Asheville City Schools PreK-12 Instructional Framework

Core Beliefs

We believe all students can **learn, discover, and thrive**. By putting students first and remaining standards focused, we will strive to create learning environments that ensure excellence with equity for all students.

Background/Introduction

The Asheville City Schools Strategic Plan, *Excellence with Equity!*, was created as a roadmap for our district through 2020. In the 2015-16 school year, the ACS Teaching and Learning Team identified six Teaching and Learning Essentials rooted in the Common Core Standards to help guide the instructional practices of the district (academic vocabulary, close reading of text, writing with evidence, make sense of problems and persevere in solving, construct viable arguments and critique reasons, and model with mathematics). Building from these six essentials, the Teaching and Learning Department collaborated with a team of expert teachers to create instructional frameworks for the district. This team of teachers, representing all grade spans, disciplines, and schools in the district, started collaborating during the spring of 2016. In the summer of 2017, the teacher team worked to articulate the connection between the ACS Instructional Frameworks, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and Integrated Comprehensive Systems (ICS) Equity Work. The frameworks have been revised to make them more user-friendly and to help staff integrate them in their everyday practice. All of the frameworks are grounded in the district strategic plan and Common Core standards and are vertically aligned to include shared practices and strategies.

Purpose

The ACS Instructional Frameworks are designed to provide guidance for planning in all our classrooms and decision making in the district. These frameworks will serve a variety of purposes, including to:
- decrease the achievement gap through rigorous, relevant, and responsive instruction;
- help teachers put into practice the district strategic plan with a focus on The Whole Child and Academic Achievement;
- serve as the foundation for district and school-based professional development;
- drive the work of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs);
- inform the writing of School Improvement Plans and the work of School Improvement Teams;
- guide the decision making around building schedules and assigning staff responsibilities;
- support the writing of teachers' Professional Development Plans (PDPs); and
- provide the foundation for curricular development, including the alignment of pacing guides, creation of assessments, and development of unit and lesson plans.

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ACS Faculty Strategy 1	Faculty **support students' social and emotional success** with a focus on equity using the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework by:
Action Steps	❏ explicitly teaching and reteaching schoolwide and classroom expectations, routines, and norms; ❏ using data-based problem solving to make instructional, curricular, and environmental decisions for all students; ❏ analyzing discipline data specifically around disproportionality and then implementing proactive measures to improve academic growth and achievement; ❏ promoting self-regulation; ❏ using behavior management strategies that are nurturing and build resiliency; ❏ valuing the experiences and contributions of each student; and ❏ providing academic, behavioral, and social/emotional instruction in a culturally responsive manner.
ACS Faculty Strategy 2	Faculty **engage students in relevant and rigorous learning** with a focus on equity using the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework by:
Action Steps	❏ providing differentiated, standards-based core instruction for the growth of all students, including remediation, acceleration, and enrichment, guided by formative and summative student data; ❏ providing students with appropriate tiers of targeted instruction and systems of support in addition to core instruction; ❏ using student data, including progress monitoring, to make Personalized Educational Plans (PEPs) to ensure students make progress towards grade level expectations; ❏ analyzing exceptional children's data by coordinating with the EC department to implement proactive measures to appropriately serve all students; ❏ collaborating in PLCs to turn data into useful and relevant information ensuring student growth and learning; ❏ ensuring all students have access to rigorous core curriculum rooted in grade-level or content standards; ❏ developing lesson plans that provide clear learning objectives, foster higher order thinking, and align to current, research-based best practices; ❏ explicitly teaching students close reading strategies and writing with evidence across all content areas K-12; ❏ supporting student discourse and questioning; and ❏ explicitly teaching and using common and consistent high-frequency and domain-specific academic vocabulary within and across grade levels.

ACS Faculty Strategy 3	Faculty will create a **student-centered learning environment** by:
Action Steps	❏ promoting a growth mindset; ❏ maintaining high expectations for all students; ❏ encouraging active learning in the classroom; ❏ providing rubrics and exemplars to ensure high quality student work; ❏ using an asset model when making instructional decisions about individuals and groups of students; ❏ engaging students in culturally relevant instruction; ❏ providing tools for students to track their own growth; ❏ providing timely feedback on student work with a focus on student growth and learning; and ❏ using whole-group and small-group settings to increase student engagement and growth.
ACS Faculty Strategy 4	Faculty implement **digital learning** to differentiate instruction and raise achievement in all content areas by:
Action Steps	❏ promoting and modeling digital citizenship and responsibility; ❏ implementing rigorous and relevant digital learning experiences and assessments; ❏ implementing blended learning where appropriate; ❏ providing access to internet-based technology for all students; ❏ providing digital environments which support collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity; and ❏ integrating North Carolina Digital Learning Competencies (DLCs) to improve instructional practice and drive student learning.
ACS Faculty Strategy 5	Faculty ensure **instructional innovation** in all content areas by:
Action Steps	❏ using tools to measure student engagement and respond to data appropriately; ❏ collaborating across grade levels and schools with vertical alignment as a goal; ❏ using an interdisciplinary approach to curriculum and instruction; ❏ designing and implementing curriculum that is inquiry-based; ❏ exploring additional methodologies to meet student needs (e.g. STEAM, Paideia, Universal Design for Learning, AVID strategies, choice-based instruction, etc); and ❏ using a variety of assessment strategies to ensure students have multiple ways to demonstrate mastery.