

The Bridge

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



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- Assistant Commissioner Kimberley Harrington brings us up to date on some of the Department's major initiatives.
- Learn how the state hopes to prevent sudden cardiac arrest in student-athletes by updating those who administer student physicals through a new professional development module.
- A new video message from Acting New Jersey Attorney General John Jay Hoffman urges districts to make anti-bullying efforts a top priority.
- Check out what's new from the Career and Technical Education Office.
- You can now find all educator certificates online in a new feature provided by the Department's certification office.
- Do you have students who are really interested in STEM programs? Consider having them apply for the Governor's STEM Scholars Program.
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Update on NJDOE Major Initiatives

By Kimberley Harrington, Chief Academic Officer

This school year, 2014-2015, my colleagues at the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and I have partnered with professional associations around the state, such as the New Jersey Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (NJASCD), the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association/Foundation for Educational Administration (NJPSA/FEA), the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) and others to share the latest news and information about ongoing Department initiatives. Most recently, I joined Commissioner Hesper and fellow Assistant Commissioners at the NJASCD Leadership Summit on PARCC. Speakers from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), Student Achievement Partners, and local district educators addressed issues concerning student and staff preparation for the new assessments.

The Leadership Summit covered important updates on PARCC protocols with implications for scheduling and communication with staff and community. Presenters also addressed questions and concerns from attendees about alignment with the Common Core State Standards and what test results would look like for schools and parents. Marie Adair, executive director of NJASCD, has captured eight summary points she considers "essential messages" from the summit in the winter issue of *The Front Page*, an e-publication on their website available at: <http://c2.njascd.schoolwires.net/Page/146>.

NJASCD has also posted PowerPoints and handouts from the Leadership Summit presenters on their website at <http://njascd.org/Page/143>.

I look forward to more opportunities to share updates, as well as listen to you about how we can support your important ongoing work with New Jersey's students.

Message from Commissioner Hesper

As we complete the first phase in the first administration of the new statewide PARCC assessments, I want to thank each of you for your hard work and dedication in implementing this program. A great deal of effort and commitment has gone into the transition to a new assessment, but I know that we will work together to face our challenges.

I firmly believe the new PARCC assessments will – for the first time in New Jersey's decades-long history of statewide assessments – provide schools with a tool that can improve classroom instruction. That's a message we've tried to consistently convey to school leaders, and we hope it's a message that you can effectively share with parents and other stakeholders in your communities.

Thank you again for your dedication.



Professional Development Module Developed for Prevention of Sudden Cardiac Arrest in Student-Athletes



The sudden cardiac death of an otherwise healthy student-athlete is an event that everyone hopes to never see occur. To help prevent such tragedies, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has recently released the Student-Athlete Cardiac Assessment professional development module (PD module). The PD module is intended to supplement the cardiac assessment skills of physicians, advanced practice nurses and physician assistants who perform student-athlete pre-participation physical examinations.

The NJDOE and New Jersey Department of Health, in consultation with the New Jersey Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the New Jersey Academy of Family Physicians, the American Heart Association and the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Cardiology developed the PD module in accordance with the requirements of the 2013 *Scholastic Student Safety Act*. This PD module,

in addition to the revised Pre-participation Physical Evaluation form that schools have been using since April 2014, will help to protect our student athletes.

The Department has also made available an "Information Fact Sheet" that outlines the steps parents should be aware of regarding the role of their health care provider in meeting the requirements of the law, so that a student's participation on an athletic team or squad is not unnecessarily delayed. We encourage you to share the fact sheet with parents of student-athletes found at:

www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/health/services/athlete/

The PD module may be the only one of its kind across the nation. It can be found online at:

www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/health/services/athlete/PDModule.shtml.

Questions and concerns may be directed to:
schoolhealthservices@doe.state.nj.us.

New Anti-Bullying Video from the Attorney General's Office Emphasizes Importance of a Safe Learning Environment

At the March meeting of the New Jersey State Board of Education, members viewed a video message from the Acting New Jersey Attorney General, John Jay Hoffman, to school leaders on the issue of harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) in schools. The video from the Attorney General expresses the importance of a proactive, not reactive, approach to HIB, and urges school leaders to make reducing HIB a top priority. The video also emphasizes the importance of vigilant awareness about incidents of HIB, as well as ensuring a positive culture and climate in all schools.

A copy of the video message, which was developed with input from the Attorney General's Division on Civil Rights, has been distributed to all Executive County Superintendents, and will be shown at upcoming county roundtable meetings with district superintendents.

Commissioner Hespe commented on the video by saying that the Attorney General's message reminds us about the importance of providing a positive and welcoming school climate for all students, and promised that the Department of Education will continue to work with school districts to make the creation of a safe learning climate a top priority.

The video has been posted here: www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/ag/

New Developments from the Career and Technical Education Office



New Approval and Re-approval Process for Career and Technical Programs

The Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) is currently re-evaluating the CTE program approval and re-approval process with the goal of developing a web-based application. Approved CTE programs in the Business Management & Administration, Health Science, and Transportation, Distribution & Logistics Career Clusters® were scheduled to be re-approved by June 30, 2015. Since OCTE is actively working on the design of this new application to increase efficiency and streamline components, the Department is extending the approval to operate CTE programs in these specific career clusters for an additional year through June 30, 2016.

Districts will be notified when the web-based application is available and the revised program re-approval schedule is published. In the interim, districts are encouraged to review and enhance CTE programs in these clusters to align to current standards in preparation for program re-approval. The Career Cluster® pages on the Department's website at www.state.nj.us/education/cte/career/ provide contact information for OCTE staff who provide leadership for the related Career Clusters® as well as resources that continue to be added as they become available.

The district's Perkins Grant project director will also be provided with this correspondence. If there are any questions, please contact your district's respective Perkins Program Officer. A list of OCTE program officers and their county assignments is available at www.state.nj.us/education/cte/contact.htm.

Explore Career-Ready Practices at the 2015 Career Readiness Institute

The Office of Career and Technical Education will hold a full-day Career Readiness Institute on Thursday, May 28, 2015, at The College of New Jersey. The institute will provide opportunities for educators to deeply explore career-ready practices to give their students real-world learning opportunities that teach problem-solving and critical thinking, communication and interpersonal skills and collaborative learning. This year's institute promises to be filled with a wide variety of career-readiness resources and opportunities for collaboration that will support educators as they work to prepare students for a rapidly changing workplace and world.

Institute sessions will highlight strategies that promote career-readiness, as well as Career and Technical Education programs. Technical assistance will also be provided so that secondary and postsecondary educators can prepare students to meet the needs of business, industry and labor. Institute participants will also hear from education, labor and business leaders who will discuss how collaboration among organizations is critical to developing meaningful career pathways that provide multiple opportunities for success.

For more information and to learn when registration begins, check online at www.nj.gov/education/cte/conf/15/.

AchieveNJ UPDATE

Electronic Certification Information

The Office of Certification and Induction's webpage has been enhanced to provide information on all educational certificates issued to an individual, as well as the status of current applications. All information about certificates is now available online, including certificate name, certificate ID number, date of issuance, and expiration date, if applicable. In order to make certification information available more quickly, this information will appear on our website in lieu of the issuance of paper certificates. Additionally, the move to electronic certificates will save costs associated with printing and mailing, as many of our neighboring states have discovered. Therefore, as of May 15, 2015, paper certificates will no longer be issued. For more information, please see the instructions posted on the Department's certification website at: www.nj.gov/education/educators/license/tcis/instructions.pdf.



Instructions for Viewing Online
Certification Application Status

Loan Forgiveness for Teachers

The Office of Recruitment, Preparation, and Recognition keeps updated information about loan forgiveness for teachers in certain circumstances found here: www.nj.gov/education/educators/rpr/preparation/aidandloans/. Please visit this page to learn how teachers may qualify for partial or complete loan forgiveness.

Governor's STEM Scholars Program Is Accepting Applications

The Governor's STEM Scholars Program is accepting applications for the class of 2015. The program is a public-private partnership for students interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and is an initiative of the Research & Development Council of New Jersey, the Governor's Office, the New Jersey Department of Education and the Secretary of Higher Education.

This is a free program open to New Jersey students in grades 10 through Ph.D., and it will take place during four, day-long Saturday conferences over the 2015-2016 academic year. Applications will be accepted until Friday, May 29, 2015.

The program seeks to select a diverse and representative group of 50 high school and post-secondary students (through Ph.D./M.D.) who are passionate about STEM, presenting them with incredible opportunities to learn about becoming a STEM professional from New Jersey's vast STEM industry and leading academic professionals.

Scholars are provided with mentoring opportunities that allow them to engage in meaningful, ongoing dialogue with professionals from New Jersey's research and development community, as well as state policymakers. At the heart of the program are four themed conferences designed to mentor, educate, and inspire the scholars by introducing them to accomplished STEM professionals in industry, academia, nonprofits and government.

The expectation is that engaging the best and brightest students in our state with their professional peers will open up mutually beneficial doors of research, opportunity and professional development.

To explore the site and apply to the program, please visit www.govstemscholars.org.

PARCC NOTES

The New Jersey Department of Education has announced the release of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) English Language Arts (ELA) End-of-Year (EOY) Practice Tests. The ELA EOY practice tests are located online at:

<http://parcc.pearson.com/practice-tests/english/>.

The answer keys are posted at the following link: www.parconline.org/practice-test-answers

If you have any questions or need assistance, contact one of the Office of Assessment's staff below:
Veronica Orsi, High School PARCC Coordinator at (609) 292-8739 or

veronica.orsi@doe.state.nj.us

Timothy Steele-Dadzie, Middle School PARCC Coordinator at (609) 777-2087 or

timothy.steele.dadzie@doe.state.nj.us

Orlando Vadel, Elementary School PARCC Coordinator at (609) 341-3456 or

orlando.vadel@doe.state.nj.us



News,
Upcoming Events &
Professional Development
Opportunities



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

NEW: The New Jersey Department of Education's Office of School Innovation is pleased to share the progress of its innovateNJ initiative. In keeping with our belief that innovation is a necessary component of the learning experiences and outcomes of students, the Office of School Innovation has begun a monthly newsletter. This newsletter will provide New Jersey educators with viable models, tools and tips on how innovation is being utilized across school districts. The first issue can be read on the innovateNJ website at www.nj.gov/education/innovateNJ/community/newsletter/15/01.pdf.

REMINDER: The New Jersey Department of Education invites public school districts – including charter schools – to participate in the 2015 Exemplary Secondary Educator Recognition Program. The goal of the program is to identify exemplary educators for special recognition. Your recommendations will help honor individuals who are valued by their school and community and who may ultimately receive prestigious national recognition.

The Department requests administrators to identify up to three exemplary secondary (grades 6-12) teachers, specialists, or principals who have taught for at least five years and who have demonstrated exceptional teaching and leadership abilities.

The online application can be accessed by logging onto the Homeroom website (<http://homeroom.state.nj.us/>) and clicking on the Exemplary Educator link. To submit a nomination, you will need a district-level user account from your district's Homeroom Administrator (formerly WUA). Completed applications (forms, resumes, and recommendation letters) must be submitted online by 4 p.m., on Friday, April 3, 2015.

Your nomination is confidential and should not be shared with the individual being recommended. Nominators of candidates who are selected as Exemplary Educators will receive a certificate of recognition in November 2015 via mail to share with the awardees.

If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Besant, program coordinator, at nancy.besant@doe.state.nj.us.

NEW: Epinephrine Requirements for Schools –

The Department's Office of Student Support Services has announced the new legal requirements for schools to maintain a supply of epinephrine auto-injectors for emergency administration to any student who experiences a severe life-threatening allergic reaction, known as anaphylaxis. The new law allows the school nurse and designees trained by the school nurse to administer the epinephrine to a student without a history of anaphylaxis.

<http://education.state.nj.us/broadcasts/2015/MAR/03/13265/Expanded%20Epinephrine%20Mandates.pdf>

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