ACHIEVEMENT, LEARNING & LEADERSHIP

VISION
We are a dynamic, collaborative community of energized educators, engaged students and supportive partners with a passion for continuous learning.

MISSION
Achievement, Learning, & Leadership utilizes evidence-based curricular resources, instructional practices, and professional supports to ensure rigorous learning outcomes for the District 11 community, resulting in prepared, productive, informed, and engaged citizens.

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Strategic Plan Celebrations:

- Empowering the Whole Student: Penrose Principal Tamara Sobin and TLC Gretchen Bitner were interviewed and quoted in the September/October issue of Principal magazine, published by the National Association of Elementary School Principals, for their work on authentic assessment, specific to Project-Based Learning!
- Equitable Practices: Achieve Online was highlighted in Research: Outcomes of Blended/Online Learning Programs recently for their work in helping at-risk middle and high school students thrive and learn to love school in a blended learning, alternative education setting! Read more: [https://www.k12.com/content/dam/fueled/press-room/in-the-news/academic-outcomes-of-nine-blended-and-online-learning-programs-white-paper.pdf](https://www.k12.com/content/dam/fueled/press-room/in-the-news/academic-outcomes-of-nine-blended-and-online-learning-programs-white-paper.pdf)
- Collaborative Culture: On October 5, local churches held their “Colorado Springs, I Love you, City Services Day.” Many schools in D11 were the proud recipients of goodwill by our community. For example, at West Elementary School, 35 volunteers from Academy Christian Church provided three hours of grounds keeping support to include pruning, weeding, raking, sweeping, and trash removal. Over 48 bags of trash were collected. In addition, we’d like to recognize those D11 staff members that represented School District 11 in the community by volunteering their time to support the larger Colorado Springs area as well.

Engage Coaching Strategy:

- When analyzing your ADB results, your data conversation can be coached to strong action steps in effective reteach strategies. Two opportunities for reteaching (presented at the October K12 meeting) were Modeling and Guided Discourse. In your spiral-bound Engage Coaching book, use the GBF Coaches Guide and the GBF Scope and Sequence tabs for further resources. Additionally, p. 291-325 in Get Better Faster also include great resources to use when coaching to effective reteaching plans!

Equity in Education:

- Recommended reading (via Chalkbeat):

UPCOMING
11/6 (7:45-11:30am) Executive Professionals & K12 Leadership Meeting
Tesla PD

11/6 (12:00–4:00pm) Middle School Principals Meeting
Tesla PD

11/7 (7:30-11:30am) High School Principals Meeting
Antler’s Grill Club Room

11/13 (7:30-11:00am) Elementary School Principals Meeting
Tesla PD
MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT
Jennifer Schulte, MTSS Facilitator and Sonia Urban, MTSS Specialist

The Office of MTSS has been working hard to meet the EASI CO-MTSS Grant Expansion deadline. The purpose is to continue the work that has been occurring for the past several years as well as expand our efforts. The main ideas of the EASI CO-MTSS Grant are to offer PD and support for the rollout of the MTSS Framework, Guidebook, and Student Success Team structure. Implementation will be staggered over the next several years. More details to follow as we hear from the CDE. As always, if you have questions please contact us. Thank you!

SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT—ACHIEVE TEAM
Jeremy Koselak, System Improvement Specialist

The Achieve Team has completed quarterly step backs with many ACT schools to debrief on implementation benchmarks and student outcome data. These step backs are part of a robust improvement cycle known as Strategic Performance Management – a process ACT schools learn about throughout the school year.

ACT school USIPs were reviewed and revised, with attention to the ACT plan components. Per state statute, additional revisions were recommended by the BOE and DAC for the four schools on the state accountability clock. The plans overall are far better as compared to previous years – way to go school leadership teams!

Celebration: For schools that were part of the first round of the EASI grant with CDE in 2018-19 (Empowering Action for School Improvement), including schools currently in the final year of the Turnaround Network (for schools designated for extra support by state and/or federal criteria), seven of the eight are no longer flagged by CDE or the Feds and five are now at “Performance” (the other three are at “Improvement”)

We are currently applying on behalf of 11 schools for the 2nd cohort of EASI grant supports. To learn more about the ESSA criteria and EASI grant process, go to: https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplication

We are in process of retooling the school improvement model to incorporate the 5 Essential Conditions for School Improvement. All D11 schools will be participating in a culture and climate survey of staff and students (November 12-December 20) aligned to the 5 Essentials that will lay the foundation for this critical work moving forward. To learn more, please visit: https://www.d11.org/5essentialssurvey
The C&I team has been working on several disciplinary literacy tools and resources based on school specific requests. These materials can be found in the training and resources referenced at the November K12 meeting and the Engaging Learners training with Dr. McKnight. This month focused on the use of learning centers/stations in all subjects. One page learning center reference tools for each subject are available now. Educators attending the Engaging Learners trainings will all receive Dr. McKnight’s newest book: Learning Centers for the Big Kids once it is finalized by the publisher as well.

One specific item in these resources well worth reading comes from Natalie Wexler’s book, The Knowledge Gap, Why Deeply Diving Into Content Could Be the Key to Reading Comprehension. Embedded in the article is a video created by Daniel Willingham, Teaching Content Is Teaching Reading. These resources share the overlying rationale for the importance of the disciplinary literacy pillar in the instructional framework.

Another related and exciting roll out for the month of November is the launch of the D11 Graduate Profile. This profile is organized by eight Learner Attributes. These attributes have been aligned to the Colorado Essential Skills embedded in each and every Grade Level Expectation in all grades and subjects of the Colorado Academic Standards and will be an important guide to articulate what is meant by the instructional core in D11. These attributes should be tightly adhered to in all instructional experiences that students receive and are inclusive of content, concepts and skill attainment to meet our whole student focus.

- Academically Ready
- Continuous Learner
- Skilled Communicator
- Empowered Citizen
- Innovative Problem Solver
- Healthy and Balanced
- Critical Thinker
- Empathetic Collaborator

The C&I team is committed to serving as learning leaders that empower educators to reach their highest potential for student success. We strive to offer service and support to our entire D11 community as we model continuous learning to improve our knowledge, practices, and structures so that all students reach their personal best. Success in our work looks like:

- supporting educators in engaging students in deep learning in all subjects
- unlocking unlimited possibilities for all learners
- serving as a district ambassadors through integrity, empathy and credibility.

Curriculum Calendar link
GIFTED & TALENTED
Kristin Balsick, GT Facilitator

Colorado Association for Gifted & Talented (CAGT) 2019. We are pleased to announce that D11 was represented very well at this year’s CAGT event. 45 staff members and a handful of parents attended informative sessions and training. Two of our staff presented sessions to attendees, one high school student performed on her trumpet, and one of our elementary students was the recipient of the 2019 Youth Impact Award. It was definitely a successful conference!

Pikes Peak GT will host author Jim Deslisle on November 14, 2019. A free full day training will be offered to teachers and an evening event will be offered to parents. Information will be posted on the www.D11.org/GT website in the IMPORTANT GT ANNOUNCEMENTS tab.

Fall SENG Parent Discussion Groups are currently in session. Registration for the Spring SENG groups will be opening just before winter break. www.D11.org/SENG

The Cognitive Abilities Test, (CogAT-7), is being administered online to all second grade students in District 11 during the months of October and November. The CogAT measures general reasoning abilities in three domains: verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal. Individual student score reports will be mailed to the parent/guardian address on file. Students who complete all three sections of the assessment will receive an ability profile score. A brief description of the child’s learned reasoning abilities can be found when entering the profile on the following website: https://www.riversideinsights.com/apps/cogat
Parents/Guardians should contact the Gifted & Talented Resource Teacher or Principal at their child’s school to opt the child out and not have them take the Cognitive Abilities Test. Parents can access the assessment notification letter at www.D11.org/GT.

Information on the Gifted Education Budget can be found on the CDE website: http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/gtbudget and on the D11 GT website: https://www.d11.org/Page/2552 Please contact the GT Office if you have ideas and/or suggestions of how to utilize our resources.

Websites ideas with resources and information to support our gifted students, their teachers, and our families:
www.sengifted.org www.coloradogifted.org www.cde.state.co.us/gt/parents www.nagc.org
www.byrdseed.com
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
Mykel Donnelly, ELA Facilitator

The ELA team has been collaborating regularly with Dr. Kathryn McKnight and her Engaging Learners model to develop and implement disciplinary literacy through student learning centers at the secondary level. This work has been primarily focused at the middle school level. Monthly meetings with the elementary TLC’s provided our team and Dr. McKnight the opportunity to share best practices around instructional coaching. Bringing specific coaching strategies to the TLC’s was the first step. Our next steps are to develop learning lab classrooms where Dr. McKnight will co-teach or model in a classroom and then support the classroom teacher with a coaching conference. These learning labs will be recorded and eventually live streamed so that all educators and leaders in our district can learn from these model classrooms. The ELA team also continues to support individual teachers and schools with our current implementations.

SCIENCE & HEALTH
Darian Founds, Science/Health Facilitator

One of the key elements of the 2020 CO Science Standards is the focus on science and engineering practices (SEP). These practices describe how students engage with and deepen their understanding of scientific content and concepts in an authentic manner. Every evidence outcome, from kindergarten to high school, in the 2020 CO Science Standards leads with one of the SEPs which require students to apply such skills as developing models, analyzing data, or engaging in argument from evidence. More information about the science and engineering practices can be found in the Next Generation Science Standards Appendix F.
Becoming Literate Like a Mathematician (Part 2)

Last time in this space I claimed that the disciplinary habits of mind and behaviors represented by the eight Standards for Mathematical Practice (SMPs) provide an avenue into developing K-12 students’ disciplinary literacy in mathematics. In this article, I will begin illustrating my claim by describing an instructional routine where SMP 2, Reason abstractly and quantitatively, is required.

The answer to almost any contextualized math problem (a “word problem”) students encounter is not simply a number or a value but is instead a quantity. Quantities are things that can be counted or measured. A quantity has three components: its value, its label, and its sign (positive or negative). We can describe quantities using the sentence stems, “The number of...” or “The amount of...”. It is easy to recognize that being quantitatively literate falls within disciplinary literacy for several content areas.

When students go wrong with math word problems, often they are not recognizing the nature of quantities nor relationships between quantities presented; they are not exercising disciplinary literacy. To view a relatively famous example of this, watch How Old is the Shepherd? In this video, 75% of the sampled 8th graders quickly bypass making sense of quantities and simply start applying arithmetic operations to numbers they see in the nonsense math prompt: “There are 125 sheep and 5 dogs in a flock. How old is the shepherd?!”

An instructional routine to foster reasoning about quantities relies on the simple move of removing the question from the math word problem and presenting students with only the context. This short-circuits the habit of “answer getting” we have instilled in our students; it halts students’ reflexes to immediately begin computing. After the teacher quiets the inevitable cries of “What are we supposed to do?!”, they re-direct students to working on visually representing the quantities and relationships between quantities presented in the problem. This can be a very different method of comprehending and interpreting quantity-rich text for both students and teachers, and so this sort of task provides lots of opportunities for student collaboration and math talk.

Try this example yourself: “Each year Quinn plants 24 flowers in his garden. This year he planted only red flowers and purple flowers. Quinn prefers purple, so he planted twice as many purple flowers as red flowers.” Draw your own visual representation of this scenario and, when you are ready, click here to see some representations of this scenario.
All D11 AVID schools have access to the AVID Weekly to support literacy skill development by all teachers for all students. Teachers access this resource through their my AVID.org account to take advantage of the following:

Objective:
- AVID Weekly is designed for use by teachers at the high school, middle school and elementary levels, as well as AVID for Higher Education. It is intended to be a resource for moving AVID instructional methodologies, including disciplinary literacy, school wide.

What We Provide:
- All educators at a school site have access to AVID Weekly if the school and/or district has purchased an AVID Secondary Library or a subscription to AVID Weekly.
- Engaging articles, exemplar lessons, and a matrix guide are published on the first of each month from September through June. All previous months’ materials from the current academic school year are also archived and accessible online.

Current and Engaging Content:
- AVID Weekly articles are selected each month to cover three levels of difficulty: Foundational, Intermediate, and Advanced. Additionally, there is an English language learner (ELL) lesson developed each month with an accompanying article to support academic language development. Articles are chosen to encompass a broad range of content areas to support disciplinary literacy, or reading like a content expert. Their content areas are identified on the monthly matrix.
- Lesson design is based on AVID’s critical reading process with an emphasis on disciplinary literacy.

Teacher Resources Home Page
The Teacher Resources page offers support to teachers who are interested in crafting highly effective and purposeful reading and writing assignments. The following resources are provided on this website to aid AVID Weekly subscribers:

I. The Matrix
The matrix is a valuable resource for educators for the following reasons:
- It lists the lessons and articles available for the month, which can be viewed online or downloaded as PDF files.
- It identifies a level for each article: advanced, intermediate, or foundational. These distinctions take into account vocabulary, content, sophistication of ideas, text structure, and overall length of the text.
- It identifies content areas to which the lesson or article connects.
- It identifies which stage(s) of AVID's critical reading process are emphasized within each lesson. Every lesson will use all stages of the critical reading process, but not every lesson goes as deeply into a particular phase (e.g., building vocabulary) as others might.
- To return to the matrix from other areas of the site, click on the “Articles and Lessons” tab at the top of the page.

II. Instructional Model
Each month, AVID Weekly makes available six types of exemplar lessons designed to demonstrate what reading and writing for disciplinary literacy look like when integrated into an instructional plan, with the "engage," "activate," and "extend" phases driving the research based best practices and strategies drawn from current AVID curriculum resources. The six lesson levels include:
- Foundational (1–2 lessons)
- Intermediate (1–2 lessons)
- Advanced (1 lesson)
- ELL (1 lesson)
- AVID for Higher Education (1 lesson)

III. Archives
AVID Weekly archives both the articles and the matrix for each month. Use the navigation menu on the site to view the matrix from any month of the current school year.

Joan Jahelka, AVID Coordinator
UPCOMING

11/12 (8:00-3:30)
McGraw Hill IMPACT Social Studies Curriculum PD for 2nd Grade at Tesla

SOCIAL STUDIES
Joan Jahelka, Social Studies Facilitator

ES: Our Colorado Giant Map kit is now available for check-out by schools for a two-week period so that teachers can familiarize themselves with this resource and supporting lessons for grades K-5. Please e-mail joan.jahelka@d11.org with the two-week slot that your school would like the kit to be at your school.

Disciplinary literacy (DL) in social studies means that teachers are using thoughtfully chosen literacy techniques to teach students social studies objectives (not using social studies to learn literacy objectives). It is using reading, writing, speaking, listening, and performance skills to enhance social studies learning.

Questions that may help focus social studies DL:
• How do we help students think in social studies?
• What specialized texts do we have students read in social studies, and how do we help students access them?

The main foci of DL in social studies are:
• Inquiry cycle (questioning, research, analysis, communication)
• Primary source analysis (often as a part of the inquiry cycle)
• Sourcing and bias (how does knowing who wrote something change how you accept that source as "truth"?)
• Considering point of view (how would a geographer view something different than a historian, for example)
• Specialized vocabulary (ex: bias, stereotype, "truth" mean different things in English class than in a history class).

To learn more about how student writing improves in social studies, please access the following research:
Disciplinary Literacy in History: An Exploration of the Historical Nature of Adolescents’ Writing
VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS
Laurilea McDaniel, Visual & Performing Arts Facilitator

- Visual & Performing Arts now has an Instagram account, please follow us @District11VAPArts
- CS Dance Theatre Choreography Contest – Submissions Now Being Accepted [https://csdance.org/ascend-local-choreography-festival/](https://csdance.org/ascend-local-choreography-festival/)

UPCOMING

11/6 (7:00pm)
Middle Honor Choir Concert
RJ Wasson Auditorium

12/12
Colorado Thespian Middle School Day
Colorado Convention Center

12/13-14
ThesCon
Colorado Convention Center/Colorado

Cultural Art Show

Open to public
11.5.19 - 11.30.19
Tuesday - Saturday
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Reception
November 12, 2019
5 - 6:30 p.m.
@ The Citadel
Across from the Bungee jump east of the food court
Innovative problem solving is a competency critical for success in life and requires learners to embrace curiosity, creativity, informed risk taking, novel approaches and cycles of inquiry. It is also one of the eight elements on the D11 Graduate Profile, and we can provide opportunity to develop this skill set through inquiry-based learning.

Inquiry based learning is all about cultivating the innate curiosity all humans possess. Studies show children come to us as kindergartens brimming with curiosity but leave as 12th graders with far less. In fact, in 2014 Goodman notes, “A longitudinal study of kindergarten children measured 98% of them at genius level in divergent thinking. Five years later, when they were aged 8 to 10 years, those at genius level had dropped to 50%. After another five years, the number of divergent thinking geniuses had fallen further still.”

One way to embed inquiry-based learning strategies into everyday learning experiences for students is through questioning skills. Generating or developing a question engages our brains and activates divergent thinking processes.

Convergent and Divergent Thinking
Convergent thinking is about linear and systematic processes in which we narrow ideas into a single solution. Divergent thinking is open ended, flexible, iterative and encourages us to take creative risks. Schools traditionally have favored convergent thinking as we often seek and celebrate the “right” answer. However, innovative problem-solving skills in demand by employers and secondary education Institutions, recognizes that both cognitive processes are valuable working together.

Here are a few examples of how to activate divergent thinking processes:

- Problem based learning - Instead of asking questions to which there is a correct answer, ask students to create the problem. [Link to video here]
- Feedback as a catalyst - Direct instruction of how to give and receive feedback with simple starters such as, “I like, I wish, and I wonder” and responding with “I will” to get to the next iteration. [Link to Power of Feedback - Austin’s Butterfly]
- Environments that defer judgement - When deferring judgment, the learning environment becomes open to other influences, possibility thinking and ideas.
- Question stems to guide divergent processes - For example “What if... or What might be an alternate way of thinking about...?” [Link to more here]
- Start with the answer - Example - The answer is the ocean. What might the question be?
- Posing “Would you rather” questions - Demands evaluative and analytical thinking. [Link to more here]
- Using online tools - Like Wonderopolis ([link here]) and Mystery Doug ([link here]).
- Host a Wonder Day ([link here])
GLOBAL EDUCATION
Claudette Murtha, Global Education Facilitator

North Middle School World Language program and teachers accepted the CLEAR Award (Colorado Language Excellence & Achievement Recognition) at the CCFLT (Colorado Congress of Foreign Language Teachers) conference in Golden, Colorado on October 5th. A total of seven World Language teachers attended this conference in Golden and Pueblo (October 19th).

Global Education Department is working on a plan to encourage well-planned, service-oriented and standards-driven, equitable international travel for our staff and students. More to come!

Free Voluntary Reading (FVR) libraries should be ready to implement for all four high schools and one middle school. Not only does free reading in the World Language classroom change attitudes about reading, research shows that students who read more write better too! Click HERE to find out more about how FVR libraries in World Language is great for our kids!

MULTILINGUAL
Talonna Hybki, Multilingual Facilitator

As we continue to enroll new English learner students in the district, ELL teachers are conducting our Identification process and testing student with the WIDA Screener or the W-APT exam.

Reminder: ELL students should be on I-Ready for at least 20 minutes a week and ELL teachers should be looking at their student’s data/reports periodically to provide students and classroom teachers updates on their progress.

We are observing students using the Imagine Learning Language and Literacy program at our pilot schools. We are excited to see that students are engaging with the program and are showing very good progress in their oral language skills and literacy skills.

The CLDE office is working on creating an approved 45 hour CLD course proposal. Once this course approval is obtained from CDE we will be working with a team of ELL teachers to create each course so that we can begin to offer more choices to our district teachers.
**SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
Judy Gudvangen, Special Education Executive Director

**Student-Led IEP Meetings**  
Mitchell High School students recently filmed a motivation/training video for SPED teachers about the school’s implementation of student-led IEP meetings. The video reports how powerful these meetings are for the entire IEP team and how they encourage leadership skills in students. It includes a panel discussion led by a student, and filming of two IEP meetings: one at Wilson Elementary and the other at Mitchell High School. Mitchell students have already made presentations at the Peak Parent Conference on Inclusive Education and the Transition Leadership Institute in the past year, and on November 14, they will be presenting, for a second time, the same content at UCCS to future special education teachers. Thanks to the Mitchell team and their students for their ongoing leadership in this area. We will make the video available when possible, but please let us know if you are interested in observing a student-led IEP meeting at Mitchell.

**Graduation Requirements**  
The special education department is working on developing a Performance Assessment as an option for students who need an additional way to achieve the Post Workforce Readiness part of the new graduation requirements. New guidance will be distributed to our high school SPED teams prior to Winter Break.

**Special Education Advisory Committee**  
The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) presentation on Guardianship at the Arc was cancelled in October due to inclement weather. The Steering Committee is working to get this re-scheduled during the second semester.