



Engaging in Self-care as a Leader

Remember to Put Your Oxygen Mask on First

By Terri McCoy, Administrator for Leadership Development

As leaders during these difficult times, we find ourselves thinking first how best to support students, staff, and families and ensure they are both surviving and thriving. Often our own needs and wants are not even considered. There is a lot of information available that shows us that it is not only okay to practice self-care, but necessary if we are going to serve others well. Although the ideas vary on how best to do this, there do seem to be some consistent practices that have proven to be effective. Consider how you can include self-care as a part of your everyday routine.



Seek Connection. Find colleagues you value and trust and schedule time to think together, to share concerns and frustrations with one another, and to laugh with each other. It helps to have this outlet and to know that others are on a similar journey.

Establish time for yourself. Making a habit of starting or ending the day with time just for you is critical. Even if it is only for a short time, the benefits are worth it.

Remember your why. Think about what drives you and what you are passionate about. This helps to motivate us to continue doing the hard work during challenging times.

Maintain healthy routines. Eat well and exercise. Consider meditation, purposeful gratitude, or journaling. There is research that confirms the importance of establishing these routines.

Be kind. Treat yourself with the same kindness and grace you would a friend. Check your internal dialogue. If you wouldn't say the same things to someone you care about, don't say them to yourself.

Making self-care a priority is not indulgent or a luxury. It is vital if we are to meet the many demands and responsibilities of leadership.

For further information, please contact Terri McCoy (terri.mccoy@maricopa.gov).

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REIL-Extend educators have adapted and innovated to meet the challenges of teaching and learning during COVID-19. Throughout this issue, you'll find educators sharing the lessons they've learned. Much of what has emerged are things they report they'll carry with them long after the pandemic is over.

LESSONS LEARNED

DURING THE PANDEMIC

KENDRA MORENO
Project Lead

Unique PD Designed for Experienced Educators

By Des Hockman, Professional Development Resource Coordinator

Professional development is meant to support your continued growth, but what happens when you've mastered the proficiency levels of your craft? At the start of the school year, the Scope & Sequence Handbook was published and previewed at the EGP Roadshows. When the document was created, our team realized that if you were a teacher moving into the upper levels of the LOI there weren't as many opportunities for your focused professional development. We also realized that at those levels the LOI elements could no longer be separated easily; they merged. How can you get Critical Thinking at levels four and five without having excellent Task Analysis or Student-to-Student Interactions? You can't. This is what makes it challenging to score consistently at a level five.



HOW EXCELLING TEACHERS...

- PLAN FOR INSTRUCTION SERIES
- CREATE RIGOROUS CLASSROOMS SERIES
- CREATE CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING SERIES
- CREATE AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT SERIES
- USE DATA SERIES
- CREATE PRODUCTIVE LEARNING COMMUNITIES SERIES



To support those educators craving these higher level professional development opportunities, we created the "How Excelling Teachers..." Series for the Learning Library. There are six units of study that educators can go through, each organized in playlists and structured as self-led PDs. These units are meant to challenge even the most experienced educator, providing research and supports for becoming an excelling educator. The units are designed to meet

educators where they are, grow them through a series of learning and practice opportunities, and support long-term and complex learning goals. We know that the "How Excelling Teachers..." Series will support proficient educators to continue growing, and we also hope that you enjoy learning with them!

Our work on curriculum mapping and identifying essential standards has become critical in virtual instruction. Narrowing the focus and being willing to let go of the 'nice to knows' and really focus on the 'got to knows' has been our biggest success.

REBECCA WILLEY

Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Wilson School District

LESSONS LEARNED

For further information, please contact Des Hockman (desere.hockman@maricopa.gov).

The Life Changing Magic of TidyingUp Your Website

By Emily Beck, HCMS Administrator

Some call it a lifehack, some call it optimization, and some call it a relentless pursuit of organization. The Netflix phenomenon "Tidying Up with Marie Kondo" saw an incredible uptick in viewership in 2020, particularly when we all started spending more time at home and realizing how much of our own stuff we don't use. Marie Kondo's methods for examining, organizing, and releasing material goods has made quite the impression on those looking to increase usefulness and impact of each item in their possession. What does this have to do with a district or campus website? Just as Kondo drives home the point that an item is valued only as much as the support it offers, so too does a website. If it's broken, ill-fitting, irrelevant, or otherwise useless, it's time to make some changes.



Think of your website as your first impression—on a potential student or family, your staff, a community member, or a job candidate. Does it have "curb appeal" and invite the viewer to learn more? Your website has the ability to represent and strengthen your overall Human Capital Management System, communicate your district's Mission and Values, and can be a powerful hub of information for your staff, students, and

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community. Reviewing it with a critical eye can help you determine what information and resources to prioritize and how to maximize its impact.

If the idea of optimizing your website doesn't exactly "spark joy," consider using this [website audit tool](#) as a starting point. You can take a deep dive into the cluttered back pages, or you can scale your review to take just 15 minutes by focusing on only one component at a time.

For further information, please contact Emily Beck (emily.beck@maricopa.gov).

Participating in Job Redesign

By Tanya Gabrick, Field Specialist

Last winter, Nadaburg Unified School District participated in the job redesign process. A year later, we took a moment with Nancy Penzone to reflect on how that process went and to identify some of the benefits/challenges.

WHAT PROMPTED YOU TO INVEST THE TIME TO REDESIGN YOUR JOB DESCRIPTIONS?

I participated in training through the REIL-Extend grant to become certified as a Human Capital Leader in Education. There I learned strategies to attract, place, and retain educators. Our district needed to update many of our job descriptions, especially to align the job descriptions to the evaluation process which includes the LOI, COI, MCLOI, RAOI and LdOI. We also wanted to better attract applicants by branding our district using job descriptions as one of the tools.

WERE THERE ANY CHALLENGES?

Re-designing job descriptions, as well as creating new job descriptions, takes time and attention to detail. In a small district many employees wear multiple hats. We also had the challenge of posting the positions in a short amount of time in order to attract the best candidates. With the support of Tanya Gabrick, our field specialist, we invited Emily Beck to come out to the district and jump start the process. With the use of the [Job Description Tool Kit](#), the district was able to take on the challenges of redesigning job

descriptions as well as create new job descriptions for newly added Multi-Classroom Leader positions as well as our new high school positions. The toolkit allowed the district to follow a format that worked for us.

WERE THERE ANY SURPRISES THAT CAME FROM THE PROCESS?

We were pleasantly surprised by the number of qualified applicants we received. We had many internal and external candidates for multiple positions. There were so many applicants that we were unable to offer everyone the leadership

At first our online instruction was haphazard and not very engaging. In August, my colleague and I began to co-plan and co-teach, which was an amazing experience that I believe benefitted the students who got the best of both of us. And, like most everyone, I finally learned how technology can enhance instruction. I am using SeeSaw, Nearpod, YouTube, and other things to better differentiate for my students. They are much more engaged. I have returned to in-person, and I have kept up the use of the technology.

MICHELE RUTIN

1st-3rd Grade Teacher
Esperanza Community School

LESSONS
LEARNED

Despite our physical distance as a staff, our relationships have become stronger. I am more cognizant of the comprehensive needs of my staff and families in the context of the pandemic. As a leader, I feel it is my moral and ethical obligation to acknowledge, validate, and support community members who may experience trauma. I believe this will continue post-pandemic, given the positive impact on our school culture.

DIANE SALAZAR

Principal

Faith North Early Childhood Learning Center

LESSONS
LEARNED



positions for which they had applied. So, using the multi-data point hiring practices we were able to identify competencies and skills that matched other positions within our district. Because we were clear on expectations and competencies required for the positions, we were able to select amazing people to add to our growing staff. Although it may not have been the position they applied for, the established pool of educators allowed us to place great people in other career pathways.

For further information, please contact Tanya Gabrick (tanya.gabrick@maricopa.gov).

Celebrating the Small Victories

By Kim St. Clair, Professional Development Resource Coordinator

Caylin-Hublitz-Lieu, Capitol Elementary School fourth grade teacher, graciously allowed us to record an online lesson, which provided LOI virtual observation scoring practice to evaluators. She absolutely wowed us with her incredible student engagement! I recently asked her about the tools, challenges, and joys of engaging students in online learning.

Mrs. Lieu reflected teaching online is “a constant balancing act of community needs, relationship building, academic rigor and extending grace; the beauty is there is room for all those elements in our classrooms. Otherwise, my approach to teaching online is the same as in-person: establishing a strong learning community with routines and procedures and careful, thorough lesson planning.”



I have learned patience, adaptability, flexibility, and how to extend grace to myself and my students.

CAYLIN-HUBLITZ-LIEU
4th Grade Teacher
Capitol Elementary School

**LESSONS
LEARNED**

Finally, Mrs. Lieu shared, “I have joy and gratitude for the small wins, such as students in the Zoom waiting room 10 minutes early because they are eager for class or messages of ‘I get it!’ in chat boxes. These are the things, despite all the challenges, that keep me going.”

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

There are difficulties with online learning, but I have been so pleased to see my students grow. Our students are more resilient than we sometimes give them credit. The students who have struggled with distractions and time management in the past are receiving more individual attention and support.

MICHAELA CHATMAN

**LESSONS
LEARNED** 7th/8th Grade English Language Arts Teacher
Bethune Elementary

Caylin shared that switching to an online model required rethinking and adapting traditional instruction by:

- Using digital anchor charts
- Providing teacher models on NearPod or JamBoard
- Leveraging collaboration boards such as Padlet for brainstorming or exit tickets

Furthermore, she acknowledged meeting the standard for Student-to-Student Interaction described in the LOI has been particularly challenging, which she overcame by:

- Practicing Zoom procedures with her students (e.g., muting, taking turns talking).
- Posing discussion board open-ended questions, then highlighting specific responses with the whole group.
- Inviting students to agree/disagree, add on, or make a connection with each other’s written or verbal responses.
- Prompting students to use visual signals (thumbs up, sidewise, or down) to show they would like to talk to the original student about their idea.
- Incorporating digital sentence frames and discussion frameworks on teacher slides or online activities.
- Utilizing FlipGrid for mini-research projects.



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.

NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK

Take our quick [3-question survey](#) to let us know what you think!