



Excellence, Preparation for Life, Opportunities for All

Offices of Curriculum and Instruction

Becoming a Strategic Teacher

There are many adjectives used to describe great teachers – passionate, dedicated, and kind are just a few that come to mind. One word that we may not think of as often is strategic. In a recent ASCD article, a teacher is defined as strategic for three reasons.

1. Strategic teachers have a repertoire of research based instructional strategies at their disposal.
 - Having a “tool belt” of strategies accessible to teachers at all times is critical to meeting students’ needs. Compared to 20 years ago, volumes of time, money, and research has been devoted to the teaching and learning process. As educators, we now have more information than we ever have before including how the brain works, how students learn, and strategies that can be used in the classroom. The availability of research-based instructional strategies helps teachers answer questions such as:
 - How can I differentiate instruction so more of my students succeed?
 - How can I help my students learn more of the skills deemed necessary for success in the state standards?
 - How can I increase student engagement?
 - How can I deepen understanding of the content?
2. Strategic teachers understand how and when to use particular strategies in their classrooms. They can select strategies that support their objectives and adapt strategies to meet particular learning goals. In other words, their overall approach to instruction is strategic.
 - The first step in success is knowing research based strategies. The next step is knowing when to use them. Knowing the purpose of the lesson, the students’ needs, and the background of the students is critical to picking the right strategy.
3. Strategic teachers understand that fellow educators are their greatest resource. This is why strategic teachers seek out opportunities to work and learn with colleagues.
 - Collaboration can be one of the greatest ways to improve instruction, not just in one classroom, but across the entire building. The power of teachers working together can make great things happen for kids.

For more information on this topic, see the attached article from The Thoughtful Classroom.

FCSD in 2017-2018 ... Preparing now for changes to come.

When the Fairfield City School District opens its doors in 2017-2018, many things will look and feel very different. In order to prepare for changes to come, there are a variety of different groups hard at work now to ensure things are ready to go.

One of these groups is the Middle School Redesign Team, which was created part way through last year and is comprised of certified staff from both FIS and FMS. The purpose of this team is to make recommendations for the design, structures, systems, and processes used in our two middle schools for the 2017-2018 school year.

This group has been instrumental in the development of the preliminary schedules for Creekside and Crossroads Middle Schools, the plans for the team structures that will be used at both buildings, and the decision to have some type of advisory system to serve students throughout their middle school career. In addition, this group brainstormed some facility needs in order to promote equity between these two buildings. This led to the installation of a new gym floor and new science rooms at FIS during the summer of 2016.

***The Fairfield City School District
Offices of Curriculum and Instruction***

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Members of the Middle School Redesign Team have put in many hours to prepare, plan, and communicate plans for our new middle schools. Here is a “shout out” to the good work of this group:

- Tim Adams
- Karen Albrecht
- Rob Beidelman
- Eileen Ernst
- Erica Green
- Laura Griffin
- Michael McCrory
- Elyse Parker
- Katie Pospisil
- Laura Siebenburgen
- Lauren Sweeney
- Lani Wildow

November 8th is Almost Here!

As you all know, November 8th is our next district wide in-service day, and it represents a big day for our entire district. At the end of the day on November 7th, the email portion of First Class will be turned off, and we will convert to Microsoft Outlook. There are a few things you can do now to be prepared for this conversion:

- Relax. All change is a challenge, but we will get through this together.
- Reduce your saved emails. If you can delete some of your saved emails, please do. This will speed up the conversion process.
- Ask questions. If you have any questions, please ask.
- Relax. ☺

See you on November 8th!

Fairfield City School District Creating Opportunities for Our Future



Pictured Above:

- Kagan structures in FFS classroom
- Collaboration at our District Leadership Team (DLT) Meeting
- FHS / BT students presenting at recent Board Meeting
- FHS Jazz Band students
- New FFS and Compass Elementary