



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Common Core District Leads
FROM: Dr. Dianna Roberge-Wentzell, Chief Academic Officer
RE: May Newsletter: Common Core State Standards Implementation
DATE: May 3, 2013

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

This is the second 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 and that you will be able to forward onto educators.

Featured in this newsletter:

- **Moving Ahead With Common Core**
- **America's Business Leaders Support the Common Core**
- **Videos about the Common Core for Teacher Professional Development**
- **Common Core Aligned "Practice Assessment" Update**
- **Community of Practice @ CAS: Professional Learning Opportunity**
- **Connecticut's State Network of Educators: Professional Learning Opportunity**
- **Smarter Balanced Practice Test Available May 29, 2013**
- **World Languages Instruction Supports Common Core Literacy**
- **Spotlight on Partnership**

Moving Ahead With Common Core

On April 20, 2013, the *New York Times* published an editorial in support of the Common Core State Standards. The editorial board says, "...if the country retreats from the Common Core reforms, it will be surrendering the field to competitors that have already left it behind in math and science education, which are essential to participation in the 21st-century work force." Read the entire editorial [here](#).

America's Business Leaders Support the Common Core

On February 12, 2013, 73 of America's top business leaders came together and published [an open letter in the New York Times](#) declaring their "support [for] these new, tougher academic standards....now under way in America's schools [that] hold great promise for creating a more highly skilled workforce that is better equipped to meet the needs of local, state and national economies."

Videos about the Common Core for Teacher Professional Development

These two videos from the *Teaching Channel* may be informative for [math teachers in grades 3-5](#) or [English language arts teachers in grades 9-12](#). Standards Covered: The math standard covered is Math.4.NBT.B.6. The ELA standards covered are ELA.W.11-12.9a, ELA.SL.11-12.1a, and ELA.RL.11-12.1.

The Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) developed a series of 45-minute videos for educators in [English language arts/literacy](#) and [mathematics](#) that provide the background of the Common Core State Standards and the six shifts that are inherent in these standards. The videos include David Coleman, Sandra Alberti, Lily Wong Fillmore, and others who helped create the Common Core. [NOTE: In the April Newsletter, we provided you with the CGCS [two 30-second Public Service Announcements](#) and [two three-minute videos](#) to quickly tell the story of the Common Core to the public. Please note that you will need to turn on "cc" to access closed caption for these videos.]

Common Core Aligned “Practice Assessment” Update

Administration is currently underway for over 100 districts across the state. Assessment literacy professional learning opportunities, as it relates to the CSDE Common Core aligned “Practice Assessment” and Smarter Balanced, will be prioritized for these participating districts.

Community of Practice @ CAS: Professional Learning Opportunity

The CSDE, in partnership with the Connecticut Association Schools (CAS), is pleased to announce the first date for a Community of Practice on June 20, 2013. The focus of this community of practice will be around what school leaders need to know on the Common Core State Standards in order to improve instruction within their schools. More information is forthcoming.

Connecticut’s State Network of Educators: Professional Learning Opportunity

Smarter Balanced and the CSDE invite educators who have significant experience in formative assessment and deep knowledge of Common Core State Standards to join Connecticut’s State Network of Educators and help review professional learning resources for the Smarter Balanced Digital Library, the heart of the formative practice resources. The Digital Library is an online, user-friendly, searchable library for educators that contain only high-quality, vetted resources. It is interactive and allows educators from member states to use and rate resources and collaborate. Smarter Balanced and the CSDE are looking for qualified educators in K-12 and higher education with expertise in: Formative Assessment, CCSS for ELA and/or Math, General Education, Gifted and Talented students, ELL or Students with Disabilities. Selected volunteers should be available between September 2013 – September 2014. The link to the [online application](#) will be available from May 1 to June 3, 2013. Please contact the Assessment Bureau’s Teacher Involvement Coordinator, Joseph Di Garbo via telephone at 860-713-6863 or via email Joe.DiGarbo@ct.gov. More information is forthcoming.

Smarter Balanced Practice Test Available May 29, 2013

Smarter Balanced will release a more complete and more broadly available “practice test” starting May 29, 2013. This is a great opportunity for districts that did not participate in the CSDE Common Core aligned “Practice Assessment” to experience items that look like those found on the 2015 Smarter Balanced assessment. One of the benefits to this practice test is that it will include performance tasks, which all districts should try-out this summer. More details about the Smarter Balanced practice test and the plans for the Smarter Balanced practice test can be found [here](#).

World Languages Instruction Supports Common Core Literacy

The [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages](#) (ACTFL) developed a [crosswalk document](#) to demonstrate how their National Standards for Learning Languages align with the Common Core State Standards by identifying how each of the standards within each strand are addressed through standards- and performance-based language learning. This document also contains examples of how language students at novice, intermediate, and advanced levels demonstrate the ELA and literacy standards. Read more in an article from ACTFL’s journal *The Language Educator* from January 2013: [“The Common Core Framework and World Languages: A Wake-up Call for All.”](#)

Spotlight on Partnership

There are great ways to let your community and parents know how you are partnering with the CSDE on the Common Core State Standards that may work nicely with your existing strategies. For example, Hartford Public Schools has spotlighted the Common Core District Team on their [website](#). We hope you will consider something similar and/or please share with us ways in which you’ve highlighted our partnership. Feedback may be sent to Emily Byrne via email at emily.byrne@ct.gov.