



HIGHER | GREATER
expectations | student results

SCSD Teaching & Learning Newsletter

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CAO's Thoughts

Dear SCSD Colleagues,

It is hard to believe that we are rapidly nearing the end of another school year. Culminating events and celebrations are being held, reminding us of all that has been accomplished with our hard work and continued efforts to improve outcomes for students. Thank you for all that you have done for our students and families during this school year. Your effort, talent and selfless service throughout the school year are valued and appreciated!

We are very excited to continue to offer high-quality support and professional development to teachers. Much has been done this year around our Early Literacy Initiative, rollout of Units of Study, use of FOSS Kits and Personalized Learning implementation, just to name a few focus areas. A Summer Professional Learning Catalog will be distributed very soon detailing a multitude of offerings for teachers at every level. Please be sure to follow instructions for registering for sessions you would like to attend. Additionally, be sure to take advantage of expanded capacity at our 2018 Summer Summit that will be held August 21 – 23rd at the Marriot Syracuse Downtown.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity, in the final Teaching and Learning Newsletter of the school year, to announce that I will be retiring from the district this summer. It has been an honor to serve our families and students for the past 35 years. Throughout this time I have had the pleasure to work with incredible teachers, staff and administrative colleagues. My life has been blessed and enriched by these relationships and the opportunities I have had to make a difference in the District. I wish all of you the best as you continue to face the challenges and reap the many rewards of the work we do.

Very Sincerely,

Linda D. Mulvey

Chief Academic Officer

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Library Media Services

Lincoln, Grant and ELMS

This June small groups from Grant, Lincoln and ELMS will be participating in a unique collaborative project inspired by a session from the Winter Summit. In January, Theatre 167 and the Red House gave a session on how to create an engaging presentation that allows students to connect to a book, even if they have not read the entire thing. The presenters showed us how to break the book up into smaller chunks and allow groups of students to pull out the most important information to create a play that, when each group presents in order, creates an entire picture of the story. As teachers we had a phenomenal time reading and performing Marina Budhos' book *Tell Us We're Home* at the workshop and knew we wanted to bring the experience to our students. We chose the book *Refugee* by Alan Gratz, a story that follows three refugees from different time periods. Each middle school has been assigned a different story line with students from Lincoln reading and adapting the story of Josef a Jewish boy living in 1930's Nazi Germany, ELMS students learning about Isabel, a Cuban refugee in 1994 who hopes a raft will be enough to get her to safety and students from Grant taking the story of Mahmoud a Syrian boy in 2015 who is making the long journey to Europe. Students will only know the story from their character's perspective, but, when all three groups come together to present their adaptations to each other, they will learn that these stories are interwoven in ways they might not have imagined as they experience the entire story for the first time.

Bellevue Library

The Osmo project is driven by student inquiry. Students begin the project by unboxing the Osmo kits. There are several kits which provide information and activities to introduce and develop coding, math, running real world businesses, spelling and drawing skills. Students work on building problem solving skills, collaborative skills, perseverance and much more. Students love deciphering how to use the manipulatives in



coordination with the games, recording their unboxing "youtube" green screen review. Students get to utilize green screen technology while filming, directing and editing each other's work. Students leave the unit feeling extremely positive and accomplished.

Ty Allan Jackson Author Visit

Ty Allan Jackson is very proud to say that he's a children's book author. He visited 8 of our schools on March 26th and 27th, and our kids fell in love! He spoke to all our 2nd-6th graders about imagination, entrepreneurship, and the power of reading. Every class that came got two of his books for their classroom, which quickly became coveted materials.

We also were fortunate enough to have Ty speak the next day at our SCSD STAC meeting. He spoke and led a discussion on the importance of diverse books, especially for our students. He expounded on the need to teach financial literacy to children and made connections to his book 'Danny Dollar Millionaire'. Teachers, administrators, SCSD staff, and the Superintendent were inspired by Ty's passion for reading and teaching, and we hope to welcome him back to the district in the future.



Personalized Learning Update

[Go to this SWAY](#)

Enrichment

Redhouse Arts Center was proud to host Soul Steps, a high energy step group that came to Syracuse in April and May! They worked on some new performances while they were in residence at Redhouse and were very excited to present these dances to our students.

This is the Showcase season for Enrichment. "Where did the Magic go?" performances by H.W. Smith K-2nd grade students were written and directed by Marketing and Media teacher Ms. Whalen. All students in the Peaceful Schools classes participated by creating the set and costumes and performing on stage. The Big Bad Wolves are tired of being the Big Bad Wolves and end up working together and using S.T.A.R. Power to succeed.

- H.W. Smith girls visit the Federal Building to participate in the Susan B. Anthony trial re-enactment. The girls played the suffragettes so they were in era costumes and sat in the jury box for the trial.
- Visual arts students from WSA will have their artwork on display at the Salt City Coffee shop. They designed coffee mugs utilizing CARES skills.
- Performing arts students visited Le Moyne College. They toured the Performing Arts Center, participated in theater games and had a discussion with a professor and Le Moyne theater students.
- A partnership with NY State Parks connected kids to a grant that allowed for a field trip to visit Clark Reservation. They participated in environmentally themed activities and hiked in the park.
- A Rocket Launch was held on May 24th and 25th at Dr. King.
- The Westside Academy Showcase is scheduled for June 7th.

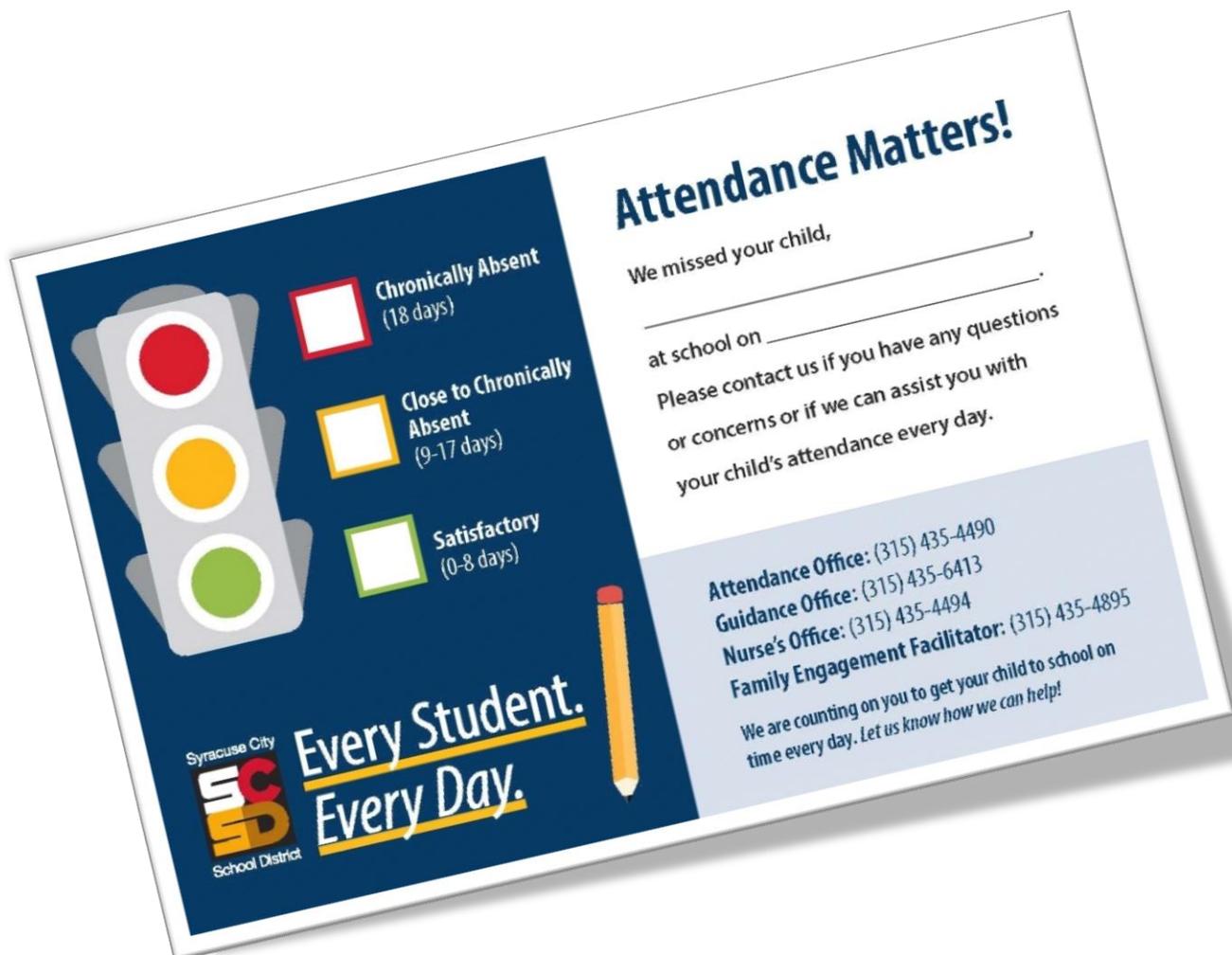
Pre-K & Elementary Division

“Every Student Every Day”

Chronic absenteeism is a significant barrier to students’ academic success. The logic is simple. If students are not in school, they are not learning. While the logic is easy to understand absenteeism is a complex problem for school personnel to solve. Everyone who works in schools understands the difficult nature of navigating transportation issues, parent and student illnesses, and the host of other family issues that prevent children from being in school. The Syracuse City School District is working with Proving Ground an organization from Harvard University to identify solutions to this complex problem. Four initiatives that will be studied to identify the impact on chronic absenteeism during the 2018-19 school year are:

1. Targeted home visits to 5-grade students during the summer.
2. Daily postcards to Kindergarten families for students who are absent.
3. An insert in report cards and interim reports that compares a child’s absences to the school’s overall all attendance.
4. Revised Robocalls for absent students.

Below is a draft of the postcard that will be sent to kindergarten families.



Fine Arts

We're still going strong in the Fine Arts Department!

Recent highlights (follow [@SCSDArts on Twitter](#) to see these in action!):

- Henninger, Corcoran, Nottingham, and PSLA performed successful runs of their spring musicals ([Beauty and the Beast](#), [Cinderella](#), [Once on This Island](#), and [Shrek](#) respectively). Many of our elementary and middle schools also had great performances and more are coming up. Bravo to all staff and students involved!!
- [Two of our high school artists](#), Lily Gaffney (Nottingham) and Bryan Fernandez (Henninger) received GOLD in the National Scholastic Arts Competition!
- [Corcoran](#) and [Meachem](#) Art students were selected to partake in regional exhibits at Beaver Lake.
- As part of an amazing [Community Musicians Day](#), hosted by Meachem in celebration of Music in Our Schools Month in March, NYSSMA (New York State School Music Association) leadership toured several music classrooms to [recognize the exemplary work](#) of our music teachers!
- [Nottingham Band students](#) received a GOLD rating on their performances at NYSSMA Majors!
- The annual All City Choral Festival was held in the beginning of May and once again our students impressed the audience with their skill and artistry.
- Our Arts Task Force has just completed our 5th meeting with only one more to go! This has been an exciting and creative time for the Fine Arts department as we've worked on drafting a SCSD Arts Action Plan. It's been exciting to think about the potential of our arts programming for our students!
- We had a successful annual All City Art Exhibit on May 19th at Meachem Elementary School. Thank you to all who came to see the amazing work our students are creating!
- Don't forget-it's concert and exhibit season in many of our schools...keep [checking the Fine Arts Calendar](#) to catch all of our events!



Career & Technical Education

AUVSI Xponential Conference: Unmanned Vehicles

On April 30th, the CTE departments were asked to be a part of the New York State contingent of the Exponential Conference in Denver, Colorado. The conference is a National Conference where CEO Center State, Nu Air and the UAS Upstate Consortium are competing to attract new Unmanned Aerial business into the Central New York area. SCSD CTE was asked to participate as our new RPAS program is marketed to businesses as a pathway for business to access highly qualified employees.

The Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems program that is housed at PSLA is now a PTECH program where students will earn their AAS in UAS Technology. Students will complete the program with an Associate's degree and a part 107FAA unlicensed Aerial flying license. The FAA Part 107 is the key to students who are entering this career field. There are only slightly over 1500 licenses issued in the country at this time with the need predicted to grow tremendously as the UAS market starts to take hold.

To put this industry in perspective, think of the introduction of cell phones when we all carried them around in small bags. The UAS market is in its beginning stages and as educators, we should not be passive on its potential. As we prepare our students for the workplace, the need for foundational math and science skills will be imperative.

So, as a caution to all of us as educators, get ready! One day this technology will impact us all in how we prepare students for future careers.

ENL, World Languages & Bilingual Education

Bilingual Education in SCSD

In the Syracuse City School District, two elementary schools, Seymour Dual Language Academy and Delaware Primary have established dual language programs as their model of bilingual education for students identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) whose native language is Spanish and students who are non-ELLs or monolingual English speakers. The dual language model integrates students proficient in English and ELLs in an instructional setting where language learning is taught through content, and language arts instruction is taught in both English and Spanish. The underlying goal is to prepare students for the future with abilities to listen, speak, read and write in two languages while promoting high academic achievement, as well as developing an appreciation for different cultures.

Research has shown that bilingual education offers many benefits to students in terms of academic achievement, cognitive development, improved communicative ability, cultural awareness, and employment opportunities. Societies as a whole also profit economically, politically and socially when its citizens can communicate with, and appreciate, people from other countries and cultures. Participation in a bilingual program at an early age gives children a distinct advantage throughout life, including:

- **Academic Benefits**

Students in bilingual programs, whether native speakers of English or a non-English language, can learn to read in two languages and achieve high levels of success in both languages. Students in bilingual education programs begin to understand more deeply at an early age the subtleties of how language works, can better comprehend the complexities of language and are more adept at correcting errors in language meaning and grammar. This involves brain activity and flexibility and is one of the reasons why those exposed to a bilingual education develop better problem solving, memory and thought. In addition, students in bilingual education think more creatively than their monolingual peers and understand the subtle meanings of words. They also demonstrate a more highly developed ability to vary word usage based on the needs of the listener. In later years, studies have shown that bilingual students perform better academically than their monolingual peers in the mainstream classrooms and on cognitive assessments.

- **Social Benefits**

Bilingual children also gain huge social advantages over their monolingual peers. Students in bilingual education programs are more comfortable in a multi-cultural environment and are more tolerant and open-minded towards people, cultures and languages. They can overcome the communication hurdles and the cultural barriers that other students struggle with when experiencing a change in their social circle. Bilingual education helps the students at a personal level, boosting their confidence and supports children with preserving important relationships with their entire family, culture, traditions and community. All of these are key parts of their developing identity.

- **Cultural Benefits**

Proficiency in two languages also permits students to broaden their horizons by engaging with folk tales, songs, idioms, expressions, historical documents and other primary sources without the mediation of translation. Bilingual education opens doors to other ways of thinking about the world and the possibility of relationships with people in other communities and other countries. Students develop very positive attitudes about other languages and cultural backgrounds and positive attitudes about their own heritage language and cultural background.

- **Health Benefits**

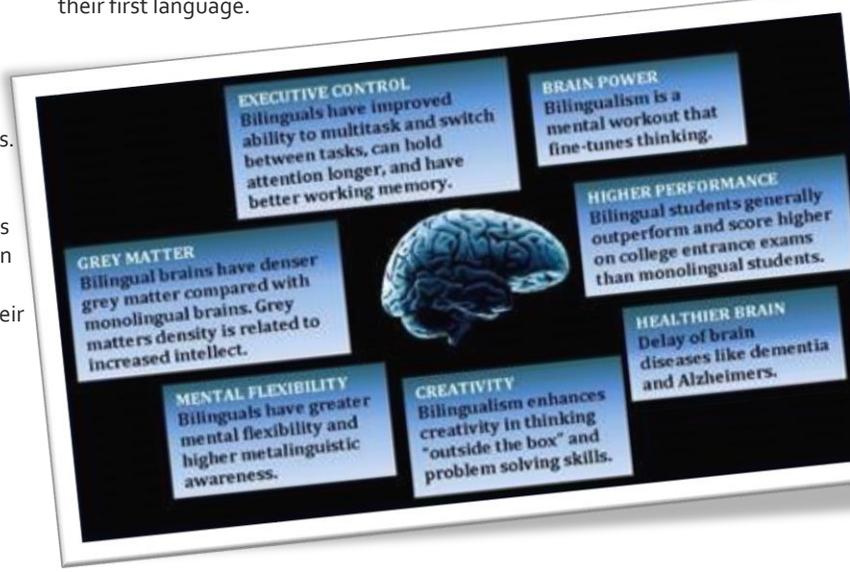
Research has also shown that the advantages of bilingualism last well into old age. Bilingualism appears to provide a means of fending off a natural decline of cognitive function and maintaining what is called "cognitive reserve." Being bilingual may contribute to this reserve by keeping the cognitive mechanisms sharp and helping to recruit alternate brain networks to compensate for those that become damaged during aging. Studies have shown that older bilingual people enjoy improved memory and has even shown that bilingualism delays the onset of dementia.

- **Economic Benefits**

Being bilingual is a skill that's becoming more and more valuable in an increasingly globalized economy; it allows students to forge personal and professional relationships with millions of people around the world and it opens up new cultures and experiences. Bilingualism may also have economic benefits for young adults related to employment, promotion, and earnings. One study has found that fluent bilingualism is associated with a decreased likelihood of dropping out of high school and an increased probability of obtaining a higher status job and higher annual earnings.

- **Cognitive Benefits**

A bilingual education can strengthen the executive function of the brain. Studies show that because bilingual students are able to use two languages at the same time, switching constantly, the bilingual brain can have better attention and task-switching capacities than the monolingual brain, thanks to its developed ability to inhibit one language while using another. Studies have also shown that students that learn in a bilingual environment become more sophisticated thinkers, have increased listening skills and memory, they perform better on tasks that call for creative thinking, have greater linguistic awareness and show a greater understanding of their first language.



Mathematics

May always brings the tension of the New York State Assessment for mathematics and review for Regents Exams with thoughts of spring flowers, field trips, pools and beaches. Students are longing for summer and there is still so much awesome mathematics to learn in the last weeks of school! I wanted to highlight the learning students will engage in during the last few weeks of school for Grades Pre-K through eight.

The fluencies for each grade level are also included. Fluencies would be great to continue building within independent and collaborative stations. How many of your students are on target with their grade level fluency?

	Content	Fluency
Pre-K	Students will begin to understand the concept of adding. 3 apples and 1 more make 4 apples.	While there is no specific fluency outlined for Pre-K, counting to 10 and beyond is a great target for Pre-K. Add and Subtract within 5.
Kindergarten	Counting to 100 orally by 1	Add and Subtract within 10.
Grade 1	Addition and Subtraction of Numbers to 100 using place value strategies and understanding comparison problems.	Add and Subtract to 20 Add and Subtract to 100 with paper and pencil using place value strategies.
Grade 2	Problem Solving with length, money and data. Investigating shapes Extend understanding of part and whole relationships using geometry. Begin to develop an understanding of the unit fractions as equal parts of a whole.	Multiply and divide up to 100. Add and subtract to 1000 using place value strategies.
Grade 3	Students will be experiencing several different types of one and two step word problems that incorporate topics from the year to include all four operations along with area and perimeter.	Add and subtract within 1,000,000.
Grade 4	Explore multiple strategies for solving measurement problems that involve unit conversion.	Multi-digit multiplication.
Grade 5	Students will explore relationships between points, ordered pairs, patterns, lines and the rules that generate them. Students will explore real world applications of the coordinate plane.	Multi-digit division. Multi-digit decimal operations.
Grade 6	Students will delve into not only presenting data, but analyzing data. Students will summarize data in terms of center, variability and shape. Students will continue to explore the ways to best summarize data in context to the problem posed.	Solve 1 and 2-step equations.
Grade 7	Students will explore and solve problems in geometry. Students will investigate angle relationships. This will serve as additional opportunities to hone their equation solving skills	Solve simple 2x2 systems of linear equations by inspection.
Grade 8	Eighth grade students will explore and begin to understand irrational numbers through the study of the Pythagorean Theorem.	



Professional Development

Summer Summit - Professional Learning Conference for Educators in SCSD

On August 21st, 22nd & 23rd the Syracuse City School District, Syracuse Teacher Center and Syracuse Teachers Association will host the 2018 Summer Summit at the Syracuse Marriott Downtown. The Summer Summit will provide opportunities for staff to participate in professional learning, collaborate and network in a conference-style venue.

How will you elevate your practice to advance equity and excellence in SCSD? Chart your Course at the Summit!

WHO CAN ATTEND? SCSD Educators

PRE-REGISTRATION: Pre-Registration is now open for this event! Seats are limited, so reserve your seat for this event in SCSD. Summer Summit attendees who have pre-registered, will have an opportunity to then register for specific conference sessions to be held from 8:30 am - 1:30 pm each day.

HOW TO PRE-REGISTER:

1. Login to **Performance Matters!**
2. On the Home Page, locate the **Summer Summit Channel**.
3. Click **Pre-Register** and follow on-screen steps!
4. Select **Mark as Viewed** after viewing the short Pre-Registration Video!
5. In **My Courses** on the Professional Learning page, you will now see a green checkmark next to the Pre-Registration Event!
6. You will receive an email on June 17th that course registration is open to select and build your schedule.

These instructions are also posted on the Performance Matters Home page. We look forward to seeing you at the Summer Summit!

CONTACT:

Email Francine Grannell at fgrannell@scsd.us if you have any questions.

Science & Technology



Students did great work on their science fair projects for the Environmental Challenge which was held May 22nd at the Carrier Dome. Roughly 900 students from our Middle and PK-8 buildings attended!

Our fourth-grade teachers are continuing their implementation of FOSS and have begun using the Environments Module. The Environments Module has four investigations that focus on the anchor phenomenon that animals and plants interact with their environment and with each other. Classrooms are hatching brine shrimp and observing isopods in terrariums.

Our fifth-grade teachers recently began their FOSS training and professional development as they work to prepare for implementation in the 2018-2019 school year.

Our district New York State Science Leadership Team (NYSSLS) has been working diligently around the creation of new science pacing maps for grades 6-12. Each grade level and content area within science and technology is represented on this team. These pacing guides include embedded units using the new science standards also known as the NYSSLS. These guides will be shared with all science teachers in the district to gather feedback as we move forward with implementation of the NYSSLS. Recently, team members had an opportunity to attend a professional development session around the new standards in Albany, and work with experts from the National Science Teachers Association.



English Language Arts



Early Literacy

NOW:

The Superintendent's Early Literacy Initiative has provided a much needed focus on our earliest learners. We, as a district, believe that when we...

- Build teacher knowledge and skills
- Support instructional practices through professional development and coaching
- Provide evidence-based resources and tools for teachers

...then we will have increased student achievement! To that end, we have:

- Trained over 300 teachers in Becoming an Early Literacy Expert (BELE 1.0)
- Provided PD and coaching support through four District Early Literacy Coaches
- Developed and/or shared multiple evidence-based resources around the support of early reading skills

LATER:

In 2018-19, we look forward to continuing this great work. Please look out for our summer offerings; we will be rolling out BELE 2.0 which will take the content knowledge learned in BELE 1.0 and provide direct application to practice using existing assessments and resources to support classroom teachers.

High School English

NOW:

High School English teachers have been diving into Personalized Learning through the use of station rotation, playlists, Canvas, and other strategies. They have used these strategies to increase student engagement around ELA Curriculum units.

LATER:

Check out the Summer Summit offering on Building the Best Playlists which will use ELA foundational documents to develop engaging and appropriately rigorous playlists.

Writing Initiative

NOW:

We have seen great gains in the stamina and confidence of our 3rd grade writers this year and the quality of their writing has reflected that! In May, 3rd grade teachers celebrated their work together at a culminating session where they wrote letters to 4th grade teachers about their experiences. We plan to share some of those words with 4th grade teachers as we begin our work with them.

LATER:

In May and June, 4th grade teachers will be taking the baton and running with the work that has been started as we roll the implementation up. We will also be piloting at a few schools in grade 5.

We are ready to give the end-of-year on-demand assessments and look forward to seeing the fruits of our labor.

Training and support will continue on a smaller scale for grade 3 next year and will be amped up at grade 4. Kate and Laura look forward to growing the success!

Middle School ELA

NOW:

Middle School ELA teachers have been engaging in a variety of PD sessions around Personalized Learning (PL) and AVID. At two different sessions, they engaged in classroom tasks integrating the two approaches and have since been trying out new strategies in their classrooms.

LATER:

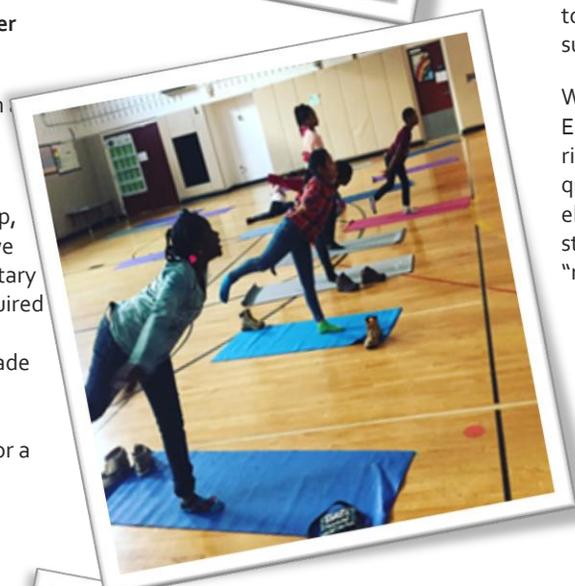
Next year's focus on PL/AVID will be supported by all content areas. Check out the Summer Summit offering on ELA Text Talks that will model strategies from each approach!

Physical Education, Health and FACS

The Physical Education Department recently completed an internal audit and presented to the Board of Education regarding the audit findings. The essential focus of the audit was to inquire about if elementary schools are meeting the New York State Physical Education Mandates:

- Kindergarten-3rd grade students to have:
- Physical Education for **120 minutes per week**.
- Have **daily** physical education
- 4th and 5th grade students to have:
- Physical Education for **120 minutes per week**.
- Must participate in Physical Education **least three days a week**.

After discussing with the Board of Education and District Senior Leadership, starting next school year (2018-2019), we are excited to announce that all elementary students in all schools will meet the required NYS Physical Education Mandates. Students in grades Kindergarten-3rd grade will have daily physical education and students in 4th and 5th grade, will have physical education three days a week, for a total of 120 minutes per week.



Currently, elementary school administrators and their School Leadership Teams are working diligently in devising a schedule to ensure their school building meets the NYS Physical Education Mandates for the upcoming school year.

The Physical Education Department is also going forth with creating a new curriculum that aligns to both New York State and National standards. The department is putting together a *Physical Education Curriculum Task Force Team* to develop a curriculum that will be completed by the end of the 2017-2018 school year. Professional development will be provided to all physical education teachers over the summer and at the start of the school year.

We are excited to meet the NYS Physical Education mandates, introduce a new rigorous curriculum and to highlight how a quality physical education program can elevate the success and health for our students moving forward. Remember the "more we burn, the better we learn!"

Board of Education

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NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Syracuse City School District hereby advises students, parents, employees and the general public that it is committed to providing equal access to all categories of employment, programs and educational opportunities, including career and technical education opportunities, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, Native American ancestry/ethnicity, creed or religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender identity or expression, disability or any other legally protected category under federal, state or local law.

Inquiries regarding the District's non-discrimination policies should be directed to:

Civil Rights Compliance Officer

Syracuse City School District

725 Harrison Street • Syracuse, NY 13210

(315) 435-4131

Email: CivilRightsCompliance@scsd.us