



Office of School Improvement Newsletter Special Principal Edition

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Volume 4, Issue 1
Winter/Spring 2013-14

Message from the Editor

Michael L. Hill, PASS Coordinator

The Office of School Improvement (OSI) is pleased to make available our first newsletter issue for 2013-2014. We hope that you will find the information helpful. First of all, please help us welcome Ms. Michelle Wallace, school improvement specialist, as a new member to the OSI team. Michelle comes to us from Nottoway County where she was Director of Instruction, Grants, and Technology. Her primary responsibilities within the OSI include providing assistance with increasing the graduation rate and working with policies, regulations and standards as they relate to school accreditation and federal accountability requirements. OSI is very pleased to have Michelle join our team! For those of you who are familiar with previous issues of the newsletter, you will notice that this issue includes fewer topics than issues of the past. This is deliberate as the OSI has streamlined office communication processes that include a variety of additional communication vehicles. This allows the OSI the opportunity to concentrate on specific topics for the newsletter. With this in mind, a primary focus of this newsletter is the school principal and school leadership teams. Support for building instructional leadership capacity and process development at the school level is very important to our office. Within the process of school improvement, research-based and effective-based “best” practices indicate that the school principal serves a very important, pivotal role in the overall success of the school. It is our hope that the information shared in this issue will be helpful to all of our principals and leadership teams in their school improvement journey. OSI would like to thank all of the divisions and schools that we have been so fortunate to work with this year. The spirit of cooperation, support, and sense of “teamwork” that we have felt from everyone has been extraordinary. A special thank you is extended to all of the approximately 420 schools rated *Accredited with Warning/Provisionally Accredited – Graduation Rate* and their respective divisions for their hard work during the division led academic review process. The curriculum alignment focus was new as well as the process and materials. Overall, the feedback that we have received from division and school personnel and contractors has been very positive. Many divisions and schools expressed their appreciation for including a focus on the curriculum alignment process that begins with division level personnel and ultimately ends with the classroom instruction received by the student. We continue to be excited about the outstanding work of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Intra-agency Technical Assistance Team. It is through the ongoing collaborative efforts with this internal VDOE team that many division and school professional development needs are realized. We know that great things can happen for our children when we all work and learn together. Please do not hesitate to contact the OSI for support!

Important Dates

March 20, 2014 — School Improvement Support Session (SISS) Webinar at 10:00 a.m.
April 9, 2014—(Optional) Priority schools (all cohorts) attend Roundtable Discussion Day with Julie Corbett in Richmond, Virginia
April 30, 2014— School Improvement Plans of Title 1 improvement plan required schools submitted via the Indistar® Dashboard
April 30, 2014—Focus school data spreadsheets submitted via the Document Upload in Indistar®
April 30, 2014—Focus school improvement plans and division-level improvement plans submitted via the Indistar® Dashboard (Cohort I and II)
April 30, 2014—Priority schools (all cohorts) submit the Priority School Data Analysis Quarterly Report (Qtr 3—April) responses via the Indistar® Dashboard
May 1, 2014—Focus schools (Cohort I and II) complete and submit The Algebra Readiness Diagnostic Test (ARDT) Reporting Form via the Indistar® Dashboard
May 28, 2014 OR June 3, 2014—Priority schools (all cohorts) participate in technical assistance closing of the year Webinar with Janice Garland and Bev Rabil
June 1—30, 2014— Priority schools (all cohorts) administer the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) - Note: Administer prior to teacher's leaving depending on district calendar
June 30, 2014—Priority schools submit the Priority School Data Analysis Quarterly Report (Qtr 4—June) responses via the Indistar® Dashboard
June 30, 2014—Priority schools (all cohorts) submit the Transformation Implementation Plan via the Indistar® Dashboard
June 30, 2014—Focus school data spreadsheets submitted via the Document Upload in Indistar®
June 30, 2014—Focus school improvement plans and division-level improvement plans submitted via the Indistar® Dashboard (Cohort I and II)
June 30, 2014 — School improvement plans of Title 1 improvement plan required schools submitted via the Indistar® Dashboard
July 1—August 30, 2014—Priority schools (all cohorts) SIG onsite monitoring visits (TBD); presentation of SIG Continuation Application 2014-15 (VDOE) - Date: TBD





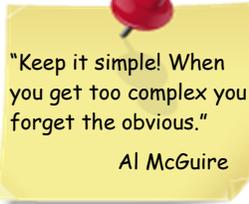
Principals' Corner

School Principals,

Now, more than ever, is the time for you to step up to the plate and deliver the strong leadership that is necessary in order to experience a successful school improvement journey. Your entire school family is depending on you! The journey begins and ends with a laser-like focus on individual student growth. Successful school improvement teams begin with the end-in-mind while visualizing the "big picture". Implementation and evaluation of proven research-based processes and strategies for the purpose of creating an ongoing cycle of continuous school improvement are essential components of the journey. It is important to approach your journey of school improvement as a PROCESS that consists of many parts. Successful implementation and follow-through of all of the parts are important for the overall success of the journey. In other words,

realizing the "big picture" or end-in-mind are largely dependent on the degree of execution of all of the individual parts.

The following are principal-specific actions that will help drive the school improvement PROCESS in your school.



"Keep it simple! When you get too complex you forget the obvious."

Al McGuire

The actions include a twelve month process. They are organized into three categories—actions that are common for each month of the academic year; actions that are specific to each month during the academic year; and actions that are unique to summer planning.

Principal Actions for Every Month During the School Year

— **Conduct...**

1. Monthly meeting with the school leadership and improvement team (review progress of school improvement plan (SIP) on Indistar®; review current Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention data for all participating students including Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners; review other significant school data; review school Indistar® Dashboard for report due dates; status of all technical assistance and upcoming professional development; make needed revisions; post progress monitoring notes, agendas, and minutes).

2. Monthly staff meeting with a focus on instructional practices; review/update of the school improvement plan on Indistar®; update on all technical assistance and professional development activities; update on school safety procedures/crisis plan.

3. Monthly administrative meeting with grade-

level/content area teams to discuss individual student progress (all students); review progress of students in tiered interventions; discuss referrals to Student Support Team where necessary; all support staff attend to include guidance.

4. Monthly building walkthrough with lead custodian to inspect building maintenance and ensure a safe school environment.

5. Instructional walkthroughs with the school leadership team to include division personnel noting instructional areas of strength and addressing areas needing improvement. (see suggested walkthrough form in this newsletter).

6. Principal-led parent outreach initiative to increase active involvement and communication.

7. Safety drills and submit the required forms to the division.

— **Develop** and distribute school monthly newsletter and calendar of activities for the upcoming month to all staff members, students, and parents.

— **Focus** on teamwork and developing a "sense of community" with the entire school family.

— **Observe** classroom instruction and conduct follow-up conferences with teachers (review lesson plans to ensure planning is aligned with what is being taught; aligned at the written, taught, and tested curriculum; aligned at the appropriate cognitive levels; plans include differentiated activities, etc.; schedule peer observations and assign professional development as necessary).

— **Maintain** updated school-wide calendar showing all school related activities for the month. Post where all staff can view.

(monthly actions cont'd on next page)



"The whole aim of good teaching is to turn the young learner, by nature a little copycat, into an independent, self-propelling creature, who cannot merely learn but study.... This is to turn pupils into students, and it can be done on any rung of the ladder of learning."

Jocques Barzun, Teacher in America



Principals' Corner (cont'd)

— **Review** and monitor ...

1. Weekly lesson plans for all teachers— checking for curriculum alignment; content and cognitive levels; higher order thinking skills; differentiation — plans must include evidence of application of VDOE Web site resources for writing, English, mathematics, and science; evidence of collaborative planning with the special education teacher—lesson objective must include behavior, conditions, and criteria for success.

2. All classroom teacher formative assessments to ensure curriculum map alignment, lesson plan alignment, and SOL test format including regular practice with technology-enhanced test items and writing SOL requirements.

— **Submit** all required documents/reports due on Indistar® .



Principal Actions by Calendar Month

Note: Please see top of this page and page 2 for additional principal actions suggested for EVERY month.

March

— **Finalize** a six-week instructional plan targeting specific individual student needs in preparation for spring testing (to be implemented and monitored during the six weeks prior to testing).

— **Plan ...**

1. Transition program for rising sixth/ninth grade students that includes staff from elementary, middle, and high school.

2. A quarterly school celebration for students, staff, and parents.

April

— **Meet** with teachers regarding their revised retention lists.

— **Plan** SOL Parent Night.

— **Review** report cards and provide written feedback to teachers. (Meet with individual teachers regarding students who may require a referral to the student support team; conduct student support team meetings based on teacher referrals.)

— **Using** specific individual student performance data, develop and implement the 45-day SOL Instructional Plan for all testing grades.

May

— **Begin** the planning process for the 2014-2015 school year Request feedback from all staff (instructional and non-instructional) regarding suggestions for improvement for the next school year. Discuss any opportunities for grade-level planning opportunities over the summer.

— **Coordinate** with division all summer school programs available to students.

— **Conduct ...**

1. SOL Parent Night (prepare parents for SOL testing procedures and expectations and let them know how they can help prepare their child for testing. Also, answer any questions that they may have.

2. Quarterly school celebration (students, staff, and parents).

— **Meet** with all staff members regarding the end-of-the-year responsibilities and procedures for closing out the school year.

June

— **Check-out** staff members on the last day of school after all tasks from the end-of-the-year checklist have been completed.

— **Conduct** final school-wide end-of-the-year celebration with students, staff, and parents.

— **Continue** planning process for the 2013-2014 school year. Discuss feedback received from staff regarding recommendations for next year.

— **Meet** with teachers regarding final retention lists; discuss procedures for parent notification of the impending retention and the appeals process.

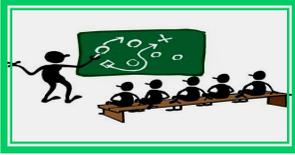
— **Review** report cards and provide written feedback to teachers.



“Personalization ensues from the relationships among teachers and learners and the teacher’s orchestration of multiple means for enhancing every aspect of each student’s learning and development.”

Sam Redding

*“Getting Personal: The Art of Personalized Learning”,
Handbook on Innovations in Learning*

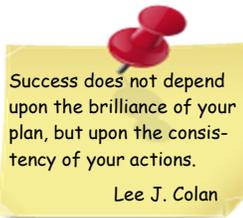


Principals' Corner (cont'd)

Summer Principal Action Priorities

— Daily/Weekly Tasks...

1. Keep school enrollment and pupil-teacher-ratio (PTR) information updated.
2. Keep class rosters updated.
3. Keep running list of items to review/share during teacher work week.
4. Check on progress of maintenance and summer cleaning.
5. Check with summer staff about tasks for the day.
6. Return phone calls and e-mails promptly.
7. Model a positive attitude.



July

— Do your homework...

1. Study the VDOE Web site—especially the information on School Improvement and Reform (including 2013-2014 Academic Review training materials that focus on all aspects of curriculum alignment), Instruction (including Teacher Direct), Special Education, and English Language Learners.
 3. Study best practices on effective classroom instructional strategies and seek opportunities to observe effective instruction. Review the work of John Hattie's book "Visible Learning", Edie Holcomb's book "Asking the Right Questions, Tools for Collaboration and School Change", and Todd Whitaker's two books "What great Principals Do Differently" and "What Great Teachers Do Differently". Study information found on the Web site of "What Works Clearinghouse", Institute of Education Science (IES); "Indicators in Action", Center on Innovation and Improvement (CII); and "The Handbook on Innovations in Learning", Center on Innovations in Learning (CIL), 2013.
- **Schedule** individual meetings with all instructional staff to review expectations for the upcoming year.
 - **Develop** a process for monitoring all aspects of instructional program.
 - **Develop** a comprehensive lesson plan format.
 - **Develop** a transition program for rising sixth/ninth grade students that includes staff from elementary, middle, and high

school.

- **Develop** a quarterly school celebration for students, staff, and parents.
- **Determine** and provide written duties and responsibilities for all school support staff—secretarial, custodial/maintenance, instructional, and administrative.
- **Implement** effective organizational strategies—both school-wide and office procedures (i.e. tickler file, wall calendar, etc.).
- **Review** important manuals including School Board Policy/Procedures, Personnel Policy/Procedures, Safety and Security Policy/Procedures, and Principal and Teacher Evaluation Procedures and Requirements.
- **Following** division policy, revise/review teacher evaluation process. Develop goal setting, observation, documentation review schedules for the coming year. See Superintendent's Memo #100-12 for additional resources at [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memo/2013/100-13.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2013/100-13.shtml). Study principal evaluation process and tools. Begin developing ideas and gathering data from principal goal setting. In addition to division resources, see resources on VDOE Web site at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/performance_evaluation/principal/training/index.shtml.
- **Order** instructional and other materials (student agendas, teacher agendas, home/school communication folders, textbooks, etc.) Inventory all textbooks per division procedures to assess school needs.
- **Schedule** faculty and team meetings (days of the week and/or month) - faculty, leadership team, grade level/content team, IEP team, school improvement planning team, celebrate learning team, student support team, etc. (combining teams wherever possible).
- **Update** student/parent handbook and faculty handbook.



"Special education innovations should improve on current instructional practice. An ideal special education innovation would allow a student with a disability to compete on the same level as peers without disabilities."

*Joseph Boyle,
"Specialized Innovations for Students with Disabilities",
Handbook on Innovations in Learning,
Center on Innovations in Learning, 2013.*



Principals' Corner (cont'd)

August

- **Identify**, design, and provide implementation guidelines and expectations for school data analysis system for use by all instructional staff. Must have ability to collect data on individual students and target groups.
- **Develop** and prepare for implementation school safety and security procedures that are aligned with division expectations.
- **Finalize** class rosters; add new students as necessary.
- **Develop** teacher work week schedule maximizing time for work in classrooms and team planning (including inclusion teams). Include activities that encourage fun and teamwork. Create agenda for work week staff meeting and prepare materials and handouts. Organize all work week schedules, etc. and handbooks in notebook for teachers.



- **Schedule** Open House before school starts – Open House can be an opportunity for students and parents to informally visit the school, classrooms and meet their teacher(s) and other staff, distribute any school forms, parent (committee/helper) sign-up, student supply list, sample student agenda, pay fees, tour the school, etc. Open House can also be a more formal event to introduce students and parents to middle school or high school, as an example. The key is planning and organization.
- **Determine** how and when teacher assignments are communicated to students/parents.
- **Prepare** “Welcome Back” letter to staff – include schedule for work week, school news, and generate excitement for the opening of school – mail letter to all staff by beginning of August.
- **Meet** with Parent Teacher Association (PTA) president, program chair, and music teacher (if appropriate) to determine dates of PTA meetings and programs.
- **Identify** and schedule fall and spring picture days.
- **Schedule** PTA/School Back-to-School Night in September (first PTA meeting) PTA business meeting, teachers formally present to parents (in classrooms) instructional expectations for teachers, students and parents, student behavioral expectations, etc.
- **Create** duty schedules – bus and parent pickup, hall duty, lunch duty (if applicable), first day of school and first week of school “All Hands on Deck” duty list, etc.
- **Place** all reporting due dates from Indistar® Dashboard on school calendar.

- **Develop** yearly schedule for SOL/Benchmark Assessment Analysis/Formative Assessment meetings with teachers beginning in August/September to discuss SOL results.
- **Develop** schedules for interim report, report card, benchmark assessment and professional development.
- **Schedule** meeting with bus drivers during teacher work week to discuss expectations.
- **Create** and organize morning arrival and afternoon dismissal bus schedule (including first week of school) to maximize instructional time and student safety.
- **Develop** content and schedule for first day of school principal meetings with students to set expectations for year.
- **Develop** mentor schedule for first year teachers and buddy schedule for other faculty and staff entering their first year at the school regardless of years of experience.
- **Identify** “Celebrate Learning” Team; develop and schedule “Celebrate Learning” assemblies for the school year. “Celebrate Learning” refers to a school-wide program designed to excite ALL STUDENTS about learning. Also, schedule school spirit days.
- **Update** staff information for staff handbook.
- **Review** all schedules, rosters, updated lists, room assignments, etc. for suggestions and proofing.
- **Finalize** room assignments and update school map
- **Identify** strategies to increase parent communication.
- **Develop** new parent liaison/resource program.
- **Place** on school calendar all special schools days (i.e., Veteran’s Day, staff appreciation days, etc.).
- **Update** school Web site and develop expectations and procedures for school Web site use by teachers.
- **Review** upcoming school year division calendar, school board meetings, principal meetings, etc. before scheduling school activities and place on school calendar.



“In a blended learning approach, technology is not seen as a replacement for the traditional classroom, but rather as a powerful tool to enhance what is already proven to be effective pedagogy.”

Sam Redding

*“Getting Personal: The Art of Personalized Learning”,
Handbook on Innovations in Learning,
Center on Innovations in Learning, 2013*



Principals' Corner (cont'd)

Note: Please see pages 2 and 3 for additional principal actions suggested for every month.

September

— **Conduct** meeting/assembly for all students (preferably the first day of school) to reinforce school-wide academic expectations and to review the school's Code of Conduct. All staff should attend including support staff, guidance counselor, custodial, food service, secretaries, etc.

— **Review** with staff expectations/guidelines for new/revised teacher evaluation process...

1. Develop schedule for summative evaluation conferences and for review of documentation logs/portfolios.
2. Review with staff division decision rules/guidelines for Standard 7 and expectations for documenting data to support Standard 7.

— **Observe** every new teacher during the first two weeks of school and provide encouraging feedback.



— **Work** with the school leadership team to make any necessary revisions to the school improvement plan based on feedback received from all stakeholders.

— **Conduct** initial administrative meeting with each grade-level team to discuss...

1. Goals for the year, review grade level meeting expectations, developing group norms and meeting schedule.
2. The importance of collaborative planning and teamwork—including special education and English language learner teachers, guidance counselor, etc.
3. The content and importance of the school improvement plan.
4. Importance of data analysis and classroom teacher responsibilities.
5. Importance of using all available VDOE resources on Web site to the fullest extent. This includes the School Improvement and Reform page under Academic Reviews. This section is an excellent resource for all aspects of curriculum alignment including lesson planning components—recorded webinars, PowerPoint presentations, and other materials.

6. Lesson planning expectations including common grade level assessments, content and cognitive levels; developing higher order thinking skills; formative assessments, tiering instruction, etc.

7. Expectations for ongoing classroom formative assessments procedures and tiered intervention guidelines and procedures.

8. Division and school policies and procedures related to classroom instruction— report cards, interim reports, use of benchmark results, student retention guidelines, child study procedures, student support team procedures, etc.

— **Plan** grade-level specific activities for the year including field trips. Incorporate these dates on the school's master calendar.

— **Meet** with the school guidance counselor/testing director regarding the testing schedule. Incorporate these dates on the school's master calendar.

— **Meet** with the PTA board to finalize activities for the year. Incorporate these dates on the school's master calendar.

October

— **Plan** parent conference day activities...

1. Send home parent conference day letters and conference reservation forms.

2. Schedule and conduct workshop with teachers regarding procedures for conducting successful parent conferences.

— **Review** interim progress reports...

1. Meet with individual teachers regarding students who may require a referral to the student support team.

2. Conduct student support team meetings based on teacher referrals.



“Hip hop, spoken word, digitalk, gaming, and fan fiction are popular forms of out-of-school literate activity, ones that are sure to resonate with many adolescents.”

Michael W. Smith

“Innovative Practice in Teaching the English Arts: Building Bridges Between Literacy In and Out of School”

Handbook on Innovations in Learning, Center on Innovations in Learning, 2013



Principals' Corner (cont'd)

Note: Please see pages 2 and 3 for additional principal actions suggested for every month.

November/December

- **Review** expectations regarding classroom holiday celebrations with all staff members.
- **Meet** with appropriate staff and PTA representatives regarding planning needs for November and December holiday programs with a focus on uninterrupted classroom instructional time.
- **Review** report cards providing written feedback to teachers and positive and encouraging comments to students. (Meet with individual teachers regarding students who may require a referral to the student support team; Conduct student support team meetings based on teacher referrals.)
- **Develop** performance improvement plans in accordance with division policies and procedures for teachers whose performance fails to meet expectations.
- **Plan** and conduct a quarterly school celebration for students, staff, and parents.



January

- **Review** report cards providing written feedback to teachers and positive and encouraging comments to students.
- **Following** division procedures, develop and monitor performance improvement plans for teachers whose performance fails to meet expectations.
- **Identify** staff members whom you will not recommend for contract renewal. Collaborate with your immediate supervisor and the human resources department to prepare the appropriate documentation adhering to reporting timelines as directed.
- **Initiate** school-developed retention procedures and guidelines timeline. (Begin meetings with teachers regarding their tentative retention lists; supports needed for individual student success, and procedures for notifying parents of the possibility of retention.)
- **Conduct** mid-year meeting with students to reinforce school-wide academic expectations and to review the school's Code of Conduct with an emphasis on the most commonly cited

infractions at the school. All staff should attend.

- **Plan** a quarterly school celebration for students, staff, and parents.

February

- **Meet** with staff members regarding the upcoming SOL Writing Test. (Conduct meeting with grade teachers and proctors regarding testing procedures reinforcing the computer use requirement and VDOE available resources including practice level prompts; distribute parent letters and testing schedule ; develop incentive plan for students; schedule individual student conferences to provide support and build confidence.)
- **Begin** developing a *six-week instructional plan to begin prior to spring testing with a focus on individual student needs.
- **Conduct** a quarterly school celebration for students, staff, and parents.

*Six-Week Instructional Plan

The purpose of this plan is to indicate the strategies that will be in place during the 45 instructional days prior to testing to:

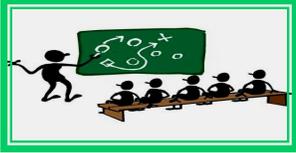
1. Ensure that the SOL Blueprints are used to direct the planning of instruction for SOL objectives not covered or not covered well during the year.
2. Ensure that the SOL Blueprints are used to direct remediation efforts for students who have not mastered SOL objectives.
3. Emphasize that this should be the priority of everyone in the building to ensure that "all hands are on deck" to support increased student achievement.



Push for High Quality Communication

"Communication breathes the first spark of life into teamwork and communication keeps teamwork alive. No other factor plays such a precious role in building and preserving trust among teammates. Communication is the make-or-break issue."

The Team Member Handbook on Teamwork,
Price Pritchett



Principals' Corner (cont'd)

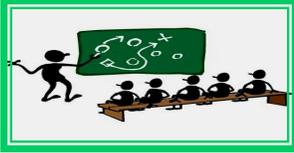
Best Practices in Anti-Bullying and Suicide Prevention

(Hanover Research—March 2014)

Hanover Research investigated best practices in the prevention of bullying and suicide among school-aged youths. In addition, three school districts with effective programs in these areas are profiled in the full report. To access the entire report, go to www.hanoverresearch.com and log in. If you are not a registered *Hanover Research* user you can contact them at *Hanover Research*, 4401 Wilson Blvd, 4th Floor Arlington, VA 22203.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Districts should facilitate school-wide, multidisciplinary anti-bullying initiatives.** Analyses comparing various types of strategies indicate whole-school approaches as the most effective at reducing bullying. Programs should specify clear policies, educate students and staff, build a positive school climate, monitor incidence rates, and engage families and communities.
- **Districts should consider addressing mental health issues explicitly in their anti-bullying policies.** A review of district policies by the U.S. Department of Education found that local education agencies frequently overlook mental health provisions in official anti-bullying policies. The most effective district policies also clearly outline counseling and other services for bullies and victims.
- **Districts should implement a multi-informant approach to assessing the prevalence and characteristics of bullying in schools.** Experts recommend that districts survey students, teachers, staff, parents, and community members about bullying, as perceptions among various stakeholder groups often differ.
- **Teachers and staff should participate in related professional development to ensure a cohesive approach to bullying.** Training should ensure that all personnel who interact directly with students understand bullying and its effects, know district policies and rules, and follow intervention strategies as needed. To that end, several national organizations provide districts with anti-bullying materials, such as guides, presentations, webinars, and even training sessions at no cost.
- **It is crucial for districts to gain the support of parents and other key stakeholders in anti-bullying efforts, as bullying often occurs outside of school.** Rather than random acts of outreach, family engagement should be both sustained and delivered across multiple settings. Districts also should forge partnerships with community organizations and create a community action plan to prevent bullying in all settings. Potential partners include law enforcement agencies, health services providers, advocacy groups, faith-based organizations, colleges and universities, and local businesses.
- **Bullying and suicide should be viewed as interconnected issues, and efforts to prevent both should be fully integrated.** Research indicates that districts often use several different prevention programs simultaneously, overwhelming staff and reducing sustainability. Rather, districts should consolidate efforts and exploit synergies in best practices, such as a focus on school climate, family engagement, and careful monitoring.
- **Research indicates three largely ineffective approaches to reducing bullying in school: peer mediation, one-day assemblies, and zero tolerance discipline policies.** Peer mediation, or peer conflict resolution, often proves misguided because of the appearance of shared guilt among victim and aggressor. One-day assemblies, though useful as part of a comprehensive strategy, remain insufficient as standalone efforts. Lastly, zero tolerance policies that include suspension or expulsion may discourage students and parents from reporting bullying and do not provide bullies with sufficient pro-social supports.



Principals' Corner (cont'd)

English Language Learner

Breakout Session

Division Leadership Support Team (DLST) Meeting
The College of William and Mary - School of Education
September 16, 2013

Did you know that...

- The World-Class Instructional and Design (WIDA) English Development Standards (ELD) Standards became Virginia's ELD standards for ELLs in 2008?
<http://www.wida.us/standards/>
- There are five ELD standards that include the language of 1) social and instructional interaction; 2) language arts; 3) mathematics; 4) science; and 5) social studies?
<http://www.wida.us/standards/>
- The ELL subgroup takes an assessment in the spring (ACCESS for ELLs) to test the students' level of English language acquisition in which students must show an increase in language proficiency or attainment in language proficiency?
<http://www.wida.us/assessment/>
- Title III Coordinators have access to school and student level ACCESS reports, Title III Summary Reports, and Spring ACCESS for ELLs reports that are valuable resources?
This information can assist personnel in designing differentiated instructional lessons to meet the needs of the various English language proficiency levels of ELLs, which range from 1-5. Be sure to include Title III Coordinators in School Improvement discussions to share this information.
<http://www.wida.us/standards/>
- School divisions may be or have been in division level Title III improvement in the current or prior year(s)? (2013 results should be available in late September or Early October) You should consult with the Title III Coordinator to see if the school division is or has been in Title III improvement. If so, the Title III Coordinator will be able to provide the Title III improvement information that is relevant at the school level.

A. If the school division is **not** or **has never been** in Title III improvement, the following steps are recommended:

Step 1: Conduct a self-evaluation of the English language program (ELP) within the school using *A Diagnostic Tool for Taking your Program's Pulse* located on the VDOE ESL Web site. This tool is meant to support administrators' efforts to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement for their language programs and services.

Step 2: Interpret SOL and ACCESS for ELLs data.
Note: A template is available on the VDOE ESL Web site

Step 3: Consider how trends in data reveal opportunities for professional development and technical assistance. Consider how resources in the ESL arena can be leveraged to address those areas of opportunity.

Additional information addressing instruction and compliance is available on the VDOE ESL Web site.

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/esl/index.shtml>
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title3/index.shtml



Principals' Corner (cont'd)

Mathematics Instructional Walkthrough Form (courtesy of Dr. Yvonne Holloman, VDOE)

School: _____
 Grade/Teacher: _____ Date: -- _____ Time: _____
 Standards of Learning Objective(s): _____
 Lesson Objective (Behavior, Conditions, and Criteria for Success): _____

Focus of Instructional Walkthrough:
 Instructional Planning
 Instructional Delivery
 Assessment of and for Learning

Focus: Instructional Planning
 - Uses student learning data to guide planning-
 - Plans time for realistic pacing
 - Plans for differentiated instruction
 - Aligns lesson objectives to curriculum and student needs

Examples of Evidence:
 - Lesson plan includes learning objective (behavior, conditions, and criteria for success), essential vocabulary, and related state learning standard
 - Lesson plan includes differentiated tasks assigned to groups of students or individual students based on identified student needs
 - Lesson plan includes formative assessments and essential questions for students
 - Encourages student verbal and written descriptions of models
 - Plans tasks for students that require higher-order thinking skills

Evidence:

Focus: Instructional Delivery
 - Engages students
 - Builds on prior knowledge
 - Differentiates instruction
 - Reinforces learning goals
 - Uses a variety of strategies/resources
 - Uses instructional technology
 - Communicates clearly

Examples of Evidence:
 Asks open-ended questions and allows students to use reasoning skills to develop solutions
 - Presents real-life scenarios, authentic problems, complex tasks, and applications
 - Presents mathematical concepts and procedures using a variety of representations including pictures, models, graphic organizers
 - Uses appropriate tools such as technology, calculators, graphing utilities, computer software, manipulatives, measuring instruments, physical materials
 - Asks various levels of questions from recall to comprehension/synthesis/ analysis/prediction
 - Uses mathematical vocabulary accurately

Evidence:

Focus: Assessment of and for Student Learning
 - Uses pre-assessment data
 - Uses appropriate assessments
 - Aligns assessments with standards
 - Uses a variety of assessment strategies
 - Uses assessment tools for formative / summative purposes
 - Gives constructive feedback

Examples of Evidence:
 - Assigns and utilizes journals, presentations
 - Uses exit slips
 - Requires students to use mathematical vocabulary in discussions and written explanations
 - Promotes mathematical discourse (student to student, and teacher to student)
 - Teaches concepts in context (uses real world scenarios)
 - Emphasizes reasoning and sense-making by students
 - Prompts students to elaborate during discussions
 - Uses student responses to adjust instruction
 - Encourages students to explore multiple problem-solving strategies and alternate solutions, and to share and justify these when appropriate
 - Models disposition for solving challenging mathematical problems

Evidence:

Suggested Next Steps:

TEAMWORK

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The Virginia Department of Education assists chronically low-performing schools and school divisions to implement effective instructional strategies to increase student growth. The Office of School Improvement has developed a nationally-recognized comprehensive support system that focuses on building division-level capacity to support schools in need of interventions.



The OSI would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their support. We could not do it without them!

Casex LLC (DataCation)
Division and School Personnel
Edvantia
Editure
Hanover Research
Indistar® - Lighting our Path to Stellar Learning
Intra-agency Technical Assistance Team, VDOE
OSI Contractors
School-University Research Network (SURN)—The College of William and Mary
TeacherStudio
The Center on Innovations in Learning (CIL)
The College of William and Mary
The National High School Center
The Virginia Association for Elementary School Principals (VAESP)
The Virginia Foundation for Educational Leadership (VFEL)

The ultimate goal in school improvement is for the people attached to the school to drive its continuous improvement for the sake of their own children and students.

- Dr. Sam Redding, 2009