

December 2013 Monthly Resource:



This month, our “mailing” includes a video series on the Common Core State Standards, the National Parent Teacher Association guide to the new assessments, text complexity resources, a list of free professional development opportunities that include STEM and ELA-related trainings, and information regarding workshops for school board members sponsored by the NJ School Boards Association.

I. CCSS Videos

To further aid states in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the Council of Chief State School Officers created a series of videos to explain the CCSS in greater depth. These videos can be found at:

http://www.ccsso.org/resources/digital_resources/common_core_implementation_video_series.html

II. National PTA Guide to the New Assessments in NJ

The National Parent Teacher Association created a guide that includes:

- An overview of the new assessments
- Sample questions
- An overview of accountability for students, teachers, and schools
- Additional resources for parents

To access the guide, click on the following link:

<http://www.njpta.org/Parents%20Guide%20to%20New%20Assessments%20in%20NJ.pdf>

III. Text Complexity Resources

The quantitative dimension of text complexity refers to those aspects—such as word frequency, sentence length, and text cohesion (to name just three)—that are difficult for a reader to evaluate when examining a text. These factors are more efficiently measured by computer programs. The websites in the following chart provide a means for teachers to enter text in order to determine the quantitative level of text complexity.

Quantitative (Text Complexity) Website Resources

ATOS by Renaissance Learning	http://www.renlearn.com/atos/
Degrees of Reading Power® (DRP®) by Questar Assessment, Inc.	http://www.questarai.com/products/drpprogram/pages/dr_p_analyzer.aspx
Flesch-Kincaid (public domain)	http://www.read-able.com/
The Lexile® Framework For Reading by MetaMetrics	http://www.lexile.com/analyzer/
Reading Maturity by Pearson Education (not free)	http://www.readingmaturity.com/rmm-web/#/
SourceRater by Educational Testing Service (not free)	http://www.ets.org/research/topics/as_nlp/educational_applications/
Easability Indicator by Coh-Metrix	http://141.225.42.101/cohmetrixgates/Home.aspx

IV. Reading Resources

This link provides a comprehensive book list that is organized according to theme. Educators who are looking for multiple texts on the same topic may find this particularly useful. Many of the references also include a recommended age-range.

<http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet23#children>

V. Professional Development

Below are some examples of the free professional development opportunities that will be offered by the NJ DOE in the coming months. Click on

<http://education.state.nj.us/events/all/> to view the complete list.

- PARCC Technology Readiness Regional Meeting
PARCC Technology Readiness Updates
Date: December 16, 2013
Time: 10:00am to 1:00pm
- Kindergarten Seminar
Research-based Kindergarten Best Practices for K Teachers & Administrators
Date: January 17, 2014
Time: 9:30am to 2:30pm

VI. Professional Development – STEM PD

Title: Promoting a Conceptual Understanding of Fractions in Grades 3 to

Description: Understanding fractions is a focal point in grades 3 through 5 in the Common Core State Standards and a building block for learning higher-level mathematical concepts. This workshop will present attendees with strategies for teaching fractions, which promote conceptual understanding.

Requested Audience: Teachers in grades 3 through 5

When: December 2, 2013 (Central)

December 4, 2013 (South)

December 17, 2013 (North)

Time: 8:30am – 9:00am Registration, Session 9:00am – 3:00pm

Registration Links:

December 2, 2013 [Promoting a Conceptual Understanding of Fractions in Grades 3 to 5 - Central](#) (Trenton)

December 4, 2013 [Promoting a Conceptual Understanding of Fractions in Grades 3 to 5 - South](#) (Galloway)

December 17, 2013 [Promoting a Conceptual Understanding of Fractions in Grades 3 to 5 - North](#) (Branchburg)

Title: Teaching Ratio and Proportion in Grades 6 and 7

Description: The Common Core State Standards have a strong emphasis on ratio and proportion for grades 6 and 7. Participants will be presented with sample lessons and instructional methods to use in the classroom, which promote a stronger knowledge base in the concepts of ratio and proportion for students.

Requested Audience: Teachers in grades 6 and 7

When: December 9, 2013 (Central)

December 10, 2013 (South)

December 16, 2013 (North)

Time: 8:30am – 9:00am Registration, Session 9:00am – 3:00pm

Registration Links:

December 9, 2013 [Teaching Ratio and Proportion in Grades 6 and 7 - Central](#) (Trenton)

December 10, 2013 [Teaching Ratio and Proportion in Grades 6 and 7 - South](#) (Galloway)

December 16, 2013 [Teaching Ratio and Proportion in Grades 6 and 7 - North](#)
(Branchburg)

VII. Professional Development – ELA PD

Title: Text Complexity

Description: Literacy Specialists from the NJDOE Office of Literacy will present a series of free workshops designed to provide context and instructional strategies for the implementation of the Common Core in ELA. The workshops will focus on the shifts and will offer practical applications for the classroom.

Teachers will look at both quantitative and qualitative data that inform text choices for their classroom instruction. Text complexity will be an increasingly important component of instruction as the PARCC assessments are administered and this workshop will investigate both the selection and uses of text in our New Jersey classrooms.

Requested Audience: Teachers

When: January 15, 2014 (Gloucester Community College)

January 21, 2014 (Middlesex County College)

Registration Links: Both sessions are limited to 150 participants. Registration will be open on our site by Wednesday, December 4. Early registration is encouraged.

<http://education.state.nj.us/events/all/>

Additional sessions are also planned for **January 29** and **February 13**. Please watch our registration site for topics and location. <http://education.state.nj.us/events/all/>

VIII. NJ School Boards Association Presents – Student Achievement: A Walk in the PARCC

The Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is developing a set of standardized tests for grades 3-11 that will be used to assess students' mastery of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English language arts. To prepare for these assessments, districts need to address issues of instructional readiness as well as "tech" readiness. This program will focus on the role of board members in ensuring that our schools are ready to meet all of the challenges associated with the new assessments.

Details to register can be found here:

<http://www.njsba.org/news/sbn/20131029/njsba-revises-board-member-academy-programs.php?a=195#parcc>