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## REIL Change & Growth Highlights from Year 4

*By Kendra Moreno, Project Lead*

When it was announced that Arizona schools would remain closed through the end of the school year, schools were faced with an incredible challenge and, understandably, a range of emotions. But REIL educators are nimble and equipped. In a time of uncertainty and confusion, you have set out to make the best of a very trying situation. The REIL-Extend staff wishes to thank you for your dedication and to acknowledge you for your perseverance, creativity, and heart. You are making it work!

During Year 4 of our REIL-Extend grant, we worked closely with school leaders and their teams to support the design of school-wide, yearlong professional development plans. This resulted in a series of connected and engaging professional learning cycles at each campus focused on achieving school initiatives and helping teachers to meet their EGP goals.

While school buildings may be closed now, the learning continues, and not just for the students. The Learning Library in RDSS offers a variety of professional learning opportunities including self-led PDs which are designed for you to engage in the professional learning of your choice from your own home. In addition, there are podcasts, articles, and even book studies. With each of the hundreds of classroom video clips, there is a supplementary document available called a "Video Support Guide," to assist you while you reflect on what you've viewed and maybe even serve as documentation of your efforts toward your EGP goal.

We are all dreaming about the day when we can get back to school. Until that time, please reach out to your Field Specialist or Peer Evaluators if we can help in any way. Whether it's a resource or a listening ear, we are honored to work with you and want to support you in the incredible work you are doing.

*For further information, please contact Kendra Moreno ([kendra.moreno@maricopa.gov](mailto:kendra.moreno@maricopa.gov)).*



**WHEN WE ARE NO LONGER  
ABLE TO CHANGE A SITUATION,  
WE ARE CHALLENGED TO  
CHANGE OURSELVES.**

**- VIKTOR E. FRANKL**

## Work From Home Tips

By Jenny Schenck, Project Manager

As we continue to adjust to our “new normal,” I thought I’d share some tips on how to survive after the initial glee of staying home subsides and the walls start to close in on you.

**DRESS FOR SUCCESS.** I know it’s tempting to stay in your pajamas all day. But the simple act of just getting dressed, even if it’s into a different set of comfy clothes, will help to keep you out of the doldrums.



**WATER YOURSELF.** Hydration is the first thing people forget when they break their routine. Set a timer, line up bottles of water, do anything to remind you to drink water. Trust me, you won’t run out of toilet paper and your body will thank you.

**BANG A GONG.** Establish some practice that opens and closes your work day. It can be whatever you want. Jumping jacks, meditation, listening to a song. Whatever it is, do it right before you start working and then at the end of your workday. This is replacing physically entering and exiting a building, so you could just walk out your front door and walk back in. Seems silly, but it helps.

**THE 10 MINUTE PU (PICK UP).** As you spend more time in your homes, the clutter situation becomes real. Instead of going full Marie Kondo, try setting a timer for 10 minutes and pick up things around your house. If some items don’t have a designated spot, put them in a laundry basket or box to deal with later, so don’t let them stall your progress.

**THE PANDEMIC 15.** Eating out of boredom? The next time you walk into the kitchen for a snack, drink a glass of water first. If you’re still hungry afterwards, then get your snack. This will help prevent overeating due to boredom and keep you hydrated. Win-win.

For further tips, please contact Jenny Schenck ([jennifer.schenck@maricopa.gov](mailto:jennifer.schenck@maricopa.gov)).

## EGPs: A Chance to Celebrate

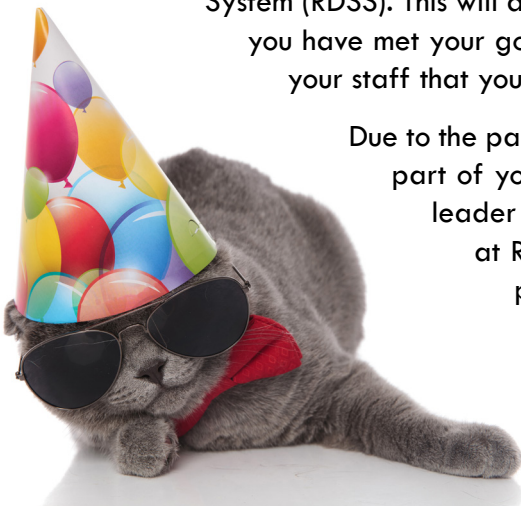
By Des Hockman, Professional Development Resource Coordinator

It has been such an adventure this year with all that is going on in the world. Now that your schools are virtual, you are learning all sorts of new things or refining skills that you already had. Maybe you are perfecting a new way to authentically engage learners without being in the room with them, communicating with students via letters to build community, or are learning how to monitor and adjust in a virtual classroom. No matter what, we are all learning new things, and that is really the point of the Educator Goal Plan (EGP): to promote and support new learning within our professional growth.

Now that the year is coming to an end, take the time to celebrate what you’ve learned and ensure that all these new learnings and skills are reflected within the evidence section of your EGP in the REILize Decision Support System (RDSS). This will allow your school leader to review that you have sufficient evidence to show that you have met your goal and mark your EGP as complete. Leaders, the EGP is a great way to show your staff that you have noticed the new skills that they have been developing.

Due to the pandemic, state testing will not occur this year. If AZMerit or another state test was part of your evidence of success, you may need to have a conversation with your school leader to adjust the assessment goal. Even though we had to close school doors, we at REIL-Extend know that you are still working hard to provide the best education possible to all students. Be sure to take time and reflect on all the new things that you have been learning to do and perfect. As you close out EGPs take time to celebrate your accomplishments and new skills gained.

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



## Learner Engagement with Mr. Jenkins

By Traci Price, Peer Evaluator

Learner engagement can be achieved in a variety of settings. Knowing what strategies to employ is essential when it comes to making learning engaging. I've had the privilege of working with Mr. Jenkins, a physical education teacher at Wilson Primary this year. During my collaborative experiences and an interview with Mr. Jenkins, I was able to observe learner engagement through different lenses: learner engagement as it's seen in the classroom setting (student-to-student and teacher-to-student), as well as learner engagement in a professional growth setting (colleague-to-colleague and coach/peer evaluator-to-teacher interaction). These settings are different, yet there are critical elements that remain the same when engaging any learner. The following are some insights from my interview with Mr. Jenkins.

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**Price:** *What does learner engagement mean to you and why do you think it's important?*

**Jenkins:** As educators, we can only expect a handful of students, in each class, to intrinsically engage themselves into the learning and the rest of the class will need our help. When our students are fully engaged, that means we have effectively used a variety of different methods and strategies to draw their interest.

**P:** *What methods/strategies do you use to inspire students to be active learners?*

**J:** It's always important to grab students' attention right out of the gate. One strategy that can be effective for students who aren't feeling engaged, is providing a real-world tie to the lesson. Knowing that the skills being taught will be useful outside of the classroom can help students find increased value and engagement with learning. I also like to use a combination of teaching by invitation and intra-task variation. Teaching by invitation is a whole group method I use to suggest challenges and modifications to an activity to make it easier or harder for my learners depending on [their] level and ability. I use intra-task variation when I observe a group of students or a student who is really standing out as either struggling or succeeding with ease, and I will customize the task to fit their needs. I use these two methods the most, because providing a task at the correct difficulty level is one of the best ways to keep students engaged.

**P:** *How do you know when your students are engaged?*

**J:** When students are engaged in learning, it creates a positive atmosphere that makes the experience more enjoyable for all involved. Some of the most common indicators of high student engagement include: active participation in tasks/activities, students taking part in facilitating their own learning through feedback, students asking the teacher and each other questions, and students making connections to material from past and future lessons.

**P:** *Recently you were able to observe and converse with fellow educators in your content field. Can you expand on that experience as it relates to your own authentic learning or engagement?*

**J:** When I was able to observe peers who were in the same content field, I was highly engaged. I truly enjoyed working with other Physical Education educators because I was able to see instructors demonstrate strategies and methods, in real time, with an entire class of students. I can relate to my students who need a real-world tie to be fully engaged in their learning, because I'm never more engaged than when I'm learning tools or strategies that I'll be able to use myself.

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I want to thank Mr. Jenkins for going above and beyond to make learning engaging for all the Wilson Primary students. He has really shed light on what research states are critical elements of learner engagement; providing an opportunity to explore, making tasks/activities brief, ensuring that experiences/content is highly relevant to real-world context, and offering frequent feedback and positive reinforcement.

For further information, please contact Traci Price ([traci.price@maricopa.gov](mailto:traci.price@maricopa.gov)).



## Strategic Workforce Planning

By Emily Beck, HCMS Administrator

As one academic year winds down, human capital leaders begin to seriously consider the needs of the next. One of those revolving considerations is the staffing need of each campus. An effective strategy is to work backwards: consider the district’s strategic plan, then step down through each organizational level to determine which roles need attention. Start by analyzing supply (current staff) and demand (predictions for next year’s staffing needs) to determine the workforce gap. This year’s Human Capital Leaders in Education (HCLE) cohort practiced this in simulations based on local student demographics and enrollment stability, general economic climate, housing trends, and historical staff attrition rates. Once the overall hiring position has been clarified and aligned with the strategic plan, it’s time to take action. This may mean reviewing and updating job descriptions, rolling out new recruitment initiatives, and designing an application and screening process that moves candidates along efficiently.



With the recently added complexities of social distancing, recruitment and hiring may look very different this year from those prior. Fortunately, job fairs and panel interviews aren’t the only options! Consider some more active recruitment strategies that will woo tomorrow’s great educators and support staff. How about an open Zoom meeting where job seekers can pop in, join breakout sessions, and access links to applications and more information? Have you considered a Facebook Live session that would invite candidates to learn more about your district? When it comes to interviewing, there are many data points that can be gathered from a distance—think performance tasks, video submissions, and video conference Behavior Event interviews. If hiring a star performer is the grand prize, strategic staffing is the multi-player game. How can your district Level Up this year?

For further information, click [here](#) to check out a Virtual Talent Guide from [tntp.org](http://tntp.org) or contact Emily Beck ([emily.beck@maricopa.gov](mailto:emily.beck@maricopa.gov)).



**INSTRUCTIONAL CONFERENCE MICRO-CREDENTIALS**

The “Know Thy” micro-credential series is designed to support evaluators and coaches to transform the instructional conference into a powerful professional learning experience for teachers.

**TO REGISTER, VISIT: [SCHOOLSUP.ORG/MICRO-CREDENTIALS](http://SCHOOLSUP.ORG/MICRO-CREDENTIALS)**

<p><b>KNOW THYSELF</b></p> <p>MCESA</p> <p>DP</p> <p>UNCOVERING LEADER WILL DRIVER &amp; BIASES</p>	<p><b>KNOW THY TEACHER</b></p> <p>MCESA</p> <p>DP</p> <p>USING THE SKILL &amp; WILL MATRIX ASSESSMENT</p>	<p><b>KNOW THY PLAN</b></p> <p>MCESA</p> <p>DP</p> <p>USING THE SKILL &amp; WILL MATRIX TO PLAN AN INSTRUCTIONAL CONFERENCE</p>
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### Learning Library Catalog

There’s never been a better time to check out all the offerings in the RDSS Learning Library. It has more than 890 resources available in the Explore tab and over 115 in-person professional development packages in the PD Packages tab. To view all of our current offerings, check out our Learning Library Catalog [Part 1](#) & [Part 2](#).

Need help logging in to RDSS or technical support? Call (602) 698-6155 or email [Help@rdssadmin.com](mailto:Help@rdssadmin.com).

### NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK

Did you really enjoy a particular article? Have a suggestion for the next issue? Take our [3-question survey](#) to tell us what you think!



### 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.