent year and start preparing for the fall! As your year wraps up, please remember to take time to thank all the people who contributed to the successes we've had, and who will continue to support and encourage our students moving forward into the next school year. I hope that you enjoy this summer spending time with family and basking in your well-deserved time off!



This edition of *Pursuit of Excellence* highlights some of the achievements within the Department of Curriculum and Instruction this year, as well as details important information regarding our summer enrichment offerings. It includes excerpts from the offices of Adult Education, AVID, Career & Technical Education, Curriculum Design & Instructional Services, English Language Learner Services, Early Childhood, Talent Development, Talented & Gifted, Title I, and Specialized Instruction.

Great news! On August 31st, elementary teachers will have a chance to learn about culturally relevant texts and then immediately visit a book fair where they can select approximately \$250 worth of culturally relevant books take back to add to their classroom libraries. Session times will be posted on PLMS soon!

I hope that you enjoy this issue, and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us at (703) 619-8020.

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"Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel."-Socrates

ACPS 2020 Strategic Plan

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.



Department Priorities	ACPS 2020 Strategic Plan Goals					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Analyze and use data to improve student achievement	X					
Ensure alignment between the written, assessed, and taught curricula	X					
Coach and model effective lessons to attain student success	X		X			
Promote exemplary instructional practices through content academies and customized professional development	X		X			
Facilitate fidelity of the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)	X					
Provide instructional resources to ensure effective curriculum implementation	X		X			
Employ cross-functional teaming to increase student achievement	X					
Monitor progress toward key performance indicators	X					

Adult Education

It has been an excellent school year for the Alexandria Adult Learning Center (ALC). Thirty-seven students were able to achieve their GED using ALC programs, four students came back to school to finish their Adult High School Diploma, and many more have achieved English proficiency in order to pursue their life goals. In addition, the ALC has worked with community partners to foster workforce development opportunities in medical, pharmaceutical, and technical fields. The ALC has also begun working with Northern Virginia Community College's NOVA Access program, to help provide GED graduates with opportunities for higher education.

AVID

Final AVID Secondary enrollment is wrapping up to ensure all students are properly scheduled for the fall course in grades 6-12. Final acceptance and exit letters will be mailed during the week of June 20th. If new families wish to apply for the AVID elective during the summer months, they should inquire at the school level by contacting the AVID site coordinator or Director of Counseling in order to receive an application. AVID elective teachers should also finalize summer school physical education enrollment (8th-10th) and prepare final student portfolios (8th-11th) and final class lists by grade level. These class lists should be shared with their registrars, Directors of Counseling, and the AVID District Director by June 30th.



Curriculum Design & Instructional Services

This office is very busy preparing for multiple summer offerings, programs, and services. These include everything from completing purchase orders to ensuring that all schools are ready to start in August to finalizing summer content academies and student enrichment programs.

This summer, students in grades 3-8 will have multiple opportunities for summer enrichment experiences. At the elementary level, they will have access to such offerings as an integrated literacy, social studies, and science program as well as an exciting new humanities approach, entitled "Where in the World Are We?" The humanities program will include extension and enrichment experiences in the fine arts, physical education, and world languages. Both programs offer rich and experience-based classroom programs complemented by extension and field experiences at such venues as the Museum of Natural History to the Potomac watershed. Similarly, middle school students will be able to choose among water quality testing and biome exploration in science and a challenging debate-focused literacy and social studies program dealing with famous court cases from throughout world history.

Summer content academies will have something for everyone in terms of professional development. Offerings are available for literacy, math, science, and social studies instructors as well as new options this year for teachers in the fine arts, physical education, and world language. All programs will include a focus on differentiation, including co-facilitation by curriculum specialists working with English Learner and Specialized Instruction specialists.

Career & Technical Education

Many CTE students have been recognized for outstanding performance this year. The Optimist Club recognized outstanding seniors from T.C. Williams in Automotive Technology, Culinary Arts, Early Childhood Education, and Surgical Technology I. Seven Surgical Technology II students were recognized for program completion at a ceremony at Inova Alexandria Hospital on June 17. These students will take the Tech in Surgery certification to become certified and ready to be hired in operating rooms of local hospitals. T. C. Williams High School was recognized as a Blue Ribbon School from w!se: Working in Support of Education for the scores on the industry certification test for Economics and Personal Finance. The Automotive program passed its mid-program review to keep accreditation from NATEF- National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation. The Automotive students also took the ASE-Automotive Service Excellence exam for the first time. CTE programs continue to excel and win recognition.



English Language Learner Services

ACCESS for ELLs scores for the 2016 administration are currently available to schools. ACCESS for ELLs provides data on students' English language development in the four language domains (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and in five different content areas: Social and Instructional language, language of Language Arts, language of Mathematics, language of Science, and language of Social Studies. Schools are encouraged to use their ACCESS for ELs data to inform instructional and scheduling decisions for the 2016-17 school year.

As we gear up for the next school year, begin thinking about the role you would like the EL Instructional Specialists to play in supporting your staff and students.

Examples:

- Assist with scheduling of services
- Observe classrooms and provide constructive feedback
- Model instructional strategies and scaffolding
- Foster collaboration between co-teaching pairs
- Provide feedback on lesson plans and instructional materials
- Offer professional learning opportunities to a whole staff, teams, or individuals
- Co-plan, co-teach and co-assess with teachers
- Help determine language objectives that match a given content area
- Support implementation of cooperative learning structures
- Problem-solve for specific student needs
- Brainstorm solutions for your specific needs

Talent Development

Summer Content Academies are filling up fast! Don't miss out on your chance to participate in these exciting learning opportunities. This year, there is a wide range of content academies that span the four core content areas as well as TAG, AVID, fine arts, P.E. & health, and mental health.

Each content academy will feature a classroom teacher as a co-presenter and will include differentiation ideas for EL and SPED learners. Teachers can sign up on [PLMS](#) or using the [ACPS Professional Learning Website](#). Be sure to register or put your name on a waitlist for any courses you are interested in.



Talented & Gifted (TAG)

TAG is busy preparing for the Young Scholars Summer enrichment program. Now in its 3rd year, students from Patrick Henry, Polk, Mount Vernon Community School, and Cora Kelly are looking forward to a fun-filled summer. Polk and Cora Kelly are the sites for summer 2016. Field trips include Burke Lake, Kenilworth Gardens, Holmes Run, and a new trip along the Potomac led by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Follow us on Twitter @YSAlexandria

Title 1

The Title I Department hosted a family event with a focus on Summer Learning and Engagement! Held at George Washington Middle School on June 14th, students and their families participated in sessions of their choice to support literacy, math or science concepts. To assist with their summer learning endeavors, families chose from a wide selection of books, science kits, and math manipulatives to take home for summer engagement!

Teachers modeled strategies and guided lessons for parents that they were able to implement with their children on the spot! Parents remarked that teacher presentations gave them opportunities for “real-life learning” and application. In order to solicit immediate feedback, families were asked to complete a survey on the quality of the event. They were especially appreciative of strategies and activities that could be applied to anything read by students. Parents expressed that they felt empowered and capable of supporting their children’s growth in reading, using what they learned. In math sessions, weekly advertisements were used to create budgets, compare discounts, estimate costs and calculate totals. In science sessions, students investigated and experimented with materials and science kits. We look forward to planning our annual Title I Back-to-School Night Event in the fall!

Specialized Instruction

Preparations are well underway for the 2016 Extended School Year (ESY) Program. The theme of the ESY Program is “Good Friends & Great Citizens” and will emphasize the importance of academic and social development as members of a community. As in the past, the primary goal of ESY is to provide special education services for those students who require them based on decisions by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. This year, students will have the opportunity to work on their IEP goals while participating in a schedule that will provide the opportunity to focus on reading, writing, math, communication, technology, social studies, physical education, and/or art. We are very much looking forward to this excellent summer opportunity!



Teacher Talks Summary

This year Dr. Mazingo conducted a series of Teacher Talk discussions. From those sessions, several recurring themes that showed up included: customized professional development, “One-stop Shop” for lesson plan resources, and easier access to curriculum materials.

We have been able to resolve some of the concerns brought up during these talks. Some of our “quick wins” are:

- **Cleaning Broken Links in Curriculum**
- **“Idea Box” to submit comments to C&I**
- **Curriculum Review Process**
- **Collaborative Teacher/Division Talent Development**
- **Lesson SWAP (Sharing Wisdom Among Professionals)**