



In Case You Missed It!

Reverse the COVID Slide with Accelerated Learning

By Michelle Yerkes, Professional Development Coordinator

Now that the new school year has started, you are probably excited about getting on to a new normal, yet you may also be concerned about the effects of the COVID Slide on your students' academic growth. Now is the perfect opportunity to implement Accelerated Learning, a process to get kids on the fast track to grade level content despite learning losses from the past year and a half. We wanted to share this information with you again because of the urgent need to accelerate students' learning to help them succeed with grade level content as quickly as possible. Fortunately, anyone who has ever considered content accessibility in preparing for instruction is already familiar with many Accelerated Learning techniques. When implemented with a new focus, they are the most equitable ways to support all students to be successful with on-grade content.

Teachers accelerate learning with an identified sub-group of students before new instruction to help fill in the most essential prior skills and knowledge for the new concept. Imagine you are a brand new fourth-grade student and you missed out on learning about fractions during the pandemic. Now your class is about to start a fractions unit and you lack the essential pre-requisite skills. Luckily, 1 – 2 days before the new fractions unit begins, your teacher engages you with a Success Starter, a hands-on activity that helps you understand and get curious about fractions. Imagine your teacher also fills you in on key vocabulary and that a chart is displayed in the classroom throughout the learning for your reference. How great would it feel if your teacher provided you with actual fraction bars and helped you understand how to use them as a scaffold with the new content. In addition, your teacher creates and explains what you will be learning during the unit in a clear, concise Concept Map. You would likely feel more prepared, confident, and motivated.

You would also know and trust that your teacher cares about you and your learning. This is what Accelerated Learning is all about! Now, don't you feel less bogged down without the pressure of having to remediate every single missed skill from the previous year(s)?

If you are interested in learning more about the tools and the process to provide all students with grade level material and more equitable outcomes, please check out our resources on Accelerated Learning in the Learning Library. I love talking with teachers and leaders about Accelerated Learning, so please contact me at michelle.yerkes@maricopa.gov and let's continue the conversation!

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Look for **An Introduction to Accelerated Learning and Reversing the COVID Slide: Planning for Acceleration** playlists and the **Learning in the Fast Lane** book study in the Learning Library.

New Phoenix #1 iAcademy

By Kendra Moreno, Project Lead

There's a new school in Phoenix Elementary! The Phoenix #1 iAcademy, PESD's newest signature school, is an online virtual academy serving over 220 students in kindergarten through 8th grade. The school is led by Joseph Fuentes, a former PESD classroom teacher, Expanded Impact Teacher, and Instructional Enrichment and Intervention Specialist (IEIS).

Mr. Fuentes shared with us that the virtual academy is designed to meet students' academic needs while they learn from home. Students attend live virtual instruction but also learn asynchronously for part of their day, making the school a great fit for students who are working to be independent learners. The school aims to support their virtual learners to manage their own time and advocate for themselves. Through flexible scheduling and the implementation of supportive resources, students will engage in setting their own goals, tracking their own progress, and participating in student-led conferences.

Mr. Fuentes, like all great principals, spends time in classrooms. But for him, to effectively support his teachers as they deliver instruction virtually, he must leverage the technology to observe from both a teacher and student view. He and his staff are dedicated to providing an accessible yet rigorous academic program to ensure all students progress on grade level standards.

Developing and cultivating community with the students and families while developing a strong school culture is a priority for Mr. Fuentes. But it can be challenging when your staff and students don't share space in the traditional way. According to Mr. Fuentes, "The teachers and I are working very hard to create a community with our students and their families, so they know and feel that they are part of a school."

Congratulations to Mr. Fuentes and staff for the successful launch of the new and innovative Phoenix #1 iAcademy!

For further information, please contact Kendra Moreno (kendra.moreno@maricopa.gov).



Selling the Reinforcement

Strength-Based Feedback in the Instructional Conference

By Kendra Moreno, Project Lead

In an instructional post-observation conference, a teacher receives both a reinforcement (an area of strength) and a refinement (an area of need). Many times, the post-conference is spent on the area in need of refinement. However, evaluators need to consider the kind of feedback most likely to inspire a positive belief system related to the implementation of effective instructional strategies. In other words, "We can focus on what we're doing wrong and try to do less of it, or we can focus on what we're doing right and try to do more of it" (Aguilar, 2016).

Strength-based feedback begins with what is already going well. By identifying what made the lesson effective, leaders ask questions and provide feedback that encourages the teacher to double-down on that skill and transfer it to future lessons. Emphasizing the reinforcement not only highlights what's working but may even bring hidden skills to light. Sometimes teachers are unaware of their instructional strengths or have unintentionally forgotten why the strategy is so important. By emphasizing the cause-and-effect relationship of a teacher's effective practices, teachers acknowledge their positive impact on student learning. When a strength is acknowledged and labeled, it is more likely to become intentional and even more effective moving forward.

We have a free micro-credential called [Selling the Reinforcement: Strength-Based Feedback in the Instructional Conference](#) for leaders looking to shift their approach and begin placing more emphasis on teachers' instructional strengths. Supporting

teachers with feedback aligned to strengths in a post-observation conference doesn't mean one ignores the refinement. But by "selling the reinforcement" there's more potential to evoke a teacher's positive emotions and increase the confidence needed to tackle areas of growth.

Aguilar, E. (2016, April 10). *Asset-Based Coaching: Focusing on Strengths*. Retrieved July 15, 2019, from <https://bit.ly/3d0MLJj>.

I love hearing from the practitioners about how the experience changed their mindset and impacted their actual approach for the benefit of teachers. So here are a few anonymous quotes from evaluators who have earned their **Selling the Reinforcement** badge:

Earning the Selling the Reinforcement badge has made me more deliberate about planning for strengths-based dialogues to ensure that positive message is heard, and teachers leave feeling encouraged.

I know I have been successful with opening the teacher's eyes to new possibilities when they leave the conference smiling and ready to try it with their class the next day.

This badge was a vital step in my becoming more intentional during instructional conferences. Planning for strengths-based dialogues with teachers has increased their efficacy and understanding of the cause-effect relationships between effective practices and student results.

Using this approach continues to enhance my professional relationships with teachers. Focusing on teacher strengths rather than weaknesses opens the door for positive emotions that motivate and even inspire the teacher to use strengths as a basis for growth in areas they want to improve.



For further information, please contact Kendra Moreno (kendra.moreno@maricopa.gov).

REIL-izing Opportunity Culture Goals with Reach Associates

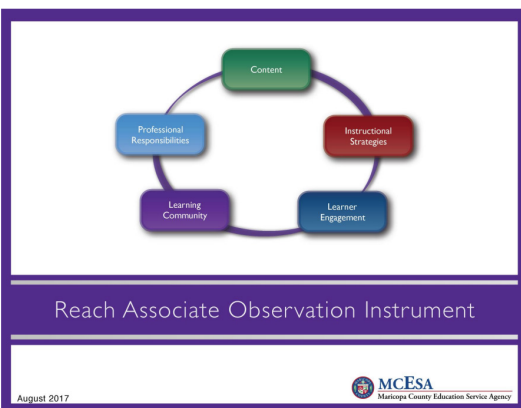
By Kim St. Clair, Professional Development Resource Coordinator

Our readers are likely familiar with the LOI, however, the Reach Associate Observation Instrument (RAOI) may be new to many. The Reach Associate (RA) role is critical to REIL-Extend Goal #2 of "accelerating access to effective educators by extending the reach of excellent teachers." RAs are exemplary paraeducators (instructional assistants) who are selected based on two important competencies:

- Concern for Order – an underlying drive to maintain or increase order in the surrounding environment.
- Serving Others – acting with a desire to help or serve others to meet their needs.

These competencies are integral to support an OC team, specifically the Expanded Impact Teacher (EIT). The RA makes it possible for the EIT to reach more students by ensuring order and the continuation of quality instruction. RAs serve to maintain and build upon the high functioning learning community and quality instruction established by the EIT and other OC team teachers.

When folks first encounter the RAOI, they will notice many similarities to the LOI because the RAOI draws from a subset of LOI elements. However, where the LOI has a total of 16 observation setting elements, the RAOI contains nine elements and is scored from 0 to 3. This aligns to the RA's role in the OC context. Make no mistake: the RAOI is not an "easy" or "watered-down" version of the LOI. Instead, the descriptor language is identical to the LOI at the same proficiency levels, making it at the appropriate level of rigor for the RA role.

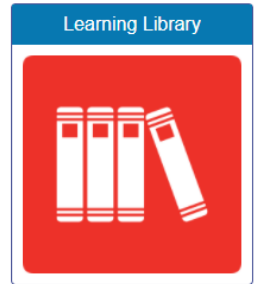


A bonus is many RAs either come to the position with or ultimately catch the "teacher bug," thereby pursuing a pathway to teacher certification! The RAOI provides the RA an opportunity to grow professionally along this potential career pathway within a framework of instructional best practices.

For further information, please contact Kim St. Clair (kimberly.stclair@maricopa.gov).

Leveraging the Learning Library

Welcome back to a new year and another chance to leverage all of the amazing professional development resources available to you in the Learning Library. Sign into the REILize Decision Support System (RDSS) and look for the Learning Library icon.



From there, navigate to the Explore tab. We have over 1,700 PD resources that span a variety of topics, resource types, and learning formats. More are added every week, and these materials are accessible by all REIL-Extend educators with an RDSS account.

Under “Explore,” you will find videos, self-led professional development, articles, book studies, infographics, and so much more. To find a particular resource, try applying filters which are available along the left-side or you can use the “search” function.

Explore

Click **Apply Filter(s)** once filters have been selected below.

★ FAVORITE

AUDIENCE ▾

ELEMENT ▾

GRADE ▾

INSTRUMENT ▾

LEVEL ▾

OTHER ▾

➤ RESOURCE TYPE ▾

RUBRIC ▾

SETTING ▾

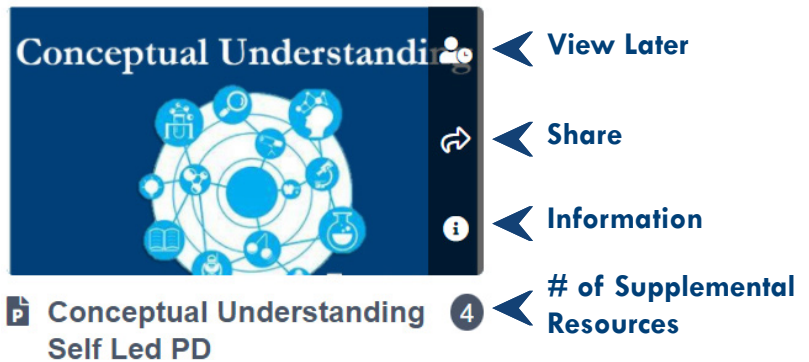
SUBJECT ▾

RESOURCE TYPE 1 ▲

- Article ☆
- Audio Articles ☆
- Best Practice Spotlight Video ☆
- Book Study ☆
- EGP Resource ☆
- Glossary ☆
- In Person PD ☆
- Infographic ☆
- Instrument Overviews ☆
- PD Videos ☆
- Playlist ☆
- Podcast ☆
- Protocol ☆
- QET ☆
- Quick Guides ☆
- Self-Led PD ☆
- Template ☆

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View Later


Share

Information

of Supplemental Resources

Conceptual Understanding Self Led PD 4

If you hold your cursor over the information icon, you’ll see a description without opening the resource including the topic, objective, audience, and estimated time.

Self-Led is our most popular resource type. When you open the PowerPoint presentation, be sure to click on the “notes” icon to view the self-led instructions, content, and activities. ➤ 


Leaders, you have a tab called “PD Packages.” Here you will find all the materials that you would need to facilitate professional learning for your staff packaged in zip files including the offerings:



➤ **Download Zip File**

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Framework
- Presenter’s Guide
- Any additional resources needed

If you ever have any questions about how to navigate the Learning Library or have a suggestion for how we can make it even better, please do not hesitate to reach out to Kendra Moreno at kendra.moreno@maricopa.gov.



REIL-Extend Goals

Goal 1: Attract, place, retain, and sustain effective educators through implementation of a high-quality, LEA-wide human capital management system focused on expanding leadership and cultivating an engaged workforce.

Goal 2: Redesign high-need schools to accelerate access to effective educators by extending the reach of excellent teachers.