

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

A Message from Dr. Terri H. Mazingo, Chief Academic Officer

Welcome to the twentieth edition of the *Pursuit of Excellence Newsletter* for 2018. This version will update you on the latest developments in a variety of key areas including: (1) trends, focus areas, and high-priority projects involving the Department of Curriculum and Instruction; (2) recapping re-teaching defined; (3) EL-related instructional tips for teachers; (4) focusing on the positive; and (5) information regarding Innovation Day.

Thank you for your continued support! Have a wonderful weekend!

Re-Teaching Defined

In the last issue, we covered the definitions of **re-teaching** and **effective re-teaching** as well as gave a general overview. In this issue, we will cover more on re-teaching as well as discover **strategies for effectiveness**.

Frye (2010) offers indications of a way forward from this dilemma by suggesting that **teachers work with students** to help them see re-teaching as simply another opportunity to **learn the material**, that it is **not always the same students who participate in re-teaching**, and that by closely **aligning re-teaching with learning goals** students can become motivated to achieve these goals and feel successful. When re-teaching is presented to students as an opportunity to **learn more rather than a consequence of failure**, it has potential to build, rather than undermine students' academic self-concept and potentially interrupt cycles of learned helplessness and poor self-efficacy that can negatively impact on students with learning difficulties (Diener and Dweck, 1978; Wong, 1996).

Effective re-teaching involves **re-presenting information from an initial lesson using different strategies** and approaches, ones that are responsive to both the learning needs of the student and the demands of teaching the pre-specified content. Effective re-teaching lessons contain three distinguishable phases: **being instruction featuring direct instruction and strategy instruction; deliberate and monitored practice; and re-assessment that provides**

opportunity for students to demonstrate achievement and teachers to evaluate their impact. Within these three phases, metacognitive strategies should be incorporated to support students' understanding about how they effectively **think and learn**, building **academic self-confidence**.

The potential impact of effective re-teaching for students with learning difficulties cannot be over-stated as it provides them with **a first, and sometimes last, opportunity to catch up and then successfully continue with learning**, potentially preventing failure, promoting success and providing motivation for further learning. Conversely, the missed opportunities of **poorly delivered or not delivered re-teaching** may well have the opposite effects. More broadly, effective re-teaching also has potential as a **focus for collaborative professional learning and school improvement initiatives**.

A more prominent and clearly expressed position for re-teaching as a **sustainable, accessible, and relatively low-cost pedagogical approach** is warranted. To sum this all up, effective re-teaching is a scarce yet potentially **powerful teaching resource**, which should be thoughtfully and strategically implemented.

(By Anne Bellert, Southern Cross University, School of Education - 2015)

Re-Teaching Guidelines

Re-teaching is an essential part of instruction that promotes student learning and motivation. Teachers should continually monitor the progress of students to make sure the concepts and skills are mastered.

When re-teaching is needed, teachers should:

1	Deconstruct the standard by breaking it down into progressive learning targets.
2	Understand exactly where the student currently is on that progression.
3	Know what steps are needed next for that student to continue toward meeting the grade-level standards.
4	Clearly communicate the learning targets in student-friendly terms with the student.
5	Encourage the student to set goals for themselves as they are learning to develop self-efficacy.

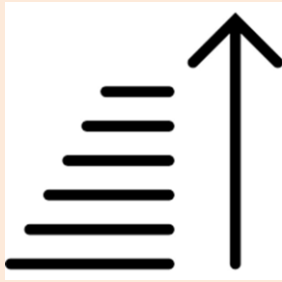
ACPS 2020
Strategic
Plan Goals

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.

Instructional Tips for Teachers: Best Practices for Emergent English Learner (EL) Students

Implement the [ACPS EL Best Practices](#) in all content areas.

Maintain **high expectations** with high levels of support.



Provide a positive, **low-anxiety environment** in which students feel comfortable taking risks (lower students' affective filter).



Use effective strategies such as **Total Physical Response (TPR)**. **Gestures, visuals, and realia** are essential for emergent ELs to gain understanding of the content.



Speak **clearly and enunciate**. Pay attention to your rate of speech. Provide opportunities for students to use the target language through **repetition**. T: "Say it with me!"



Provide a **linguistic buddy** (student who speaks the same language) to help an emergent EL understand important directions and concepts.



Provide ample time for students to **interact** with their peers and **produce/practice** language through **cooperative learning** structures.

Strategically structure groups so there are built in **language models** for emergent EL students.



Integrate **content and language** instruction in a **general education setting**. Provide access to grade level curriculum by **scaffolding** activities based on students' proficiency levels.



Refer to the [WIDA Can-Do Descriptors](#) for examples of what emergent ELs and students at varying proficiency levels have enough language to be able to do.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
LISTENING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow modeled, one-step directions for a task. Identify pictures or objects. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels. Identify pictures or objects with labels.
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Respect a student's **Silent Period** and do not force students to speak before they are ready. Emergent ELs are still developing their receptive language, even if they are not ready to produce language yet.



Allow more **wait time** for students to think and respond to questions. Students need time to translate the question into their native language and then translate their response back into English.



Allow students to **respond nonverbally** by pointing, drawing, matching, or using previously taught TPR. When a student is ready, ask **yes/no** questions and then **either/or** questions.

Examples:

- Does a plant have a stem?
- Does a plant have leaves or hands?

Provide students with oral and written **sentence frames**.



For more information, please contact Jaime Knight via email (jaime.knight@acps.k12.va.us) or at 703-619-8039.

Focusing on the Positive

Make an effort to focus on student's positive behaviors. It's normal to pay attention to negative behavior in the classroom, and only to comment on those behaviors when students are misbehaving. However, you will get more cooperation if you give equal (or more) attention to the good behaviors. Acknowledging students who have trouble managing their actions in the classroom may be especially impactful for these students.

Alternative: You have probably heard of "catch them being good." Below are some positive behaviors to look for to reward positive behaviors.

Here are some behaviors to look for:

coming into the classroom quickly and quietly	listening well in assembly
looking at the teacher quickly and quietly when asked to listen	providing a good idea or suggestion in a discussion
following instruction the first time they are asked	working well with a group of classmates
helping a classmate	listening to another's point of view
being polite	telling the teacher of a problem in the playground rather than trying to sort it out by fighting
tidying and cleaning up	letting a teacher know if someone is bullying another pupil
working hard on a piece of work	carrying out a classroom job willingly and doing it well
putting their hand up and waiting to be asked to speak	looking after a younger pupil or a new pupil
holding the door open for someone	offering help without being asked
handing homework in on time	taking turns; waiting for their turn
catching up with unfinished work or work missed due to absence	treating school books and equipment carefully
saying 'please' and 'thank you'	starting work quickly
asking for help when they need it	

walking quietly around the school	keeping their own books, possessions, and physical appearance tidy
asking before they 'borrow' something	moving from one task to another without teacher reminders
remembering to do something (i.e., taking a message home)	getting all equipment needed for a task without being told
taking a visitor to their destination rather than just directing them	telling the truth
bringing appropriate books and equipment to the classroom	listening quietly, looking at the speaker ('paying attention')
remaining calm during a difficult situation	lining up quickly and quietly
sharing equipment or activity with a classmate	being a good friend
taking a lot of care with . . . / putting a lot of thought into a piece of work	willing to answer questions and make contributions to group discussions
finding something appropriate to do when they have finished their work early	speaking well in the school play or assembly
	being willing to try something new or difficult

Submitted by Arnecia Moody, Lead Social Worker and
Adapted from www.edutopia.org/article/keeping-focus-positive-and-middleway.com.

Innovation Day at the National Inventors Hall of Fame (NIHF)

This free professional development day is focused on *inquiry-based learning* and will take place on **Saturday, January 12, 2019**. It will be a day full of hands-on activities that explore transforming learning and the engineering design process. This is a great opportunity for teachers to consider how they can take some of these practices and make them part of their daily instruction.

Mr. Al Langer, the inventor of the implantable heart defibrillator, will be the keynote speaker for this event. Consider joining this innovative event to support creative thinking, problem solving, student led-learning and our future inventors and entrepreneurs. Those who attend will be eligible for re-certification points. For more information, please email [Julia Neufer](mailto:Julia.Neufer@acps.edu) ([click for flyer](#)).

Your Feedback is Valued!

Do you have any topics of interest that you want featured in the Pursuit of Excellence? If so, please email [Sahar Wiltshire](mailto:Sahar.Wiltshire@acps.edu).

*Please note: all Pursuit of Excellence newsletters are posted on [Canvas](https://www.canvaslms.com/). Log in with your ACPS Google ID to access these newsletters.