Pupil Services Communiqué

December 2019/January 2020

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Happy New Year

DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP
Dr. Asia R. Jones, Assistant Superintendent, Pupil Services
Dr. Clark Bowers, Director, Student Services
John Lody, Director, Diagnostic and Prevention Services
Dr. Patricia D. Nelson, Director, Special Education

Committed to “EDUCATING THE WHOLE CHILD” and to ensuring a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment for all students.
Captions On For Literacy

Video is a common modality for educators to share, teach, and reinforce concepts. Captions exist to help individuals with hearing impairments experience the audio portion of the content. Research suggests that turning the captions on for video content can also help students, with or without hearing impairments, improve reading abilities. Pairing text with audio and visual content helps reinforce the meanings of words while simultaneously representing how they are spelled.

Strategies can be used to encourage educators and parents to turn on the captions whenever students are experiencing video content. Consider crafting a “Captions On!” campaign for your classroom, grade level, or school promoting the idea that captions help improve literacy. When choosing video content, encourage educators to only select video that has captions. Invite parents to turn on captions at home whenever watching television or videos. As students make meaningful contributions to the world by participating in authentic learning experiences, they might choose to create videos. When they do so, encourage students to consider an audience with diverse abilities by captioning their created video content.

Google Slides and Microsoft PowerPoint both have a live captioning option for when giving presentations. Encourage staff and students to turn on this feature to have the text displayed on the screen when using these tools to present in-person presentations. Adopting and practicing a “captions on” mentality will help improve individual literacy skills while simultaneously working toward building a more inclusive and accessible future for all.
Math Made Accessible!

Math can be made both digital and accessible using EquatIO, an extension for Google Chrome available to anyone in LCPS. Students and teachers can choose to insert mathematical equations and scientific notations into a Google Doc using a variety of modalities including typing, handwriting recognition, and voice dictation. The extension recognizes the input, converts it into the corresponding mathematical notation, and then inserts it into the Google Doc. The extension uses prediction as well, so students can start a mathematical formula or notation and choose from a provided list of options.

Speech Input feature of EquatIO

Once the math is inserted, Read&Write for Google Chrome can be used to listen back to the notation which helps students who might have difficulty processing the information using only a visual modality. The extension also offers a feature called Mathspace which allows users to insert different manipulatives such as shapes and images to create diagrams for math and science problems. To learn more about EquatIO and how it can be used to design inclusive educational experiences which help students learn how to make meaningful contributions to the world, check out this playlist of tutorials on YouTube.

Examples of some of the tools available for diagrams and other manipulatives available in the Mathspace portion of EquatIO.
CAREER & TRANSITION SERVICES

Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) Department of Pupil Services, Career and Transition Services participates on the School Business Partnership Council and works with businesses throughout Loudoun County for work-based opportunities and strategic partnerships for our students with disabilities to obtain career and life readiness competencies. Business partnerships even support in-school businesses such as the Red, White and Brew coffee shop at Independence High School, where students with disabilities work on transition skills are able to gain real work experience in school, as well as businesses such as Ford’s Fish Shack coming into schools to provide information on careers in the culinary arts and hospitality. To that end, Career and Transition is proud to announce that once again two of our business partnerships nominated will be awarded recognition at the School Business partnership breakfast March 8th for their work in support of student learning! We are grateful to all our business partners and feel they all do work with our students that merits recognition. Career and Transition would also like to make you aware of the annual LCPS When the Bus Stops Coming; Life After High School event Saturday, February 8, from 8:30am-12:30pm at the school administration building main floor. There will be over 30 service providing vendors, as well as presentations from Career and Transition, Division of Rehabilitative Services (DARS) https://www.vadars.org/drs/, and the Loudoun County Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services (MHSADS) https://www.loudoun.gov/1329/Developmental-Services and the Loudoun County Community Services Board, in addition to our traditional student panel! Click here to register https://www.lcps.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=179754. Lastly, the transition teachers in the high schools are currently processing applications for interested students who have graduated or will be graduating in June with their Applied Studies Diploma, to apply for CAST/Community and Schools Together and Project Search. Applications are due March 1st. Click on these links to view the CAST https://vimeo.com/224678484 and Project Search videos https://vimeo.com/203193020.
**CHILD FIND**

The Child Find Chat Series continued with the session, Raising Young Communicators, that was presented on January 28th from 6-8pm at the Administration building. This chat focused on preschool language and communication and fostering language within daily activities. The final Child Find Chat in the series, Screen Sense for Young Children, will be presented on March 10th from 6-8pm at the Administration building. This last chat will focus on the benefits and challenges associated with technology and children’s early development such as sleep, language, self-regulation, and behavior. Suggestions for how to plan a healthy media diet and balance tech time with hands-on learning will also being presented. Everyone is welcome to attend! Please register by calling Parent Resources Services at 571-252-6540 or at [https://www.lcps.org/ParentResourceServices](https://www.lcps.org/ParentResourceServices).

**Discovery Elementary Staff Recognized for Inclusion Initiative**

Please access Loudoun Now article [here](https://www.lcps.org/ParentResourceServices).

**Mental Health & Wellness Symposium**

The Department of Pupil Services hosted the third annual Mental Health and Wellness Conference on Saturday, Jan. 11th, at Independence High School from 8:00 am – 1:00 pm. Approximately 300 visitors attended, and the conference was reported on NBC 4 and WDVM TV. The conference provided parents and students the chance to gain information and better understand mental health topics, such as anxiety, stress, resilience, the impact of technology on mental wellness, current LCPS programs and services, and much more. There was also a screening of the independent film LIKE, followed by a presentation by Dr. Edward Spector (a psychologist who specializes in compulsive technology use) who provided practical ideas on how to help students and parents limit the amount of time students spend on their screens and the impact of technology on daily lives, interpersonal relationships, communication and more. Three breakout sessions with over 20 presenters highlighted the conference and over 25 resource vendors were available to share information with participants.
Images from the Mental Health & Wellness Symposium ...
At the invitation of Virginia Tiered System of Supports (VTSS) leaders, Kristin McGraw, presented Creating and Implementing Efficient and Effective Academic Decision-Making Documents to school divisions participating in Virginia Tiered System of Supports (VTSS) Cohorts with a focus on implementing advanced tiers. Both the collaborative process and products, including LCPS Reading Decision Trees and Guidance for Math Instructional Decision-Making documents, were shared with division and state leaders from across the state.

Upcoming Professional Development open for enrollment in My Learning Plan:

- Embedding Intervention in Math – February 20, 2020 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
- Navigating the LCPS Reading Decision Trees to Support Targeted Tier 2 Intervention Grades K-5 – March 12, 2020; 8:30 a.m.– 11:30 a.m.

On December 12, 2019, in collaboration with the Department of Pupil Services and the Department of Instruction, the Multi-Tiered System of Supports office hosted a professional learning opportunity for approximately 75 school and division staff members on Navigating the LCPS Reading Decision Trees to Support Tier 2 Targeted Instruction. Staff members learned how to navigate the Reading Decision Trees and used grade level case studies to determine instructional matches for targeted tier 2 support. Through discussion and collaboration, staff were able to plan for school-based tier 2 intervention and lesson plans they could use immediately following the professional development session.

Social-Emotional Learning

MTSS Supervisor, Stefanie LaPolla & Social-Emotional Learning Specialist, Lindsay Orme, provided a joint Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) implementation presentation with Colleen O’Neill, Sully Elementary School Principal, Amanda George, Sully School Counselor, and Annamarie Frost, Sully 3rd Grade Teacher, on December 11th in Alexandra, Virginia. The audience members attended as part of an aspiring principals cohort offered through The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and The School Superintendents Association (AASA). The LCPS team guided participants through the stages of SEL implementation from both school and division level perspectives. Information was shared on building support, planning, valuable resources, systems for continuous improvement, and lessons learned. The team was thanked for sharing their experiences and for their clear dedication to serving all students, utilizing SEL to support each child’s success in school and life.
Big News: We are now live streaming and archiving some of our presentations. Please check the individual workshop flyer to see if these sessions will be live streamed and archived. The link to watch our workshops in real time is [https://www.lcps.org/PRSlivestream](https://www.lcps.org/PRSlivestream) and to see the archived presentations is [https://www.lcps.org/Page/224337](https://www.lcps.org/Page/224337).

On January 22, 2020, PRS hosted “Managing Bumps in the Road: Building Resilient Relationships with Your Teen.” In this session, led by Dr. John Walker, families learned strategies to assist with parent/teen relationship. There were 48 participants at this well-received workshop. One parent commented, “Very informative. Made me want to try new things.” Another parent commented, “There were so many strategies I learned today. Many thanks.”

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **February 1-29, 2020**: African American History Month
- **February 3-7, 2020**: National School Counseling Week
- **February 17, 2020**: Presidents' Day Holiday: Schools & Administrative Offices Closed

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**“THE FUNCTION OF EDUCATION IS TO TEACH ONE TO THINK INTENSIVELY AND TO THINK CRITICALLY INTELLIGENCE PLUS CHARACTER THAT IS THE GOAL OF TRUE EDUCATION”**

~MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.