

# The Bridge

ISSUE  
15  
May  
2014

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



## In this Issue

Educators looking for ideas on extended learning opportunities will find information through a New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) program, “Soaring Beyond Expectations: The Afterschool Showcase,” to be held June 11.

If you are looking for professional development opportunities to help students successfully transition to postsecondary education and careers, find out how to register for the NJDOE’s 2014 Career and Technical Education Statewide Institute on May 20 at the College of New Jersey. There are no fees and there will be a free box lunch.

What were the outcomes of the of the PARCC volunteer field-testing program in April? Read about the lessons learned to prepare for the statewide administration next year.

Many districts have recently received a much-needed benefit in the form of a Regular Operating District (ROD) grant to upgrade local facilities. The Department and the School Development Authority announced that nearly 1,600 projects in 333 school districts would receive at least 40 percent of the cost of the projects if the community approved the local share.

Check the updates section for information about the updated professional standards for teachers and mentoring regulations, and what’s new in educator evaluation (AchieveNJ).

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## Soaring Beyond Expectations: The Afterschool Showcase Coming in June

Is your district looking for ideas on the kinds of high-quality extended learning opportunities it can offer to provide additional support to students?

If so, join the New Jersey Department of Education for ***Soaring Beyond Expectations: The Afterschool Showcase*** on June 11, 2014 at the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, 12 Centre Drive, Monroe Township, NJ.

The *Afterschool Showcase* will highlight quality afterschool, summer and before-school programs that have produced positive outcomes. Topics include: aligning extended learning opportunities with the school day through cross-curricular support and professional development; maximizing student engagement and attendance; increasing learning through hands-on experiences; and more. The *Afterschool Showcase* is open to all school districts, faith-based agencies, community-based agencies and others interested in utilizing afterschool, summer and before-school programs as a strategy to improve students’ knowledge and skills and engage them in meaningful learning opportunities.

For more information, contact the Office of Student Support Services, Extended Learning Opportunities unit at [nj21stccle@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:nj21stccle@doe.state.nj.us).

The registration link is <http://www.regonline.com/soaringbeyondexpectations2014>.



# The 2014 Career and Technical Education Statewide Institute is Open to All NJ Educators



The New Jersey Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education (CTE) is sponsoring a 2014 Career and Technical Education Statewide Professional Development Institute for teachers, supervisors, school administrators and school counselors interested in the successful transition of students to postsecondary education and careers.

The institute will be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2014 at The College of New Jersey, 2000 Pennington Road, Ewing, NJ from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with on-site registration beginning at 7:30 a.m. in the Brower Student Center. There is no registration fee, and a box lunch will be provided at no cost to attendees.

The design of this institute is intended to immerse educators in specific topics that are the key to ensuring that CTE programs are connecting to workforce needs and preparing students to be college and career ready. Conference breakout sessions will include:

- Full-day sessions on critical NJ CTE topics:
  - Personal Financial Literacy Boot Camp

- Student Growth Objectives (SGO 2.0) for CTE
  - Postsecondary Perkins and CTE for teams from community colleges
  - Cosmetology program updates provided by the NJ State Board of Cosmetology and Hairstyling
- Half-day sessions on building the knowledge and skills of participants will be offered in areas such as:
- NJ's key industry sectors and talent networks (Advanced Manufacturing, Entrepreneurship, Financial Services, Developing a CTE Safety and Health Plan, Hospitality & Tourism, Life Sciences, and Transportation, Logistics & Distribution)
  - Model programs of study in global logistics and marketing
  - CTE standards revision using the Common Career Technical Core & Career Ready Practices
  - Implementing quality CTE programs in comprehensive high schools
  - NJ Career Assistance Navigator (NJCAN)
  - Integrative STEM
  - Building CTE Data Literacy
  - Community-based instruction and transition for students with disabilities

Prospective attendees should register electronically by visiting the NJDOE website registration at:

<http://education.state.nj.us/cte/>

If you have questions or comments, please contact Maria Constantin at 609-984-2599.

## Regular Operating District Grants (ROD) for Facility Upgrades Received by Many Districts

In a ceremony last month in the Allendale School District, Bergen County, officials from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and the New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) announced the start of execution of grants representing more than \$500 million in grant funding for nearly 1,600 projects approved by the NJDOE. Grant execution signifies completion of the application process and the start of funding being issued to school districts through the SDA's Regular Operating District (ROD) grant program.

The NJDOE determines the selection of school projects to receive grant funds, which are administered by the SDA. The NJDOE approved 1,598 ROD Grant projects in 333 school districts throughout the state. Between state and local contributions, the total project costs of the 1,598 eligible projects are estimated to exceed \$1.2 billion, representing a significant benefit to school districts as this important project work advances.

The state-funded grants represent at least 40 percent of eligible costs for projects that address health and safety issues and other critical needs. The grants are contingent upon local approval of the remaining district share.

# Lessons Learned from the Voluntary Field-Testing of PARCC Assessments

More than 70 percent of New Jersey school districts volunteered to conduct over 62,000 performance-based Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments in April and May in preparation for the statewide administration of the new tests in the spring of 2015.

The field test provided an opportunity for the PARCC Consortium to “test the test” and use the resulting information to improve both the assessment and its online administration. By replicating test administration environments, the field test allowed local districts to identify technology capacity strengths and needs. It will enable administrators and educators to preview planning and proctor requirements, and it also helped students to become familiar with the online assessment.

While overall the districts’ experience with the field tests was positive, the purpose was also to proactively identify challenges prior to full implementation. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is collecting data to better understand what support, communications, and technology assistance will be necessary over the next twelve months to fill the identified gaps. In anticipation of the 2015 administration of PARCC assessments, the Department would like to share a few initial “lessons learned” to date from the field test:

- **Proctor Caching** is a technical term that refers to the practice of downloading the full test content to a local computer prior to administration to reduce the number of technology issues experienced by schools, including delays associated with registering student responses. This is a preventive measure to reduce bandwidth burdens, so the Department strongly recommends that all schools “proctor cache” prior to test administration.

For more information on proctor caching, including installation links and guides, see the PARCC Proctor Cache Manual and Resources located on the [Pearson website \(www.pearsonaccess.com\)](http://www.pearsonaccess.com), select “PARCC” and then access the information under “Related Links” on the right side of the page.

- **Equation Editor Navigation** in the math test requires practice. Some students that had not been exposed to PARCC practice items or the initial test

tutorial were uncertain how to navigate the Equation Editor in the math assessment component. Prior to the 2015 test administration, the Department recommends that test proctors review the Equation Editor Quick Reference Guides available under the tutorial section at: <http://practice.parcc.testnav.com>. Guides are also available at:

- **Grades 3-5**  
([http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/resources/GR3-5\\_EE\\_Tips\\_v0.1.pdf](http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/resources/GR3-5_EE_Tips_v0.1.pdf))
- **Grades 6-8**  
([http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/resources/GR6-8\\_EE\\_Tips\\_v0.1.pdf](http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/resources/GR6-8_EE_Tips_v0.1.pdf))
- **High School**  
([http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/resources/HS\\_EE\\_Tips\\_v0.1.pdf](http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/resources/HS_EE_Tips_v0.1.pdf))

- **Student Survey** – PARCC has included a student survey as a “test session” at the end of each field test to gather student feedback regarding the assessment. Student feedback will be analyzed nationally to improve the test’s usability and results will be publically available from PARCC during the summer of 2014. Students are not asked for any identifying information as part of the survey.

- **Additional Resources:**

- Once registered to administer the PARCC field test, many additional resources to aid both test administrators and test coordinators could be found on the password-protected site. Among those resources are self-paced training modules. Test administration manuals and other user guides can be found here: [www.parcconline.org/field-test-administration](http://www.parcconline.org/field-test-administration).
- PARCC updated the Field Test Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to incorporate new questions asked during the Performance-Based Assessment administration. The revised FAQs are posted at [www.parcconline.org/field-test-faqs](http://www.parcconline.org/field-test-faqs).
- If you should have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Dr. Jeffrey B. Hauger, director, Office of Assessments, at 609-984-6311 or email [assessment@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:assessment@doe.state.nj.us).

# Preparing Our Students for College and Career

At the Cape May County Technical School District, a traditional Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) vocational class has now become a Green Program of Study. High school students are engaged in a three-year program applying skills in photovoltaic energy collection; solar theory, design and use; using wind turbines; and building weatherization concepts. These students earn industry credentials ranging from an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certification to related trade certifications in addition to college credit in sustainability and energy. The HVAC/Sustainable Energy graduates are ready for employment and a number of postsecondary pathways from apprenticeship to degree programs.

At Allentown High School, Monmouth County, students in the Animal and Plant Biotechnology class work collaboratively as scientists in the Agriculture Cluster. They extract DNA from common plant-based food items to determine whether genetically modified plant material was used in production. As they await their results, the students record their procedures in their laboratory notebooks and share their findings just as they would in a research journal.

These and other Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs across the Garden State have become prime examples of interdisciplinary education and project-based learning. The programs encompass rigorous academic and technical content to prepare students for careers and postsecondary education, while helping them to develop modern skills required for today's global economy. Clearly, this is not their parents' vocational education.

Currently, New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) are undergoing the required five-year review process. This has provided an opportunity to reflect on the current CTE standards included in the NJCCCS. In 2009, New Jersey adopted CTE standards for the first time based on the knowledge and skill statements of sixteen Career Clusters® that are the organizing framework for the delivery of career and technical education embraced by all states.

The framework was developed under the leadership of the National Association of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) in 2002, and it included specific knowledge and skill statements that describe what students need to know and do to be successful in the respective Career Cluster.

In 2012, NASDCTEc updated the Career Clusters® based on input from approximately 3,500 individuals representing 42 states from K-12 education, business, industry, and higher education. The result was the development of the Common Career Technical Core

(CCTC) which sets benchmark standards for CTE and defines what students should know and be able to do at the end of a program of study. The CCTC includes content standards for each of the 16 Career Clusters® and an overarching set of 12 Career Ready Practices.

## Career Ready Practices

The Career Ready Practices of the CCTC reflect career-ready skills that every student and adult will develop and practice at increasing levels of complexity throughout their educational experience. While developing the CCTC, the working group noted commonalities across all Career Clusters® in behaviors and knowledge that individuals need to be successful. These behaviors and knowledge currently augment the 21st Century Life and Career Skills in the NJCCCS.

The 12 overarching statements that comprise the Career Ready Practices are as follows:

- Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
- Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
- Attend to personal health and financial well-being.
- Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
- Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
- Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
- Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
- Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.
- Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.
- Use technology to enhance productivity.
- Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.

## Moving Forward

The Career Ready Practices and the entire CCTC give educators great flexibility in supporting all students to be career ready. The Office of Career and Technical Education at the New Jersey Department of Education has engaged with various groups across the state over the past few months to discuss the CCTC. The response has been enthusiastic toward moving in the direction of utilizing these standards which are already 97 percent aligned with the CTE standards of the NJCCCS.

To view the CCTC, please visit [www.careertech.org/career-technical-education/cctc/](http://www.careertech.org/career-technical-education/cctc/).

# 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.



## What's New for NJ Educators?

### Updated Professional Standards for Teachers and Mentoring Regulations

On April 2, the State Board of Education adopted updated Professional Teaching Standards and mentoring regulations, which went into effect on May 5, 2014. In order to support districts in implementing the regulations, the NJDOE has now published several guidance materials.

- Overview of updated NJ Professional Standards for Teachers ([www.nj.gov/education/profdev/profstand/teacherstandardoverview.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/profstand/teacherstandardoverview.pdf))
- Alignment of InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards and NJ Professional Standards for Teachers ([www.nj.gov/education/profdev/profstand/teacherstandardscrosswalk.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/profstand/teacherstandardscrosswalk.pdf))
- Overview of New Mentoring Regulations ([www.nj.gov/education/profdev/mentor/regoverview.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/mentor/regoverview.pdf))
- Optional Mentoring Log Template ([www.nj.gov/education/profdev/mentor/MentoringLogTemplate.docx](http://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/mentor/MentoringLogTemplate.docx))

To learn more, visit the Professional Development website ([www.nj.gov/education/profdev/](http://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/)). If you have questions or feedback, email [teachpd@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:teachpd@doe.state.nj.us).

## Register for the SGO 2.0 Workshop

The Office of Evaluation will provide three-hour, interactive workshops in various locations around the state during May and June focused on the quality of assessments and on using a variety of baseline data to set targets. Participants will be able to return to their district and use the presentation and materials to directly train their staff. We recommend bringing a team of up to five SGO implementation leaders and teachers who will be responsible for turnkeying the information to district staff. Teachers are integral to the SGO development process and should be included as part of school/district teams. Register for the in-person workshops through our [web page](http://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/resources/events.shtml) ([www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/resources/events.shtml](http://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/resources/events.shtml)).

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[education.state.nj.us/feature/](http://education.state.nj.us/feature/)

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# What's New for NJ Educators?



## AchieveNJ Updates

The Department just released another [AchieveNJ Update broadcast memo](#) ([www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/050614Update.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/050614Update.pdf)), focused on resources for completing 2013-14 evaluations and preparing for setting strong Student Growth Objectives (SGOs) next year:

- In order to clearly delineate the elements involved in completing evaluations for teachers, we have published this [one-page chart](#) ([www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/implementation/TeacherEvalResourcesforEOSY.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/implementation/TeacherEvalResourcesforEOSY.pdf)) listing the components and several supporting resources.
- We have recently published two new materials to support the completion of evaluations for principals and assistant/vice principals (APs/VPs):
  - [Finishing Strong for Principal Evaluation](#) ([www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/implementation/FinishingStrongPrincipals.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/implementation/FinishingStrongPrincipals.pdf)) – offers a list of steps districts should consider in the remaining months of the school year.
  - [AP/VP Evaluation Leadership Scoring Worksheet](#) ([www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/scoring/APVPLEadershipinstrumentworksheet.xlsx](http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/scoring/APVPLEadershipinstrumentworksheet.xlsx)) – an optional tool offered to help districts score the Evaluation Leadership component. Please note we previously released the [Principal Evaluation Leadership Scoring Worksheet](#) ([www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/scoring/leadershipinstrumentworksheet.xlsx](http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/scoring/leadershipinstrumentworksheet.xlsx)).

Later this spring, we will release updated versions of our suite of SGO guidance materials. “SGO 2.0” reflects the evolution of the SGO process based on educator input and feedback. Updated SGO materials will focus on the following five points:

1. SGOs are learning targets for key concepts and skills that students can be expected to master in a course based on a rough sense of where they start. Educators should use multiple measures of student prior learning ([see example – www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/MultipleBaselineDataSlide.pdf](#)).
2. SGOs should be embedded within the typical work of a teacher. Educators can measure starting points using readily available information, align SGOs with standards normally taught, and embed SGO tests into the regular testing protocol of the school/department.
3. SGO quality relies on summative assessment quality. Educators should focus on improving summative assessment quality, developing common assessments where appropriate. In many cases, educators can modify pre-existing assessments to avoid redundant testing of students.
4. SGOs should be a true reflection of both the curriculum and the students an educator teaches. The [SGO Quality Rating Rubric](#) ([www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/SGOQualityRatingRubric.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/SGOQualityRatingRubric.pdf)) can be used to incorporate a significant number of students and course standards within an SGO.
5. SGOs should be collaborative, i.e., teacher-driven, administrator-supported, and student-centered. Even though administrators are responsible for approving and scoring SGOs, they should encourage teachers to take ownership of the SGO process as a powerful way to help them integrate standards, instruction, and assessment to improve student achievement.