

ACADEMIC OFFICE NEWS

April 2018



The Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Academic Office provides guidance and leadership on educational initiatives to assist schools and districts in preparing students to succeed in college, careers, and civic life. *Helpful updates, resources and professional learning are highlighted in this newsletter.*

FREE K-3 Reading Professional Learning Opportunity!

The CSDE has designed a series of professional learning modules for **K-3 special education and general education teachers** to support the implementation of the Connecticut Core Standards in English Language Arts: Foundational Skills and comprehensive reading instruction. This ReadConn learning series provides participants with a deep understanding of foundational reading skills.

Participants will develop the ability to identify a student's skills gap in the area of phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, and comprehension and be able to address that gap in a timely manner to ensure each student is progressing as a reader. Regular and special education teachers will practice whole class and small group direct instruction in reading foundational skills. Teachers will also develop expertise in formatively assessing reading foundational skills, as well as monitoring progress in improving students' reading skills.

Please note: a school-based team must consist of:

- one K-3 school-based literacy leader;
- two K-3 special education teachers; and
- two K-3 general education teachers.

The K-3 literacy leader is defined as a school-based individual with a formal literacy leadership role responsible for supporting K-3 teachers. All teachers on this team must currently teach Grades K-3, and may include teachers of English learners.

To register teams, go to: <http://bit.ly/READCONN>.

If you have any questions, contact Joanne White, Education Consultant, at 860-713-6751 or e-mail at Joanne.White@ct.gov.

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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Social Studies

The CSDE sponsored several webinars this year for Connecticut social studies educators. All webinars were “presented live”, and are archived on the [CSDE YouTube Channel](#).

Four-part webinar series: Understanding History through Memory, Commemoration, and Nostalgia. This series will analyze ways that societies remember historical events, and how this is often different than the actual history of those events. How do we commemorate the past, and what does this commemoration mean? This series is designed for high school and middle school history teachers. The last live webinar in this series is entitled *9/11 and its Aftermath* and will occur on May 3, 2018, from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

For additional information and to register for the webinar, contact Stephen Armstrong at Stephen.Armstrong@ct.gov.

Mathematics

The Mathematical Shifts: A Three-part Webinar Series: This webinar series will focus on the three shifts of focus, coherence and rigor. The intent is to take a deep dive into the instructional implications and provide activities for participants to fully understand the shifts necessitated by the Connecticut Core Standards for Math. This three-part series will be recorded so that districts can utilize the webinar as part of their professional learning programming. The first webinar, with an emphasis on focus, is expected to be released by April 30, 2018, with the remaining webinars released monthly thereafter.

For additional information, contact Jennifer Michalek at Jennifer.Michalek@ct.gov.

Connecticut Core Standards Online Learning Modules: The CSDE, in collaboration with Public Consulting Group, Inc. (PCG), is pleased to continue offering anytime, anywhere access to professional learning content focusing on the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS). Current modules available include Focus on Content Standards (K-5 and 6-12), Focus on Practice Standards (K-5 and 6-12), Focus on Instructional Shifts in ELA, Focus on ELA and Literacy Instruction, Supporting Connecticut Core Standards Success for ALL Students, CCS Mathematics Success for Students with Disabilities (ELA and Math), and CCS Mathematics Success for English Learners (ELA and Math). To register for these free online modules, visit [Connecticut Core Standards](#).

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (CONTINUED)

Computer Science

UTeach CS Principle Course: UTeach is expanding access to their College Board endorsed UTeach CS Principles course. They will be training 48 Connecticut teachers through comprehensive online and in-person sessions during the summer of 2018. A \$500 stipend is available and teachers will receive the comprehensive AP Computer Science Principles curriculum and teacher support materials, year-long implementation support services, and an online national community of practice. A [recording of an informational webinar](#) is available for additional details.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)

- [NGSS District Transition Planning Workshop](#)
Start or enhance your district's multi-year science plan
For vertical teams (example: 1 asst. supt., 2 principals, 1 science coordinator, 2 science coaches)
Grant funding available. Workshops are filling quickly so reserve your place quickly
1 day workshop scheduled for 4/9, 4/23, and 5/4
- [NGSX Part II Taking it Back to the Classroom](#)
Hands-on, Expert-facilitated, Focus on support of 3D learning sequences with class materials
Grant funding available. 24 hours of seminar-style learning (pre-req. NGSX Part I)
Plans for several opportunities during 2018
- [PLANS - Principals Learn About, Network, and Support 3-Dimensional Science Learning](#)
Awareness PD designed for Administrators/Evaluators
Expert facilitated in 1 1/2 days.
Opportunities planned for 4/17-18, 5/1-2, 5/30-31, 7/18-19, 8/21-22, and 9/12-13.

NGSS RESOURCES

- **NEW!** [Connecticut NGSS Parent Toolkit](#) is a short document that will guide parents to better understand the shifts in science education demanded by the NGSS. It includes many useful links to resources that will help parents identify the various components of an exemplary science program.
- **NEW!** [Connecticut NGSS Toolkit for Local School Boards](#) is a brief document that will guide school board members to better understand the shifts in science education demanded by the NGSS. It includes many useful links to resources that will help school boards identify the myriad components of an exemplary science program.
- Free online Access to [JASON](#) Programs for Public School Educators and Students in Connecticut through 2018. JASON provides curriculum and learning experiences in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) for K-12 students and professional learning for teachers.
- [Connecticut Invention Convention \(CIC\)](#) is a nonprofit educational program designed to develop and enhance problem solving and critical thinking skills in children through the process of invention.
- [Next Generation Science Website NOW Newsletter](#) is a monthly newsletter devoted to the NGSS.

PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS : A PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SERIES

Professional Learning Sessions

Teaching Oral Language Development and Foundational Reading Skills to ELs (elementary)

CREC: Tuesday, April 24, 2018

LEARN: Tuesday, May 1, 2018

Digging into the Core: Respectful Tasks and Texts for Secondary English Learners (secondary)

CREC: Wednesday, April 25, 2018

Designing Accessible Learning Experiences for English Learners in Secondary Content Classrooms (secondary)

CREC: Wednesday, May 16, 2018

ACES: Friday, May 25, 2018

Scaffolding to Support Elementary ELs (elementary)

LEARN: Friday, May 18, 2018

Community of Practice Meetings

All meetings run from 9a.m-11 a.m.

ACES: 4/12, 5/22, 6/6

CREC: 3/27, 5/31, 6/12

CES: 4/23, 5/11, 6/5

The CSDE, in collaboration with ACES and the RESC Alliance, is excited to announce a new, robust professional learning series entitled, “Pathways to Success for English Learners.”

Six, full-day **professional learning sessions** (8:30 a.m. — 3:30 p.m.) are specifically designed to focus on EL processes, procedures and pedagogy. A companion **online module** for each session will be posted for on-demand access and self-study. Target audiences are noted in the session information provided in the blue column. For all elementary and secondary sessions, districts are encouraged to send teams of 2-4 people that may include a classroom teacher, instructional coach, TESOL/ bilingual teacher and an administrator.

To extend this professional learning, a range of **community of practice meetings** will be offered for K-12 TESOL/bilingual educators, teachers of ELs, instructional coaches, coordinators and administrators. Participants will collaborate around problems of practice in the field of TESOL and bilingual education. Participants are encouraged to attend the professional learning sessions, but this is not required for participation in the community of practice meetings.

There is NO cost for these sessions but registration is required.

Register at www.aces.org/workshops

For questions, please contact John Gustafson at jgustafson@aces.org or Megan Alubicki Flick at megan.alubicki@ct.gov.

HIGH-IMPACT FAMILY ENGAGEMENT: PROMOTING EQUITY AND STUDENT SUCCESS

This webinar series will highlight evidence-based practices to promote equity in family engagement. Each session will feature state and national experts and focus on a specific evidence-based and systemic family engagement practice that has been shown to create authentic partnerships with families and impact student success. Please see the [flyer](#) for session descriptions and registration information.

The titles and dates of the webinar series are below:

- *How Welcoming is Your School? Creating a School Culture that Invites Family Engagement*, with Betsy LeBorjous, Manager for Youth and Family Services, CREC, on April 20, 2018, from 10:00-11:00 a.m.
- *Family-Friendly First Impressions: Front Office, Safety, and Support Staff as Partners in Family Engagement* with Anne Mead, Administrator for Early Childhood Education and Extended Learning Programs, Danbury Public Schools on May 25, 2018, from 10:00-11:00 a.m.
- *Linking to Learning: Bringing Families into the Learning Process and Launch of Summer Book Club*, on June 8, 2018, from 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Contact Judy Carson with any questions at judy.carson@ct.gov or 860-807-2122.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCHOOLS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS

Red, White, and Blue Schools Program: The CSDE and the Office of the Secretary of the State of Connecticut is co-sponsoring the [Red, White and Blue Schools](#) program. This program is designed to recognize schools who do an exemplary job of teaching civic education. The theme for the 2017-18 school year is *Engagement at the Local Level*. For additional information contact Stephen Armstrong at Stephen.Armstrong@ct.gov.

Remembering Our Heroes - Teaching about Veterans: The CSDE, in consultation with the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs, has established a [recognition program](#) for schools that do an exemplary job of teaching about veterans and their contributions to American society. This program encourages schools to work closely with local veterans' organizations to teach about the contributions of veterans throughout the school year. It is designed for elementary school, middle school, and high school students and teachers. For additional information contact Stephen Armstrong at Stephen.Armstrong@ct.gov.

Second Annual Commissioner's Summer Math Challenge: Last year, over 12,000 students registered for the Commissioner's Summer Math Challenge. **Stay tuned** for information about the 2018 Commissioner's Summer Math Challenge that will be launched in May!