CONNECTICUT CORE STANDARDS

Connecticut Systems of Professional Learning for District Coaches

I had the great fortune to attend several professional development sessions with many of you during the last month. Among the activities I enjoy the most are those that engage you in discussions of what you are learning and how the work is progressing in your schools and districts. In one session I captured the image to the right that sums up what folks discussed in multiple sessions as they reflected on their work as Connecticut Core Coaches this year.
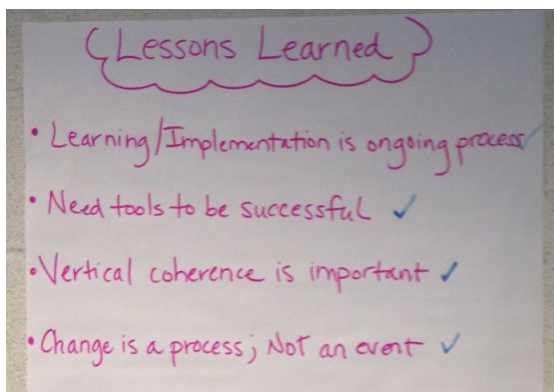
Change is indeed a process. Professional learning is not just a change, but more importantly a growth process for each of us as we become more knowledgeable and skilled, gain comfort with facilitating the learning of others, and create plans for ongoing support of our colleagues. One thing that consistently comes through in session evaluations is how valuable the opportunities are to share and hear from each other. Across the state there are many individuals that bring a wealth of knowledge and experiences to our professional development sessions. We have heard about creative uses of time to make space for vertical collaboration among teachers, strategies for supporting teachers through direct coaching and modeling, and new energy in professional learning communities. Over the summer we will

In This Issue

Introduction

Upcoming Professional Development

Spotlight on Resources

Session Feedback

Pictures from the Workshops

continue to find ways to support this sharing.

The second bullet on this chart is also of particular importance to all of us. Through our work over the last four months we have explored a number of tools and resources that can support your work with teachers. As we prepare for next fall and the next two modules of professional development, we are organizing practical tools and resources that will help you prepare, refine, and implement great units and lessons incorporating the Connecticut Core Standards. Everything we have shared in the sessions is posted on the ctcorestandards.org website. In the coming weeks these resources will be joined by video recordings of the sessions that can be used with teachers in a variety of ways. Additionally, we are preparing to launch a collaboration and networking website to support your ongoing work. Look for more information about the Connecticut Core Standards Coaches' network and an invitation to join in your email within the coming days.

Summer is a time to reflect, recharge, and renew in our profession. I hope that your summer gets off to a great start with opportunities to take time off and recharge. I'm sure you will spend time reflecting on the school year just ending, and equally sure the rest will help you renew your energy and commitment for the coming school year. Enjoy this newsletter, and stay in contact over the summer by sending any questions you have to ctcorestandards@pcgus.com.

Robb Geier, PCG Education
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Upcoming Professional Development

Modules 4 and 5 will resume this fall. Module 4 will launch September 15th and Module 5 will launch October 14th. Registration will be available by August 1st, look for more information coming via email in the coming weeks. Here is an overview of what you will learn in each session:

Module 4

English Language Arts & Literacy:
In Module 4, Connecticut Core Standards Coaches deepen their understanding of designing units and lessons that align with the Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy (CCS-ELA & Literacy) and the three instructional shifts. In Modules 2 and 3, participants focused closely on individual components of lesson design, including instructional practices for close reading and writing instruction. In Module 4, they will take on the broader perspective of overall unit design. Using a backward design

approach, they will match texts to CCS-ELA & Literacy standards, and align learning goals with assessments and the learning progression. Participants will have an opportunity to begin to formulate major pieces of a unit and practice giving and receiving feedback on their unit as it is being designed. During the session, coaches will discuss in small groups the ways in which they shared the messages of earlier modules with colleagues in their schools or districts. At the end of the session, they will reflect on Module 4 and plan for sharing and professional development back in their district or school.

Participants will:

- Review and extend their knowledge of unit and lesson design with alignment to the Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy and the three instructional shifts.
- Begin to build and examine short model curriculum units
- Examine and develop learning goals aligned to the CCS-ELA & Literacy
- Understand the use of key understandings and guiding questions to inform instruction and performance tasks
- Introduce and practice the use of the Cognitive Rigor Matrix
- Examine performance tasks and rubrics and develop aligned performance tasks
- Understand how learning progressions and formative assessment are integrated into lesson design
- Practice reviewing a unit and conducting a structured conversation around unit design
- Collaboratively plan for sharing the key components of this module within their school and/or district

Mathematics:
In Module 4, Connecticut Core Standards Coaches begin to bring all of the information, strategies, and ideas from Modules 1-3 together as they begin to look at designing comprehensive Connecticut Core Standards for Mathematics (CCS-Math) learning experiences for students. Throughout the session, participants will work through the lesson design process by identifying the learning targets they want students to meet, determining the entry point into the mathematics for all students, and making decisions about the activities that support the learning targets. Because participants are in a role where they will be providing support to teachers for designing similar learning experiences for students, special attention will be paid to strategies to support teachers' reflection on the lessons they design and have used.

Participants will:

- Create effective learning targets for use in planning lessons
- Identify the elements that need to be considered when designing and implementing CCS-Math lessons
- Design and/or modify CCS-Math lessons in order to meet the needs of all students

- Explore shifts in classroom practice that maximize students' opportunities to learn at a high level
- Consider meaningful questions to pose to teachers on their lesson design
- Explore strategies for supporting teachers as they make changes in their classroom practice

Module 5:

English Language Arts & Literacy:
In Module 5, Connecticut Core Standards Coaches deepen their understanding of the Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy (CCS-ELA & Literacy) and the three instructional shifts by collaboratively using tools and protocols to evaluate written curriculum, observe classroom instruction, and examine student work. They will review and discuss the challenges and opportunities of implementing change in the context of their roles as Connecticut Core Standards Coaches.

During the session, coaches will have an opportunity to discuss the ways in which they shared the messages of Module 4 with colleagues in their schools or districts. They will use the Educators Evaluating Quality Instructional Products (EQuIP) Rubric introduced in Module 1, to examine a lesson with the lens of their deepened understanding of CCS-aligned curriculum design. Participants will then have an opportunity to observe classroom instruction through the lens of the Instructional Practice Guide and will consider how they might use this tool to support peer observation and collegial conversation about CCS-ELA & Literacy-aligned instruction.

As they prepare to reflect on their own learning and plan how to support others, coaches will discuss the stages that adults experience when asked to make changes in beliefs and practices. They will consider their colleagues' and their district's current status in knowledge and implementation of the CCS-ELA & Literacy. Coaches will envision next steps, and plan how they, in their current role as Connecticut Core Standards coaches, can provide expertise and support full implementation of the CCS-ELA & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects.

Participants will:

- Increase expertise in evaluating CCS-aligned units and lessons with the EQuIP rubric
- Know the value for teachers in collaboratively examining student work
- Know the importance of providing clear learning targets and constructive feedback that encourage perseverance and excellence
- Become familiar with the Instructional Practice Guide and use it to observe CCS-aligned lessons
- Understand the change process and consider how to support teachers in implementing the CCS

- Consider where their school or district is in the change process and possible next steps
- Collaboratively plan for sharing key components of modules in Connecticut Systems of Professional Learning within schools and districts

Mathematics:

In Module 5, Connecticut Core Standards Coaches will focus on the changes that have been and still need to be made as part of their school's CCS-Math implementation. Because every coach, teacher, and school are unique, each may be at a different point within the change process. However, each coach will need to be able to assist teachers in continuing to make changes to their instructional practice and to sustain the changes that have already been made. Throughout Module 5, participants will work through activities, examine strategies, and explore resources that will support these changes in order to lead an in-depth implementation of the CCS-Math.

During the session participants will review topics that have been covered throughout Modules 1-4. Participants will examine different types of support that coaches can provide to teachers to help support the transition to CCS-Math in classroom instruction. Using tools introduced in earlier modules, participants will deepen their understandings of the shifts in classroom practice from the perspective of finding ways to support teachers in implementing these practices in their instruction.

As they prepare to reflect on their own learning and plan how to support others, coaches will focus on helping each other plan for supporting and sustaining change within their schools. Coaches will discuss and share strategies that they currently employ to provide teachers with ongoing professional development, the opportunities they have found for teachers to collaborate and the topics/tasks at the center of those activities, and the resources that they used to increase communication and collaboration with and among themselves and their teachers.

Participants will:

- Strengthen working relationships with peer Core Standards Coaches across their region
- Deepen their understanding of the CCS-Math through sharing of implementation experiences
- Align types of teacher support to identified teacher needs
- Examine in more depth the Shifts for Classroom Practice from Module 4 and explore ways to support teachers in the implementation of these shifts
- Explore strategies for conducting coaching observations and options for data collection
- Identify strategies and resources for supporting and sustaining change

- Identify opportunities for ongoing teacher professional development and teacher collaboration.

Spotlight on Resources

There are so many quality Core Standards resources available online. Watch for more resource spotlights in each newsletter!

Resources to Find Unit and Lesson Plans

1. EngageNY
   www.engageny.org

EngageNY is dedicated to providing educators with real-time, professional learning tools and resources to provide a college- and career-ready education for all students. Here you can find downloadable curriculum for ELA and Mathematics for Pre-K through twelfth grade. These modules, units, and lessons are provided free for all educators to use and adapt. They are fully aligned with the CCSS and the instructional shifts.

2. Odell Education
   http://odelleducation.com/literacy-curriculum

The Developing Core Proficiencies Curriculum is an integrated set of English Language Arts/Literacy units spanning grades 6-12. Funded by the USNY Regents Research Fund, the free curriculum comprises a series of four units at each grade level that provide direct instruction on a set of literacy proficiencies at the heart of the Common Core State Standards. Each unit highlights a core literacy proficiency and provides approaches, instructional sequences, handouts, tools and texts for developing independent mastery and creative critical thinking in students. The units build in complexity to support students from reading for key details to writing fully developed arguments from text.

3. Read Write Think
   http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/

Their mission is to provide educators, parents, and afterschool professionals with access to the highest quality practices in reading and language arts instruction by offering the very best in free materials. You can easily search by grade level, resource type, learning objective, and theme.

4. Achieve the Core
   http://achievethecore.org

This website is full of free content designed to help educators understand and implement the Standards. It includes practical tools designed to help students and teachers see their hard work deliver results. Achievethecore.org was created by Student Achievement Partners in the spirit of collaboration, and provides access to many tools and resources from other aligned organizations and websites.

5. America Achieves
http://commoncore.americaachieves.org/

America Achieves helps communities and states leverage policy, practice and leadership to build high quality educational systems and prepare each young person for success in careers, college, and citizenship. On this site you will find annotated videos of Common Core-aligned instruction, as well as lesson plans and in many cases, student work samples for Math and English Language Arts & Literacy both elementary and secondary levels.

6. Literacy Design Collaborative
http://ldc.org/sample-curricula/english-language-arts

LDC offers a variety of templates that help ELA teachers boost student engagement and master texts at their reading level (and above)! LDC templates "hardwire" Common Core Standards into module design, requiring students to use critical thinking skills to evaluate texts and improve their reading and writing skills. LDC also provides full units of instruction for some of the template tasks. While originally designed for secondary lessons, LDC has now expanded to include elementary examples and tasks. Sign up for LDC CoreTools to access even more curriculum.

7. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
http://www.nctm.org/resources/

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics is the public voice of mathematics education, supporting teachers to ensure equitable mathematics learning of the highest quality for all students through vision, leadership, professional development, and research. This NCTM site includes lessons and resources for elementary, middle, and high school levels.

8. Mathematics Assessment Project
http://map.mathshell.org/materials/lessons.php

The Mathematics Assessment Program (MAP) aims to bring to life the Common Core State Standards in a way that will help teachers and their students turn their aspirations for achieving them into classroom realities. MAP is a collaboration between the University of California, Berkeley and the Shell Center team at the University of Nottingham, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Classroom challenges for grades 6th, 7th, 8th and high school.

9. NYC Department of Education
http://schools.nyc.gov/academics/commoncorelibrary/taskunitstudentswork

Search a growing assortment of Common Core-aligned tasks, units and student work by keyword, grade level, subject area and Common Core Learning Standard. The components of the Common Core-aligned tasks with instructional supports include: unit overview and task description, teacher-annotated student work representing a range of performance levels, rubrics used to access student work, and Universal Design for Learning principles.

10. EduCore
http://educore.ascd.org/

EduCore™ is a collection of quality resources from other sites, in both literacy and mathematics. You can find introductory information about the Common Core Standards, videos, white papers, presentations, and mathematics lessons and literacy lessons across subject content areas and grades.

11. Illustrative Mathematics
www.illustrativemathematics.org

Illustrative Mathematics is a discerning community of educators dedicated to the coherent learning of mathematics. There are carefully vetted resources for teachers and teacher leaders to give our children an understanding of mathematics and skill in using it.

12. Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/files.html

Model curriculum for both ELA and Mathematics organized by subject and grade on a variety of topics. The units and lessons on this site were created by MA teachers, trained in Understanding by Design and the Common Core Standards. The units are evaluated with the EQuIP rubric before being published on the MA ESE website. They are then piloted by teachers, schools and districts throughout the state who provide feedback for revision.

13. The Teaching Channel
https://www.teachingchannel.org/

The Teaching Channel is made up of classroom videos that showcase effective instructional strategies for classroom practices that can be used to implement the Standards. Coupled with an online community and discussion of resources, the Teaching Channel can be used as an effective resource for ongoing professional learning.

14. Tools for the Common Core Standards
http://commoncoretools.me/

Tools for the Common Core Standards is a blog authored by writers of the Common Core in order to provide updates, resources, information, and tools for implementing the mathematics standards. A key component of this site is the information and details on the content progressions that can be used to gain a more in-depth understanding of how the design of the Standards develops students' mathematical understandings over time.

Session Feedback

"We all brought something different in terms of knowledge and between us all, we learned a great deal."

"One of the best yet!"

"Thoughtful responses to individuals' questions. Great pace, positive and thorough."

"Time to plan for next steps in district was helpful."

"I did not have knowledge of UDL before, so I feel more confident and aware of the important aspects of UDL after this workshop. I also liked the formative assessment discussion - it helped me further understand its' importance."

"I enjoyed the whole day, but especially the elements that were about student writing."

"It had a good mix of lecture information, and time to share with colleagues to discuss how this is working in their district/ or how it can be implemented."

"This was the module that was the most helpful, because it tied the other two together and applied it to what I need to do as a teacher."

Pictures from the Workshops

Questions? Need More Information?

Visit: ctcorestandards.org

Email: ctcorestandards@pcgus.com