

August 2014 Monthly Resources:



Dear Common Core Implementation Team Member,

Greetings! I hope your summer is going well.

This month, our “mailing” includes useful information for PARCC preparation, an update on the 2014 NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards, and an article about the Governor’s Task Force, which was created to review student testing. Also included are the National PTA and Hunt Institute’s Common Core videos, suggested Common Core apps for students, information about a Leadership Academy and free professional development opportunities for the summer. In the last section of this newsletter you will find a personal letter from me.

I. Draft Generic Rubrics

These rubrics have been developed for the scoring of the three Prose Constructed Response items that will appear on the PARCC summative assessments. The language of these rubrics is aligned to the CCSS, the PARCC writing evidence tables, and the PARCC content specific performance-level descriptors at the given grade level. There are rubrics for grade 3, grades 4-5, and grades 6-11. Teachers may wish to use the rubrics to score writings produced during classroom instruction, to score final written essays, to help students edit and revise their work, to demonstrate the criteria for excellence for specific writing skills, and to use language from the rubrics to create their own classroom rubrics or other formative assessment tools that are aligned to the standards.

<http://parconline.org/sites/parcc/files/Grade3CondensedRubric.pdf>

<http://parconline.org/sites/parcc/files/Grade4-5->

[ELACondensedRubricFORANALYTICANDNARRATIVEWRITING.pdf](http://parconline.org/sites/parcc/files/Grade4-5-ELACondensedRubricFORANALYTICANDNARRATIVEWRITING.pdf)

<http://parconline.org/sites/parcc/files/Grade6-11->

[ELACondensedRubricFORANALYTICANDNARRATIVEWRITING.pdf](http://parconline.org/sites/parcc/files/Grade6-11-ELACondensedRubricFORANALYTICANDNARRATIVEWRITING.pdf)

II. The New Jersey State Board of Education Adopts the 2014 NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards

The 2014 New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS), including the English Language Arts and Mathematics Common Core State Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, Social Studies, Comprehensive Health and Physical

Education, Visual and Performing Arts, World Languages, and Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards were adopted at the NJ State Board of Education meeting on July 9, 2014. The standards outline the knowledge and skills students are expected to master in grades K-12. The newly adopted standards can be found at the following link:

http://www.nj.com/education/2014/07/nj_state_board_of_education_adopts_new_curriculum_standards.html

III. Governor Christie Creates Study Commission to Review Student Testing

In an Executive Order issued July 14, the Governor announced the creation of a study commission which will review the effectiveness of all K-12 student assessments. The Commission is charged with reviewing and providing appropriate recommendations about the effectiveness of the volume, frequency, and impact of student testing occurring throughout New Jersey school districts.

<http://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/552014/approved/20140714a.html>

IV. National PTA and Hunt Institute's Common Core Video Series

This video series was developed through a partnership with the Hunt Institute as part of the National PTA's ongoing effort to provide accurate information about the Common Core State Standards and to assist PTA membership with developing grassroots advocacy skills. The videos were designed to educate parents on the Common Core State Standards and empower them to support the transition at school and at home.

http://www.pta.org/advocacy/content.cfm?ItemNumber=4158&RDtoken=21079&use_rID

V. Suggested Common Core Apps for Students

This article includes information on criteria that can be used to select Common Core-aligned apps that will be most helpful to teachers and students. It also includes links to three websites where apps can be searched by device, subject and age group.

<http://www.districtadministration.com/article/common-core-app-adoption-tips-administrators>

VI. New Jersey Leadership Academy - Quality Professional Development for Educational Leaders

The New Jersey Leadership Academy emerged in response to the growing need for high-quality, sustained, collaborative, professional development to support the work of school leaders as they meet the new demands of instructional leadership. The Academy was created by a partnership consisting of NJASA and NJPSA/FEA and supported by the NJDOE. The Academy is a new, structured approach to

professional development for all educational leaders that satisfies the Professional Development Plan requirement and allows for more comprehensive learning through cohorts of leaders at all levels. With a focus on building coherence across the key reforms to improve student learning, the Academy will engage participants in a process to foster collaborative inquiry, build leadership skills and provide opportunities for implementation at the school and district levels. Please see the link below to view the brochure.

<http://fea.njpsa.org/documents/pdf/NJLABrochure-Final.pdf>

VII. Professional Development Opportunities

New Workshops for Teachers: Improving Discussion, Questioning, and Student Engagement

This summer, the Office of Evaluation will provide workshops that focus on key elements of teacher practice. Attendees will investigate strategies to enhance discussion and questioning techniques as well as student engagement. The content is not specific to one particular observation instrument or to any particular discipline, but can apply broadly to effective instruction.

- Intended audience: 1) Teachers that would benefit from additional support in these areas; 2) Teachers who could serve as lead teachers and provide additional support back in their district; 3) Mentor teachers interested in providing additional support to new teachers in the upcoming year.
- The workshops, which are free to NJ public school educators, will be led by Office of Evaluation presenters. The sessions are designed to be informative, practical and purposeful.
- Locations include Princeton, New Providence, Sussex and several locations near the shore including Stockton University, Lacey Township and Neptune. Dates are between July 7 and August 21.
- For full registration details, please visit our [Upcoming Events web page](#).

VIII. Farewell Letter

Dear Colleagues,

Two years ago, I was serving as principal of Mt. Olive Middle School, working to improve the quality and character of the educational experience provided for students and teachers. I found it personally and professionally rewarding, and while I spent long days and countless nights engaging in the work, the nature of the position and the school's proximity to my home allowed me to maintain a certain sense of balance in my life.

Then, I was offered the opportunity to help our state's educators understand and undertake the work of implementing the Common Core State Standards. Honored by the invitation and inspired by the importance of the initiative, I took a two-year leave from my school district to lead this effort as NJ's Chief Academic Officer. The loan agreement ends on July 31, 2014.

The decision to renew the agreement or return to Mt. Olive was a difficult one for me. The district wanted me back. The work yet-to-be-done made me want to stay. Ultimately, the need to reestablish balance in my life was the deciding factor.

Thus, the purpose of this correspondence is to inform you that as of August 1st, I will return to Mt. Olive as the Director of Student Performance. My work will focus on increasing student achievement by improving teaching, learning and leadership across the district. I find myself looking forward to returning to the deep and difficult work of improving schools from within.

I am also saddened by the prospect of leaving. The experiences I have had, and the relationships I have formed, mean a great deal to me. So many people have touched my heart, deepened my knowledge, and expanded my worldview. It has been a great pleasure to work alongside such amazing and dedicated professionals.

Although my role will soon change, my commitment to the State's mission remains the same. While a permanent replacement has not yet been found, I am confident that role will be filled swiftly with a strong candidate. In the meantime, Kimberley Harrington, Director of Standards, will serve as Interim Chief Academic Officer. Please be assured she will continue to support you and the work of the Common Core Implementation Teams.

In closing, I thank you again for the work you are doing on behalf of our students.

Tracey Severns, Ed.D.
Chief Academic Officer

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<http://www.state.nj.us/education/sca/team/ccit.pdf>



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NJCore.org

What's Trending? New Features & Content on NJCORE.ORG (<http://njcore.org/>)

- Badge awards for resource contributions levels.
- Featured content area on homepage

	Month (July)	Since Launch
Number of Registered Educators	8	1,995
Number of Visitors	4,844	74,071
Top 5 Districts		
#1	Trenton	Trenton
#2	Newark	Passaic
#3	Mendham	Bayonne
#4	Egg Harbor Township	Paterson
#5	Clayton	Mount Laurel