



# Turnaround Office Newsletter



**In this Edition:**

- I. Message from the Interim Chief Academic Officer
- II. Important Dates
- III. Alliance District Convening May 7, 2015 Follow-up
- IV. Time Collaborative Cohort
- ⊄. CSDE Review of 2015-16 Alliance District Plans
- VI. CT State Personnel Development Grant Announcement

*Spotlight on Excellence*

- VII. Putman High School Makes U.S. News and World Reports List of Best High Schools
- VIII. Stanton and Uncas Schools in Norwich Hold Joint Multicultural Celebration
- IX. New Britain's DiLoreto Magnet School is Coming Alive!
- X. O'Brien School in East Hartford Shines

*"What the mind can conceive. The mind can achieve."*

Click below to access the Turnaround Office Calendars



**I. Message from Interim Chief Academic Officer**

Dear Colleagues,

It is hard to believe that June is here! Amid all your turnaround planning and monumental efforts at school improvement, school traditions continue. Promotions and graduations, dances and proms, summer programming and reading lists. The month of June is a busy one, both at schools and here at the department. We continue to strive for transparency, consistent communication, and efficient and effective supports for our Alliance/ Priority Districts and Network Schools. As you well know, the revision process for Alliance District/ Priority District applications is underway.

We are pleased to bring you multiple online summer Professional Learning opportunities this summer.

- Of particular note is our new online mini-courses in the ELA and Math Instructional Shifts. The shifts are necessary in the classroom to bring rigor and the CT Core Standards to life. The CSDE Academic Office and Public Consulting Group (PCG) have partnered to provide these mini-courses (free of charge, non-credit bearing) to educators and leaders in CT. To learn more, [click here](#).
- To view the principals "CT Core Standards Classroom "Look Fors" flipbook, [click here](#) .
- To view all our PD offerings, [click here](#).

Wishing a wonderful end to the school year and a high achieving summer with a little fun mixed in as well.

All the best,  
*Ellen Cohn*

Interim Chief Academic Officer, CSDE

**II. Important Dates in 2015**



- June 12: Deadline for SPDG Application
- July 10: Deadline for Q4 Data Submission
- July 31: Deadline for Time Collaborative Cohort IV Applications
- Mid July : Deadline for Final Submission of Alliance District Plans

### III. Follow-up: May 7, 2015 Alliance District Convening

Over 150 educators attended the May 7, 2015 Alliance District convening. The convening offered breakout sessions addressing the Essential Schools Frameworks: Talent, Academics, Culture and Climate, and Operations. We are thankful to all who attended, as well as the schools, districts, and SDE Consultants who presented.

National expert and researcher, Hedy Nai-Lin Chang and her colleague, Sue Fothergill, from Attendance Works, provided the keynote address followed by two consecutive workshops during which district teams examined district data, assessed district policies and practices, and identified tiered strategies for reducing chronic absenteeism.

As plans for 2015-16 are developed, Alliance Districts might consider the following strategies:

- ✓ form or strengthen district and school-level teams to monitor attendance, beginning in September. Attendance teams can use best practices identified by Attendance Works to improve student attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism;
- ✓ implement Tier 1 strategies to create a culture and expectation of attendance and engagement in school. "Every day counts";
- ✓ use current school year data to identify students chronically absent in 2014-15 as a target population. When students return in September 2015, provide this target population with positive support to assist students and families to overcome attendance barriers and provide motivation for getting to school every day; and,
- ✓ identify social service and health care providers to partner with the district and school to support families with non-academic needs.



Kait O'Leary, Director of Strategic Initiatives in Norwich, sports her TACO shirt. Norwich really does live and breathe the Essential School Systems TACO (Talent, Academics, Culture and Climate, Operations)!

More information about how to address chronic absenteeism, including best practice strategies and tools schools and districts can download for use, can be found on the Attendance Works Web site by [clicking here](#). The Turnaround Office and the SDE Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness will continue its collaboration to provide training, technical assistance, and support to Alliance Districts as they work to reduce chronic absenteeism in their schools.

To access all of the **May Alliance Convening materials**, please [click here](#).

### IV. Time Collaborative Cohort IV

Each district selected to join Cohort IV commits to fully engage in an intensive planning process with a subset of its schools during the 2015-16 school year to create a re-engineered school schedule that expands the conventional 6 ½ hour, 180 day school year by a minimum of 90 additional hours for all students (to the equivalent of an 7-hour school day). In return, district and school teams will receive expert technical assistance and coaching at no cost on how to rethink their school day to add learning time, schedule and staff an expanded day or year, minimize costs and build a sustainable model, and generate support for the implementation of their new day. Selected districts will also receive capacity-building funds to help cover costs during the planning year. In February 2016, participating districts will submit their schools' ELT implementation plans and qualified applicants will be approved to move forward with implementation using a combination of federal, state, and local resources, including Alliance District funds. An application form will be posted soon on the SDE Alliance District Web site which can be accessed by [clicking here](#). For additional information please e-mail Robert J. Travaglini by [clicking here](#) or by phone at 617-291-5513.

### V. CSDE Review of 2015-16 Alliance District Plans Completed

The CSDE review of the 2015-16 Alliance District plans have been completed, and the Turnaround Office points of contact are assisting districts in the revision of initial draft plans. Pending legislative budget approvals, the Turnaround Office anticipates providing districts with final Alliance District budgets by mid- to late June for final revisions.

## VI. CT State Personnel Development Grant Announcement

The CT State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) is now accepting applications for a fifth cohort of supported schools. CT's SPDG has been developed to expand and sustain a coordinated, statewide system of professional development, coaching, and support to schools, PreK-12, to improve educational outcomes for all students through the provision of a continuum of academic and behavior supports. This project offers schools an explicit, three-year support process to facilitate the development, implementation, and sustainability of the scientifically research based interventions (SRBI) framework. Through the provision of quality instruction, multi-tiered interventions, and analysis of data to inform educational decisions, participating schools will strive to improve the academic achievement of all students with a specific focus on students with disabilities, students of color, and students acquiring English. For more information, please visit <http://spdg.serc.co/index.php>. Any interested schools should submit a letter of intent/interest to the CT SPDG Project Director, Dr. Donald Briere at [donald.briere@ct.gov](mailto:donald.briere@ct.gov). Extended deadline for application is June 12, 2015.



### *Spotlight on Excellence*



## VII. Putnam High School Makes U.S. News and World Reports List of Best High Schools

Putnam High School has been named to U.S. News and World Report's list of Best High Schools. The magazine annually ranks high schools across the United States. This year, the rankings included 29,070 schools from across the country and 193 Connecticut High Schools. Schools were rated on school performance on state assessments (math and reading), college readiness of students, as well as student/teacher ratio. Putnam High School ranked 44th when measured against Connecticut high schools and ranked 2007th against high schools nation-wide. The magazine awarded silver medal status to Putnam High School. Only 13 percent of all high schools across the country were awarded silver or gold medal status. Superintendent William Hull stated, "This is just affirmation of the hard work of the staff of the entire district and our students. It speaks volumes of the culture of learning that is at Putnam High School. It also demonstrates the support that the school system receives in the community as well as the collaboration between the Board of Education, staff, families and the town. We are proud to be recognized nationally for the great work being done in the district."

## VIII. Stanton and Uncas Schools in Norwich Hold Joint Multicultural Celebration

On Tuesday, May 19, 2015, the students, parents and staff of Uncas Public School and Stanton Public School in Norwich joined together to present a Multicultural Night. Over 300 people attended the event which featured music, art and food showcasing the many cultures represented in the two schools. Kudos to Principal Billie Shea and Principal Jason Foster for organizing this wonderful event!



## IX. New Britain's DiLoreto Magnet School is Coming Alive!

Principal Alex Ortiz is very proud of the work his students and staff have accomplished in making DiLoreto come alive. The school used its wraparound grant to develop its Alive program which includes the Red Bead Club, classroom activities, stress reduction sessions, youth empowerment, and emotional literacy activities to support students as they to free themselves of barriers to academic achievement resulting from trauma. To view a delightful video promo about Alive [click here](#).

X. O'Brien School in East Hartford Shines

O'Brien STEM Academy was recently recognized by the CEA for its enhanced community school model in partnership with CommPACT. With the opening of a new family resource center, the school has created bigger and better opportunities to support students and families with needed resources and parental and community support. Work in the future will focus on forming family engagement coalitions, made up of parents and teachers, to look at ideas for improving family and community engagement. The full article describing the recognition and work O'Brien has implemented was highlighted in the February addition of the *CEA Advisor*.

If the CEA recognition wasn't enough for you, O'Brien's sixth grade students created a video to celebrate the school's successes. The video explains the variety of supports the Commissioner's Network has brought to the school. Students collected pictures from school events throughout the 2014-15 school year for use in the video. After preparing the script for the video, students selected peers for participation in the video, and rehearsals began. iPads were used for videotaping using the "news reporting" template in iMovie. You can view the video by [clicking here](#).



# 2015-16 Turnaround Office Calendar

Alliance Districts, Commissioner's Network, and SIG Schools



August 2015						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1/2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2015						
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27	28	29	30			

October 2015						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2015						
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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29	30					

December 2015						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2016						
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30/31

February 2016						
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29					

March 2016						
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27	28	29	30	31		

April 2016						
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May 2016						
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

June 2016						
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July 2016						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30/31

### Beginning-of-Year Cycle:

- November 6: Data Submission Deadline
- November 13: CSDE Data Verification
- November 16-December 4: Monitoring Meetings
- December 14-February 12: Network Midyear Audits

### Middle-of-Year Cycle:

- February 12: Data Submission Deadline
- February 19: CSDE Data Verification
- February 19: 2016-17 AD/PSD Draft Plan Deadline
- February 29-March 4: CSDE Draft AD/PSD Review Period
- March 7-25: Monitoring Meetings

### End-of-Year Cycle:

- July 1: Data Submission Deadline
- July 8: CSDE Data Verification
- July 4-22: Monitoring Meetings

### Calendar Key:

- Turnaround Newsletter
- Data Submission Deadline
- Alliance District Convenings
- Network NetStat Sessions
- Network/Alliance Monitoring