

# Fairfield's C&I Update

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## Office of Curriculum and Instruction

Rob Beidelman

Debbie Fescina

Debi Freimuth

Laura Griffin

Dawn Hildreth

Dan Jeffers

Jen Lewis

Maegan Noland

Katie Pennell

Katie Pospisil

Lauren Sweeney

Jennie Thompson

Lori Wegman

Lani Wildow

## New Year's Resolutions for Your Classroom

At this time of year, resolutions are a topic of conversation almost everywhere you go. Many of us have probably made a few New Year's resolutions. Maybe some of these resolutions are to take better care of yourself, spend more time with family, or even lose a few pounds. If you have thought about resolutions for your classroom, or maybe you want ways to make the second half of the school year a little different, here are some ideas suggested by blogger [Erin Whalen](#).

### **5. Student-Centered Classroom - "The person doing the work is the person doing the learning."**

**(Alice Keeler)** – If you are still doing most of the talking in your classroom, focus on letting the students talk more this year. Learning is a social activity. Give students time to discuss, ponder, process, and reflect out loud. You will have more engaged students AND will increase the likelihood of long term retention of the material.

**4. New Tech Tool** – Try out one new tech tool. Choose something you have heard about but haven't used yet and give it a try. Ask other teachers how they are using it. Search for its name or hashtag on Twitter to get ideas and support. Let students take the lead and try it out. And if it doesn't work right away, don't give up. Allow yourself time to learn it, use the resources you have at your fingertips (hint – the internet!), and stick with it for a while. Not every tech tool is going to work for everyone; but work on it long enough that if you decide against it, it's because it's not the best tool for your students and not because you got frustrated and quit trying.

**3. Stop Giving Homework (or at least give less, more focused homework)** – There are countless reasons why homework is an outdated practice that needs to be ditched. Equity, family time, avoiding mental overload, encouraging proper sleep, and on and on. Let's just talk about one. Equity. Think about your students' home lives. Many of them go home to an environment where they can study in peace. Some of them go home to chaos. Many of them have internet access at home. Some don't. Many have a healthy dinner. Some can't focus their minds on chemistry when their body is focused on its hunger. In the classroom, the playing field is leveled. Why not let them do their work at school where they have access to the resources they need, the most important of which is YOU, their highly qualified teacher?

**2. Have Fun** – Don't underestimate the power of fun. Students spend much of their childhood in school. How do you want them to remember it? Besides creating good memories, fun helps create *memories*. When students enjoy the learning process they are far more likely to remember what they learned. Creating a sense of fun is not just good for relationships, it's also good for learning!

**1. Take Care of Yourself** – We hear this over and over but it's true. Teaching is stressful. If you want to continue being a great teacher for many years to come, you have to take care of yourself. Get plenty of sleep. Drink lots of water. Don't skip the trip to the gym. Taking care of yourself is critically important for you and your students.

*Lani*

## Excellence Through Equity

*Excellence Through Equity: Five Principles of Courageous Leadership to Guide Achievement for Every Student. Edited by Alan M. Blankstein and Pedro Noguera with Lorena Kelly.*

As quoted by Blankstein in the book, "Courage is derived from the French word *coeur*, meaning heart. In many early Native American societies, having 'heart' was considered one of the greatest virtues. The primary attributes of this virtue were to strengthen oneself by serving others and face fears." Teachers continuously make sacrifices and face their fears for the betterment of the students they serve. To make effective and sustainable change to the educational system of our students, we must all have courageous leadership.

*Excellence Through Equity* takes educational theory and puts it into practice by illustrating and explaining how real world educators and schools are taking a closer look at providing a superior education to each and

every one of their students. The authors of the book illustrate how educators and schools have committed to ensuring that EVERY student individually gets what he or she needs to develop at the fullest potential in order to succeed in school and beyond.

Blankstein and Noguera focus on five guiding principles of courageous leadership as the foundation for which each chapter is written:

1. Getting to know your core – In the ever changing world of education, leaders must know and have a solid core. What is your purpose, what are your beliefs, and what are your intentions? Once you have reflected, you will have a solid understanding of your "why", which in turn allows you to face obstacles and continuously move forward no matter the opposition.

2. Making organizational meaning – School leaders must create a cohesive

environment built on trust and respect between every stakeholder. Without a focus, clarity lacks and confusion emerges.

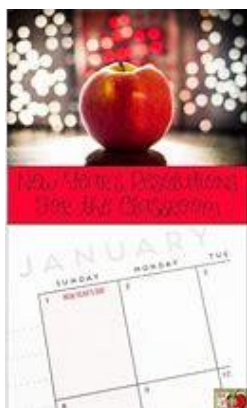
3. Ensuring constancy and consistency of purpose – For this book, the focus is equity for ALL students. Schools remain focused on their purpose equity to ensure a willingness to support the vision, along with reducing stress that comes about through having multiple priorities and a feeling of lack of time, while at the same time providing clarity for all stakeholders.

4. Facing the facts and your fears – Even though it is easier to stick with status quo, courageous leaders face data and use the data as a catalyst of improvement.

5. Building sustainable relationships – Without an environment of trust among the adults within a school, students' successes have the ability to drop. Development of quality relationships is critical for the success for all students.

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*Tell me, and I forget.  
Teach me, and I  
remember. Involve  
me, and I learn –  
Benjamin Franklin.*



## A Student's Perspective ...

Several 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who serve on our district's Equity Leadership Team were asked to respond to the prompt, "I wish my teacher knew..." Below is one of the responses. This is an opportunity for us, as adults to reflect, learn, and grow by listening to our students' voices.

### I wish my teacher knew...

The experiences with my teachers have very been positive. What stands out for me is how one of my teachers deals with controversial subjects. He works really well with students and allows them to vocalize their opinions, even on controversial topics. He doesn't just ignore it and move on to the next subject; he wants to know why the student thinks that way and get other students' opinions on the topic so that we can have a respectful debate about it. I believe he does this, because he wants us to learn how to be aware of many perspectives on issues; and he allows us to think about things differently.

I really appreciate this teacher, because it can be upsetting and embarrassing when a teacher does not know how to handle a controversial subject that is brought up in class. If it is not handled well, it can leave students feeling upset, embarrassed, or even feeling like the teacher does not care about them.

## Literacy Corner

Kudos to all of you who have been using the various literacy strategies from our professional development sessions!!! It has been truly fantastic to watch all the amazing work you are accomplishing with your students. 😊



One of the great ideas we have seen was found in Tim Lewis's math classroom. On Fridays, he starts his class with a comic about math. The students then explain what is funny about this cartoon in written format. The kids are enjoying the comics and discussing the math. Just to give you an idea, here is the comic he used last week. Ha ha!!!

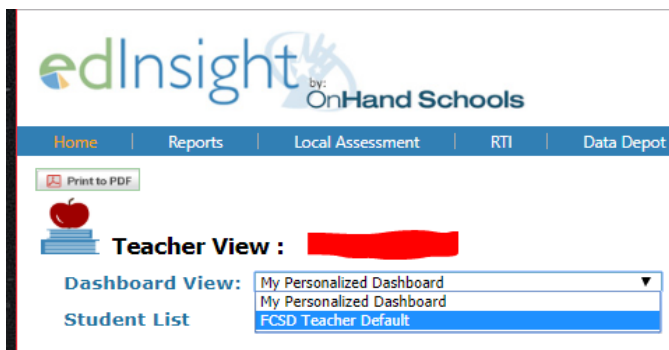
Try to set a goal of using one literacy strategy a

week. The week you are introducing new vocabulary, you can use magnet words or the vocabulary association triangle. The next week, you could use one of the writing strategies (i.e. Messing with a quote or Say, Mean, Matter). The following week, try using one of your discipline specific strategies. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Lauren Sweeney or Jennifer Lewis or any of your Literacy Leadership team members in your buildings.

# Know your Student Groups using EdInsight

An easy way to know which of your students fall into student groups can be found on EdInsight. With a little bit of set up, it becomes as easy as logging in to the site.

Login to EdInsight (username: lastname\_firstinitial, password: set by you).



Demographic Subgroup Br...		
Subgroup	# of Students	% of Population
504	4	4.94%
Ec. Dis.	37	45.68%
ELL	4	4.94%
Gifted	4	4.94%
IEP	12	14.81%

From your home page, use the dropdown to select 'FCSD Teacher Default'.

The 'Demographic Subgroup' widget appears with the number of students in each group.

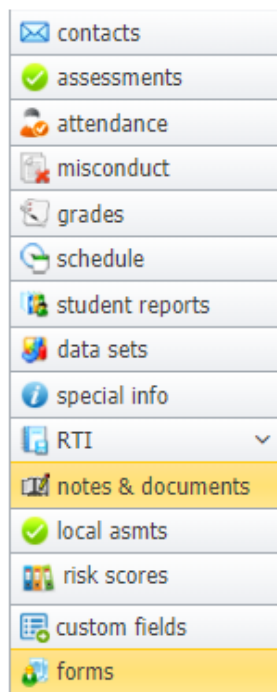
Click on a blue number to see a list of the students.

Click a student number to look at a specific student.

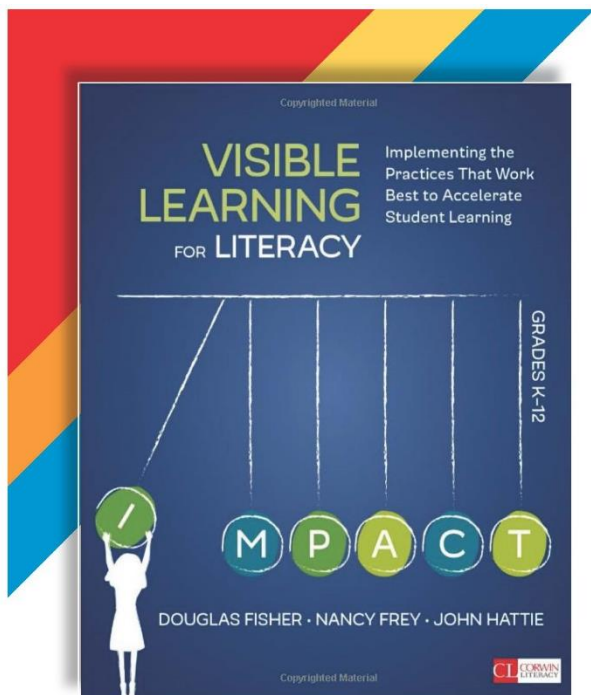
504 documents are listed under 'Notes & Documents' - **Note: not all buildings have loaded documents at this point.**

EL plans are listed under 'Forms'.

Note: you can also 'personalize' your desktop by adding/removing widgets. This will prevent you from the need to select 'FCSD Teacher Default'.



## Author Visit – Nancy Frey



### *Visible Learning for Literacy*

is the newest book in John Hattie's **Visible Learning** series. The Authors John Hattie, Douglas Fisher, and Nancy Frey focus on literacy in grades K through 12. They explore how to implement practices that work best to accelerate student learning.

If you agree with the authors' statement that **"every student deserves a great teacher, not by chance, but by design,"** then *Visible Learning for Literacy* is a good starting point for your next learning decisions.

## Author Visit

NANCY FREY

## VISIBLE LEARNING FOR LITERACY

Implementing the Practices that Work Best to Accelerate Student Learning

Join us for this special event!



Guest Presenter:  
Nancy Frey, co-author of  
*Visible Learning for Literacy*

DATE: Thursday, April 25, 2019

TIME: 4:00–5:00 PM (refreshments)  
5:00–6:30 PM (presentation)

LOCATION: Fairfield Freshman School  
8790 N. Gilmore Road  
Fairfield, OH 45014

REGISTER: To register, [click here](#) for Form.

CONTACT: Laura Griffin at  
griffin\_l@fairfieldcityschools.com





Around the District...

