



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Common Core District Leads
FROM: Dr. Dianna Roberge-Wentzell, Chief Academic Officer
RE: January Newsletter: Common Core State Standards Implementation
DATE: January 13, 2014

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Happy New Year! This is the monthly installment of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Academic Office monthly newsletter. We hope you will find helpful information within the newsletter that will support your district’s implementation efforts of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as well as other key standards, curriculum, instruction and assessment topics. We hope that you will forward all useful items on to colleagues and that you will provide us with feedback to improve this communication.

Capacity Building Professional Learning for District CCSS Coaches

In Connecticut our approach to Common Core State Standards Implementation is framed by our five C’s of Curriculum Alignment, Capacity Building, Communication, Coherence among initiatives, and Collaboration. Our capacity building actions are intended to support local districts in their unique contexts through a coaching initiative. This month our Common Core District Team program, Systems of Professional Learning debuts in partnership with Public Consulting Group (PCG) and the Regional Education Service Centers Alliance. We look forward to your feedback on the professional learning sessions.

Launch of CCSS Systems of Professional Learning

Registration Links will be sent to “CCSS District Contacts” shortly!

Each morning or afternoon workshop will include: Welcome and project overview; System of Professional Learning: Regional Context and Offerings; CCSS Training Module Overview; District needs assessment; and Planning for Successful Implementation.

Launch of CCSS Systems of Professional Learning				
Date	Event	Who?	Where?	When?
Thursday 1/23/14	ACES CCSS Launch Workshop	District CCSS Coaches	Four Points, Meriden	AM Session: 8:00 – 11:30 PM Session: 12:30 – 4:00
Monday 1/27/14	LEARN Launch Workshop	District CCSS Coaches	Mystic Marriott, Groton	AM Session: 8:00 – 11:30 PM Session: 12:30 – 4:00
Wednesday 1/29/14	CREC Launch Workshop	District CCSS Coaches	Crowne Plaza, Cromwell	AM Session: 8:00 – 11:30 PM Session: 12:30 – 4:00
Thursday 1/30/14	CES Launch Workshop	District CCSS Coaches	Norwalk Inn & Conference Center	AM Session: 8:00 – 11:30 PM Session: 12:30 – 4:00
Tuesday 2/4/14	EASTCONN Launch Workshop	District CCSS Coaches	UConn Alumni Center, Storrs	AM Session: 8:00 – 11:30 PM Session: 12:30 – 4:00
Friday 2/7/14	Education Connection Launch Workshop	District CCSS Coaches	Crowne Plaza, Southbury	AM Session: 8:00 – 11:30 PM Session: 12:30 – 4:00

The Common Core—“Just in Time” Communication Tools for Parents

In December we sent Communication Tools for Parents. This month we are sending Spanish translations of some of these documents. Please continue to advise us regarding your needs related to communicating about standards with parents. If you have tools for parental communication and engagement that you are willing to share, please email ellen.cohn@ct.gov.

The Common Core –“Just in Time” Tools for Teachers

February is Black History Month, and it is always a good time of year to engage our students in high quality texts from a variety of genre. This annotated bibliography of selected books includes Lexile levels and other information that will help teachers use these resources to support Common Core aligned instruction in their classrooms. Resources are organized by grade band. If you have questions about resources on this list or suggestions for other selected bibliographies, please email Jennifer.Webb@ct.gov.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) and CCSS in CT

Alignment documents have been created for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Standards and the CT Common Core Standards for English Language Arts; Literacy in History, Social Studies, Science and the technical subjects, as well as Mathematics. The aligned standards for courses at the high school level will help prepare students to be college and career ready. The aligned standards are also embedded in rigorous contextual lessons that require close reading, problem solving, and higher order thinking skills. The documents can be found at the CTE webpage. Click on the subject areas of interest found in the blue box at the top of the page.

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&Q=320802>

If you have questions about the CTE standards alignment to the CCSS please contact the appropriate program manager in the CTE Unit at CSDE.

CCSS in Arts Classrooms

“Text” can be defined as “a medium used to convey meaning.” In today’s 21st century, multimedia society artistic text plays an essential role in communications, which is one reason why every child needs to cultivate two-way literacy in the core art forms (media) of music, visual arts, dance, and theatre/film. Examples of well-designed units with embedded assessment that illustrate all three of the above categories of arts-CCSS connections will be available at the CSDE’s new website for CCSS support that will launch by early spring. New National Core Arts Standards to be released in June 2014 will highlight arts-CCSS connections, as outlined in College Board documents available on the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) website. <http://nccas.wikispaces.com/>. These new NCCAS standards are expected to serve as the foundation for updating Connecticut’s current arts standards. More support may also be found at <http://www.aep-arts.org/resources-2/common-core-and-the-arts/> and by contacting Scott.Shuler@ct.gov.

Update on the Smarter Balanced Field Test (Repeat information from past newsletter)

The Smarter Balanced Field Testing window is March 18 to June 6. Districts will continue to work with the CSDE on selecting their testing window during which students may test at any time.

Smarter Balanced has made a number of supports available online, some of which are included below:

- [Online Practice Test](#) - Provides an opportunity for students, educators and parents to experience the features of online testing.
- [Usability, Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines](#) - General guidelines outlining supports available for all students including supports for English language learners and students with disabilities.
- Web-based training modules - Available by January 28, 2014
- *Test Coordinator Manual* and *Test Administration Manual* - Available by January 29, 2014
- For more information refer to the [Smarter Balanced page](#) of the CSDE website.

Please also see the **new communication regarding technology readiness** attached to this newsletter.

Please direct questions regarding the School Speed Test to Abe.Kristt@ct.gov.