



Arlington  
Public  
Schools

Professional Learning

# BRIEFING REPORT

MARCH 2019





# PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The Office of Professional Learning (OPL) supports professional learning in APS. The services coordinated by this office include staff learning (face-to-face, blended and online formats) as well as the coordination of the Teacher Mentor Program, the Career Advancement Program, and teacher evaluation.

**Vision:** Every APS staff member engages in effective professional learning so every student achieves.

## MAJOR SERVICES PROVIDED

The Office of Professional Learning:

- Provides county-wide professional learning and structures to support county-wide initiatives such as Administrative Conference, Professional Learning Communities, Professional Learning Days, Adaptive Schools, Cognitive Coaching, and Responsive Classroom.
- Plans, implements, and evaluates the provision for professional growth.
- Provides oversight and support for offices and schools in planning, implementing, and evaluating effective professional learning, to include blended, online, and face-to-face formats.
- Oversees the management of and assistance with the system (Electronic Registrar Online) that allows employees to register, record, and receive credit for workshops, courses, and training offered within APS.
- Plans, implements, and evaluates the provision for orienting new T-Scale staff to APS through New Educator Orientation.
- Equips veteran teachers with the knowledge and skills to provide each new teacher consistent, ongoing support during their first year of employment in Arlington Public Schools, through the Mentor Program.
- Provides teachers with a more in-depth understanding of, and assistance with, the expectations and components of the APS knowledge and skills based pay system for T-Scale staff to include CAP Portfolios I (local) and III (National Board Certification).
- Guides the work of the Instructional Lead Teachers (ILT) who are classroom teachers interested in serving in a leadership role. The OPL provides ILTs with enhanced opportunities to learn and grow, and capitalizes on their skills and talents for the benefit of students.

Areas of focus have been supporting the work of the APS specific to professional learning communities, the Arlington Tiered System of Support and personalized learning.

- Promotes high-quality teaching and learning experiences through observation, feedback, and coaching cycles for teachers.
- Monitors instruction and program implementation through classroom walkthroughs and data analysis.
- Provides guidance and support for the T-Scale and P-Scale evaluation process in collaboration with Human Resources and Administrative Services.
- Coordinates field experience and observation placements designed to give university students guided and controlled experiences with professionals in the elementary and secondary schools.

## BRIGHT SPOTS

The OPL is working to improve **awareness and communication about professional learning opportunities offered in a variety of formats**, utilizing the data in our single system of record. An improved web page presence has included utilizing the data from ERO and posting it on the OPL web page so that staff can easily find professional learning information without having to log into ERO. The office continues to use the @APSlerns twitter account to highlight professional learning experiences.

In alignment with the APS commitment to retain highly qualified staff, the OPL oversees the **Career Advancement Program (CAP)**. Each year, we have more and more teachers enrolling in information sessions and spring seminars than we did the year before. This school year, we are supporting 75 teachers participating in the APS National Board cohort. As a part of continual improvement, we are in the process of reorganizing the content in the CAP Manual to have more aligned vocabulary and concise directions. In addition, we will begin work to align the process with the Professional Learning Framework.

To support APS in recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff, the OPL collaborates with Human Resources to establish **university networks and partnerships**. OPL initiated a revision of the Field Placement Application to align language and processes with Human Resource's Student Teaching Application process. We are currently working to establish MOA's with several local universities, including NOVA, Marymount, George Mason, and Educate VA.

Based upon recommendations from the program evaluation and from the Teacher Evaluation Advisory Committee, in support of the system-wide goal of establishing a **single system of record for professional learning** for the APS workforce, the OPL expanded the use of the online professional learning registration system to offices beyond Teaching and Learning. The OPL trained individuals in various offices to utilize the online professional learning registration system to advertise offerings, record registration, mark attendance, and conduct evaluation of professional learning offerings. In addition, school-based codes were utilized and Instructional Technology Coordinators and other school-based staff continue to be trained to manage the online professional learning registration system offerings for each building. Several schools have started using the online professional learning registration system as their system of record for professional learning offerings. This work has expanded the offerings entered and tracked via the online professional learning registration system. In addition, the OPL is excited to go live with an upgrade to the system to include integration with Canvas and inclusion in single-sign-on.

The OPL and Human Resources have been working with Purchasing and Information Services to identify the requirements of an **integrated employee dashboard** and services to cover the employee's service with APS, "from hire to retire" to include improvements and integration of the application process, onboarding, contracts, professional learning and growth, evaluation, and substitute management.

The OPL is committed to supporting the creation of shared understanding and language of **effective professional learning** to include planning, implementation, and evaluation through the engagement of stakeholders. For the first time in APS, three county-wide early release days were provided for PreK-12 staff. Staff selected offerings from the professional learning framework to enhance their practice. The framework includes face-to-face, blended and online learning formats.

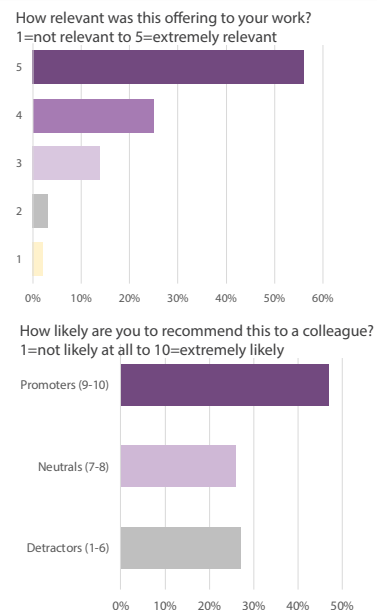
The OPL is committed to supporting effective professional learning through **collaboration with other offices**. OPL works collaboratively with departments and schools to develop professional learning opportunities that are aligned with the Teaching and Learning Framework. These opportunities are offered to educators several times throughout the year, including New Educator Orientation, The Festival of the Minds (FOM) Professional Learning Conference, Cognitive Coaching and Adaptive Schools cohorts, and APS Days of Learning.

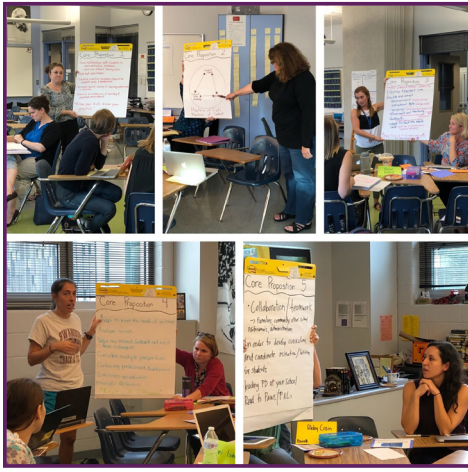
The support and inservice days for **Instructional Assistants** was **incorporated into the August Day of Learning**. 481 A-Scale, 28 E-scale, 17 G-scale, 41 P-scale, and 2,341 T-Scale attended the August 28, 2018 Day of Learning. 105 sessions were offered, including all three formats of face-to-face sessions, blended learning modules and online learning modules. One focus this year for instructional assistant learning is, in collaboration with Human Resources, supporting a pilot at Swanson Middle School. The school brought forward a plan to support assistants' learning through an online subscription service and application of the learning through regular gatherings and dialogue about the application in their work with Swanson students. The team is working on monitoring the work and will analyze the results to consider next steps and replicability. Administrative assistant professional learning was also offered on the October 8 Day of Learning. Through attending the morning sessions or the afternoon sessions, they had the opportunity to attend two of the four offerings.

## DATA THAT PROVIDES INSIGHT

- The instructional professional learning framework has been implemented, with **OVER 100 COURSES DEVELOPED**.
- The OPL trained **90 NEW TEACHER MENTORS**.
- A total of **243 MENTORS** were assigned to new teachers for the 2018-19 school year.
- 112 mentors of **new educators**
- 131 mentors of **experienced but new to APS** educators
- One **NEW ONLINE COURSE** was created for new educators with resources to help support them with licensure, leave, STAN, and information from New Educator Orientation. It also provided announcements and updates to help support them with required responsibilities throughout the year.
- The OPL is supporting **75 NATIONAL BOARD CANDIDATES**.
- 20 T-Scale employees **earned** National Board Certification.
- 12 T-Scale employees **renewed** their National Board Certification.
- The "Introduction to National Board Certification" and "CAP Overview" courses had the **HIGHEST NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS** in years, with over 100 teachers seeking to learn more about the Career Advancement Program options in APS.
- In partnership with local and regional universities, the PLO successfully placed **48 FIELD EXPERIENCE STUDENTS** in the Fall of 2019 with APS classroom teachers.

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SESSIONS EXIT SURVEY RESULTS





Significant collaboration with Human Resources and the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning has been focused on the **development of a professional learning framework** for all staff. The instructional professional learning framework was developed and implemented this year and includes face-to-face sessions, blended, and online modules. The first draft of administrative competencies has been used to plan administrator professional learning. We look forward to the refinement of these and use of the competencies to guide further work.

### WHAT WE LEARNED

APS is committed to engaging all staff in effective, high-quality professional learning. The creation of goal-oriented competency-based professional learning through a professional learning framework provides opportunities for autonomy in acquiring new knowledge and skills. The professional learning framework allows staff to have control over their learning through varied opportunities while providing a clear purpose for the learning. While in the past we have talked about THE or A (singular) professional learning framework, in actuality we need several frameworks to guide the learning of all staff.

### MOVING FORWARD

The OPL will continue to collaborate with stakeholders to redefine the Office of Professional Learning vision, mission, core competencies, services, and branding. The creation and implementation of professional learning frameworks guide the learning for all staff in APS in a coherent, cohesive manner.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATION PROGRESS

### RECOMMENDATION 1

Implement a system that:

- aligns all instructional professional learning efforts across the district with each other to support Strategic Plan goals, School Board priorities, and/or budget initiatives; and
- coordinates school-based and central office professional learning offerings through a collaborative solution process.

### COMPLETED WORK

- Developed a holistic Professional Learning Framework for instructional staff
- Drafted APS administrator competencies
- Piloted professional learning for administrators based upon draft competencies

- Provided learning opportunities for Administrative Assistants as well as Instructional Assistants

### CURRENT AREAS OF FOCUS

- Upgrade of professional learning registration system for a better user experience
- RFP development for a comprehensive employee dashboard

### NEXT STEPS

- Development of competencies and implementation of a Professional Learning Framework for all scales (Timeline TBD based upon collaborative work with HR)
- 2018-19: Testing and implementation of professional learning registration system upgrade

### RECOMMENDATION 2

Conduct an APS professional learning policy review

### CURRENT AREAS OF FOCUS

- Updating PIPs to incorporate professional learning hours

### NEXT STEPS

- 2019-20: Adjust policies to align with new frameworks

### RECOMMENDATION 3

Create and pilot professional learning delivery models that identify best practices and include tools for evaluation.

### COMPLETED WORK

- Development and delivery of over 100 professional learning offerings from the framework
- Support the use of Canvas to enhance the face-to-face and online learning experiences to increase access to resources
- Implementation of a new professional learning session feedback survey

### CURRENT AREAS OF FOCUS

- Supporting the development of online offerings in Canvas in alignment with the professional learning framework

### NEXT STEPS

- Ongoing: Support professional learning using a variety of models including blended learning, instructional rounds, job-embedded coaching and support, etc.
- 2019-20: Develop system of accountability to monitor implementation of the Professional Learning Framework

