



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Common Core District Leads
FROM: Ellen E. Cohn, Interim Chief Academic Officer, *EEC*
RE: April Newsletter
DATE: April 30, 2015

ACADEMIC NEWSLETTER

This is the April 2015 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 Connecticut Core State Standards as well as other key standards, curriculum, instruction and assessment topics.

UPDATE ON STANDARDS

Science Standards

On February 4, 2015, the State Board of Education was introduced to Connecticut's Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The Board has charged the department with continued outreach to stakeholders regarding the implications, benefits and challenges of NGSS adoption. Between now and the end of the school year superintendents, principals, families and local school board members will have opportunities to learn about NGSS through interactive webinars as well as in-person presentations. The Department's goal is to educate, listen, collect feedback and work collaboratively with all stakeholders in discussions about Science Standards.

We have worked diligently for two years within the science education community, and now will expand our efforts to build NGSS awareness among local school boards, superintendents, principals, families, and other interested stakeholders.

ASSESSMENT NEWS

1. Delay in CSDE Interim Assessment Workshops

As you know, the development of the Smarter Balanced Assessment system is a huge undertaking. We have recently learned that the Interim Assessment System will be turned off in mid-June 2015 for enhancements including Assessment Item Analysis, Assessment Item Viewing and Hand Scoring Enhancements as well as the development of more user-friendly features.

Because of this shutdown and these planned changes, the CSDE believes delaying the Interim Workshops scheduled for May and June 2015 is a wise decision. We will begin offering workshops in September 2015. We apologize for any inconvenience that this delay may cause. Registration will open in June 2015.

Interim Assessment **Rescheduled** Dates and Locations

Location	Rescheduled	Location	Rescheduled	Location	Rescheduled
Trumbull Marriott Merritt Pkwy. 180 Hawley Lane Trumbull, CT	September 30	ITBD 185 Main St New Britain, CT	September 8*	Norwich Holiday Inn 607 West Thames St Norwich, CT	October 8
	October 9		October 5		November 17
	November 16		November 18		December 15
	December 11		December 14		January 20
	January 11		January 14		February 2

*We are looking to move this date to later in September

Administrators who are making decisions about assessment systems (whether to buy locally for the district or use the interim assessment system), should contact their District Test Coordinator (DTC) to gain access and browse the Interim Assessments. DTCs can set the level of access for any member of a district or school team. Access is defined by “role,” such as teacher (classroom access), school coordinator (SC- school access), and district coordinator (DC- district access). Access will allow assigned users to view assessment items and student results. Directions and information regarding access levels are found in the TIDE manual and the Test Coordinator Manual. We hope district administrators will be able to make informed decisions using this preview.

2. Spotlight on Digital Library Forums



From **May 4 - 8**, the authors of Cognitively Based Assessment (*of, for, and as*) Learning Resources (CBAL) will facilitate conversations about the following two modules.

- ***The Using Learning Progressions to Formatively Assess Students’ Ability to Analyze Arguments*** webinar is intended for middle school English language arts teachers. Viewers learn how the classroom tasks - in particular, ***Taking a Position and Using Claims and Evidence*** - connect to argumentation learning progressions and inform instructional decisions based on students’ performance.
- ***The Using a Learning Progression to Formatively Assess the Concept of Slope*** webinar is intended for teachers of first-year algebra. This webinar provides an example of a CBAL formative digital assessment task in the ***Linear Functions and Nonlinearity*** module that incorporates a learning progression to develop students’ deep understanding of the concept of slope. Viewers hear how the learning progression, its application in the task, and ancillary resources support the teacher’s use of the task in the classroom.

Please see the attached flier on the CBAL Spotlight Series for information on how to access the CBAL modules and the recorded webinars, as well as how to join the Spotlight Forum discussions.

3. Assessment Participation

By federal and state law, universal student assessment is required annually in ELA and Math in grades 3-8 and once in high school. Also by federal and state law, assessment is required in science once in each school level (elementary, middle, and high school). In Connecticut, we participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessments in ELA and Math. These assessments are given in grades 3-8 and 11. In Science, we participate in the CMT – Science in grade 3-8 and CAPT – Science in grade 10. Some students with disabilities participate in the

Connecticut Alternate Assessment and the CMT Science Skills Checklist or CAPT Science Skills Checklist. Both the CSDE and each LEA are legally responsible to administer these assessments to all students.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Webinar Series for Principals

We continue to host webinars for principals to support standards and assessment implementation. The last webinar include the following.

Date	Content Areas	Session Overview
May 27th	Checking In on Progress With Data <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data Driven Decision-Making• Balanced Score Card	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review• Explore the elements of a Balanced Score Card and its role in checking progress and supporting data driven decision-making

If you miss the live webinar, you can access the webinars at our website: <http://ctcorestandards.org/>

NEW MATERIALS AT CT STANDARDS WEBSITE

Our academic office website is dedicated to materials, resources, and professional learning opportunities in support of standards implementation in your district. This website is refreshed three times each week and there is always **NEW** material. Please consider submitting a unit that your teachers have created. Our team will provide feedback to you and possibly feature the work of your teachers on our site! We are happy that our resource list includes work developed by our teachers. Questions about the website should be directed to Jennifer.Webb@ct.gov the website is found at: <http://ctcorestandards.org/>

