

The Bridge

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A monthly newsletter for educators from the
New Jersey Department of Education



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2014 School Performance Reports Add Participation in Career and Technical Education Programs



This month the Department of Education released School Performance Reports for the 2013-14 school year that include a new metric — student participation in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. New Jersey's public schools consistently rank among the strongest in the nation, and the School Performance Reports provide citizens with a tool to view key performance indicators that provide insight into academic achievement as measured by statewide assessments, metrics of student growth, and whether students are on track for success in college and career. The reports show that approximately 19 percent of New Jersey's high school students completed at least one course in an approved CTE program statewide.

This is the third year the Department has issued its School Performance Reports that provide comprehensive data on school performance. The reports include a color-coded guide to help readers identify whether schools met individual or statewide targets in specific areas. The reports also include "progress targets" that measure how effectively each school and subgroup has progressed toward cutting the achievement gap since the starting point of the 2010-11 school year.

CTE is included in the School Performance Reports for the first time this year pursuant to a new law. CTE provides students with opportunities to attain academic, technical and professional skills that are essential for success in 21st Century careers. Through authentic learning experiences, informed by the standards and expectations of business and industry, CTE programs enhance students' career readiness and options for the future.

The CTE participation rate on the performance report captures the percentage of all high school students who completed at least one course in any Department-approved program during the 2013-14 school year. An approved CTE program must include a coherent sequence of at least three courses aligned to academic and technical standards. Students enrolled in CTE programs may also earn industry-recognized credentials and/or college credit for specific courses.

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AchieveNJ UPDATE

Educators to Participate in Achievement Coaches Program

The Department of Education has selected 16 districts to participate in the Achievement Coaches program and three districts to lead content development for this initiative. The districts were selected from among 53 applicants and will split \$1.25 million in grant funds made available by the state.

Announced in October, the Achievement Coaches program was created to strengthen the understanding of the state's key education initiatives and enable a number of outstanding educators to have a broader impact. Specifically, three districts will work with the state to create professional development sessions to support teaching methods, standards alignment and evidence-based decision-making. Then, 16 districts will each send groups of Achievement Coaches to a summer session to prepare to deliver the training to peers across the state.

Education Commissioner David C. Hespe described the program as an opportunity to honor the outstanding work and leadership evident in many of our school districts, as well as count on the new achievement coaches to share their knowledge and expertise both with our team at the Department and with other educators.

The Department will begin working with grant awardees in February, and the majority of the training will occur during the summer of 2015. Of the total grant amount, \$250,000 will be used to design the professional learning sessions, and the remaining \$1 million will be used for stipends for Achievement Coaches, as well as other costs and materials associated with the program.

A list of the participating districts is below. For more information on the program, visit www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/achievementcoaches/.

The selected districts include:

District	County	Program
Bergenfield Boro	Bergen	Achievement Coaches
Caldwell-West Caldwell	Essex	Achievement Coaches
Clearview Regional	Gloucester	Achievement Coaches
Hopatcong	Sussex	Achievement Coaches
Jackson Township	Ocean	Achievement Coaches
Little Egg Harbor Township	Ocean	Achievement Coaches
Mantua Township	Gloucester	Achievement Coaches
Maurice River Township	Cumberland	Achievement Coaches
Metuchen	Middlesex	Achievement Coaches
Morris County Voc. Tech.	Morris	Achievement Coaches
Old Bridge Township	Middlesex	Achievement Coaches
Palisades Park	Bergen	Achievement Coaches
Passaic City	Passaic	Achievement Coaches
Princeton	Mercer	Achievement Coaches
Scotch Plains-Fanwood Regional	Union	Achievement Coaches
South River	Middlesex	Achievement Coaches
Elizabeth	Union	Content Development
Watchung Hills Regional	Somerset	Content Development
East Brunswick	Middlesex	Content Development

school earned a number one ranking in the state from U.S. News and a top 10 ranking nationally. A member of the state evaluation advisory committee for two years who was herself evaluated under AchieveNJ, Eno brings first-hand knowledge of the practitioner's perspective on evaluation. She will serve as an Implementation Manager with a particular focus on supporting the evaluation of principals and assistant/vice principals. Eno remarked, "I am professionally energized by the chance to come to the Department and work with such a talented and dedicated team. I am passionate about the role of educational leaders in our schools. Being able to work closely with the policy and practices that impact their ability to be highly effective is a great opportunity."

The Office of Evaluation's newest Policy Analyst, **Pete Mazzagatti**, also served on the state evaluation advisory committee for the past several years, and most recently worked as the PreK-12 Instructional Facilitator for the Humanities for Woodstown-Pilesgrove Regional School District. A secondary social studies teacher for 13 years, Mazzagatti was the 2011-12 Salem County Teacher of the Year while his school participated in the first year of the state evaluation pilot. Further proof of his passion for effective evaluation, he will soon defend his dissertation titled, "Teacher Evaluation Systems and Their Impact on the Teaching Strategies of High School Teachers."

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Meet the Newest Members of the NJDOE Evaluation Team

As of February 2015, the Office of Evaluation has several new staffing announcements to share. First, **Carl Blanchard** is now serving as the Interim Director of the Office of Evaluation following his two years of service as the team's policy manager. Prior to joining the NJDOE, Carl was a County Teacher of the Year in Somerset, where he served as a science teacher for eleven years at Franklin High School. He earned National Board Certification in life sciences in 2009. As an active member of the Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC) in 2011-12, Carl added a critical teacher's perspective when he first joined the evaluation team. Recognizing how beneficial this was – and how important it is for the team to bring in current, fresh perspectives from experienced and accomplished educators – Carl has recently hired two more full-time staff directly from New Jersey public school districts.

Linda Eno founded Biotechnology High School (BTHS) and served as its principal for 10 years, during which time the



Federal Agencies Collaborate to Improve After-School STEM Education

New Jersey is one of seven new states to be added

The U.S. Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program is leading new interagency partnerships to bring hands-on STEM learning opportunities to high-need students during after-school and out-of-school time. Through this collaboration, the U.S. Department will expand an existing pilot program with NASA and build new partnerships with the National Park Service (NPS) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

These partnerships will create opportunities for students to engage in solving real-world STEM challenges with scientists and experts in their field. Overall, the number of participating 21st CCLC sites will increase from approximately 20 last year to over 100. Participating states include: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Michigan, Montana, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

Engaging students during out-of-school time is an important tool for supporting all students' learning in STEM subjects. The 21st CCLC program was created as part of the 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that was signed into law in 1965 by President Lyndon Baines Johnson, who believed that "full educational opportunity" should be "our first national goal."

For more information on how the 21st CCLC program and the interagency collaboration contribute to this vision, visit www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html.

2014 School Performance Reports

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During the 2013-14 school year, 78,797 students participated in 909 approved CTE programs. Of those, 482 programs were at county vocational schools and 427 were at comprehensive high schools. CTE programs are organized into 16 career clusters, such as Business Management and Administration; Health Sciences; Hospitality & Tourism; Information Technology; and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). These programs provide broad foundational skills, as well as occupationally-specific skills which are critical to students' career-readiness in these fields.

In addition to this year's inclusion of CTE programs, the performance reports also consist of student participation in the ACT-PLAN, alongside student participation in the PSAT. These additions build on last year's improvements, which included providing data on participation in arts instruction; more accurate measurements of postsecondary education plans for high school graduates; participation and outcomes in the rigorous International Baccalaureate (IB) coursework; and participation in the ACT college-placement test, as well as the SAT.

The School Performance Reports were created collaboratively with the input of members of the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA), the New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA), the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), and the New Jersey Parent Teacher Association (NJPTA).

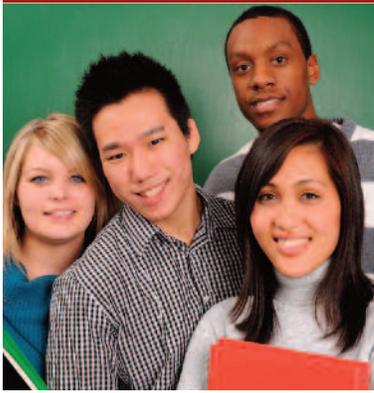
The School Performance reports can be accessed online at: <http://education.state.nj.us/pr/>.

AchieveNJ UPDATE

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In his new Department role, Mazzagatti will conduct research, collaborate directly with educators across the state, and help craft new guidance and workshop materials to support effective implementation of AchieveNJ. "I am both honored and humbled to be afforded the chance of joining such a distinguished office and team," Mazzagatti said. "I whole-heartedly believe in the opportunity for professional growth that strong evaluation systems provide to educators. I look forward to supporting districts in the continued implementation of AchieveNJ."

Finally, the evaluation team is pleased to have the part-time support of **Alyson Goodner** in implementing the new Achievement Coaches program. An alumna of Princeton University and Oxford's Saïd Business School, in 2007 Goodner founded the school collective (TSC), an online professional development network that enhances school and teacher quality in over 30 schools in the Greater Philadelphia area. Her experience also includes time as an elementary bilingual school teacher and a secondary teacher coach. Goodner is enthusiastic about the potential of the Achievement Coaches initiative. "This program highlights our greatest resource in education – our teachers – and ensures that their best practices are seen, heard, celebrated, and shared beyond their own classrooms," she explained. "I am excited to spend this spring and summer working with an exceptional team of districts and educators."



Recruiting Today's Students as Tomorrow's Teachers

The Center for Future Educators at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), the New Jersey Education Association, and the NJDOE are inviting high school teachers to apply to participate in a Tomorrow's Teachers instructor training in the summer of 2015.

Tomorrow's Teachers, an elective course for high school juniors and seniors who aspire to become teachers, was developed by the Center for Education, Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA) in South Carolina. Thirty-four states are currently using the tenth edition of this course curriculum to introduce high school students to the teaching profession. Rider University, Richard Stockton College, and Fairleigh Dickinson University currently offer college credits to New Jersey high school students who successfully complete the course.

Tomorrow's Teachers is taught for a minimum of one class period a day for a year, or the equivalent of that amount of time in contact hours. The course includes four themes: Experiencing Learning; Experiencing the Profession; Experiencing the Classroom; and, Experiencing Education. A variety of hands-on activities and a strong emphasis on observations and field experiences are required. Emphasis is also placed on teaching in critical shortage subject areas.

The following list is a sampling of New Jersey high schools currently offering Tomorrow's Teachers:

- Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy
- Gateway Regional High School
- Hanover Park Regional High School
- Hasbrouck Heights Middle/High School
- Hawthorne High School
- Jonathan Dayton High School
- Lawrence High School
- Lower Cape May Regional
- Mahwah High School
- Manchester Township High School
- Middle Township High School
- Middletown High School North
- Middletown High School South
- Old Bridge High School
- Orange High School
- Passaic Valley Regional High School
- Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology
- Paulsboro High School
- Perth Amboy High School
- Red Bank Regional High School
- Ridgefield Park Jr/Sr High School
- Secaucus High School
- Trenton Central High School
- Union City High School
- Verona HS
- West Orange HS
- West Windsor - Plainsboro High School South
- Whippany Park High School

Up to 40 high schools will be eligible to participate in this year's Tomorrow's Teachers training. Each high school is invited to send one or two instructors who would then teach the Tomorrow's Teachers course. The trainings are open to all New Jersey public high schools. Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Spaces fill up quickly, so please register early.

Instructors may select one of two sites for the two-day training, which will be conducted by CERRA instructors and will take place as follows:

- **Fairleigh Dickinson University (Teaneck)**
Monday, June 29, 2015
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Tuesday, June 30, 2015
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- **Rider University (Lawrenceville)**
Wednesday, July 1, 2015
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday, July 2, 2015
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

The cost for the Tomorrow's Teachers 10th Edition course curriculum is \$520 to be paid by each participating high school. Invoices for this curriculum will be sent directly to each school district upon acceptance of the course instructor. Thanks to funding by the New Jersey Education Association, the summer training sessions are provided at no cost to participants and include a complimentary lunch. There are no other direct expenses required for Tomorrow's Teachers to be implemented at participating high schools. Please note that the Tomorrow's Teachers curriculum may not be implemented at a high school unless training has been completed by a course instructor(s).

Teachers interested in participating in the Tomorrow's Teachers training must register by Friday, May 8, 2015. For registration details, go to: <http://futureeducators.pages.tcnj.edu/?p=10253>.

Contact Larry Fieber, executive director of the Center for Future Educators at The College of New Jersey, at 609-771-2464 or Fieber@tcnj.edu with any questions.

**News,
Upcoming Events &
Professional Development
Opportunities**



Don't forget to check out the Department's calendar of events (<http://education.state.nj.us/events/>) to view upcoming events that may be of interest to you or your district.

New Teacher Preparation & Certification Regulations Proposed

On February 4, 2015, the Department of Education proposed updates to teacher preparation and certification regulations as part of a comprehensive initiative to support teachers entering the profession. The regulations focus on four areas:

- Attracting strong candidates to enter the profession;
- Providing updated preparation requirements;
- Requiring demonstrated individual performance; and
- Providing program data and support.

For more information, see the resources on this page: www.nj.gov/education/educators/rpr/preparation/

NJDOE Seeks Nominations for Exemplary Secondary Educator Recognition Program

The NJDOE needs your help to identify outstanding secondary teachers deserving of recognition. The Department is asking teachers, parents and community members to reach out to school and district officials to suggest deserving secondary educators (grades 6-12) to nominate for the Exemplary Secondary Educator Recognition Program.

The goal of this program is to identify extraordinary secondary educators for special recognition. Your recommendations will identify individuals who are valued by their school and community and who may ultimately receive prestigious national recognition. This program alternates between elementary and secondary every year. A state certificate of recognition is given out to each candidate that is selected as an Exemplary Educator.

The online application process, to be completed by either a supervisor or administrator, ends April 3, 2015. Each district may recommend up to three educators. District administrators have access to the online nomination application.

The Department encourages every school and district to participate in recognition programs. For more detailed information, please visit: www.state.nj.us/education/educators/rpr/recognition.

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