Dear Colleagues,

While summer may be on the horizon, we know that teachers and students alike are still busy with lessons and end of year projects. My team and I will also be busy in June presenting new resources to support your classroom instruction and professional learning.

The resources we have developed are being launched by the Division’s Office of Teaching and Learning Support which is the focus of this month’s “highlight.” To learn more about these supports and other resources for your work with students, visit the Professional Learning toolkit at NJCORE.

All division supports are aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). On May 4, the NJ State Board of Education adopted the revised standards for English language arts and mathematics. In addition, it renamed all academic standards as New Jersey Student Learning Standards, which include ELA and mathematics, as well as the other content areas previously called the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS).

Best wishes as you close out this school year and see your students off to summer fun, as well as a new grade level. As always, we thank you for your hard work and dedication to the academic success of all NJ students and wish you a fabulous summer!

Kimberley Harrington,
Chief Academic Officer
Division of Teaching and Learning
Division Highlight

This month, The Blast highlights the Office of Teaching and Learning Support (OTLS), directed by Robin Knutelsky. Working in collaboration with educators and other partners, the office provides access to research-based professional learning, innovative supports, and resources. The focus is on supporting teachers as they guide students in developing the critical thinking, problem solving and creativity skills needed to thrive in the 21st century.

Several projects have been launched by the office during the school year to support classroom instruction and professional learning. A major project has been to build the repository of quality instructional resources across all content areas and grade levels available through the New Jersey Collaborative Online Resource Exchange (NJCORE). The site now hosts additional search opportunities, including a Professional Learning Toolkit including the free Blended Online Learning Modules created through a partnership with New Jersey Institute of Technology and New Jersey Principal and Supervisors Association/Foundation for Educational Administration. In June, the office will offer overview sessions, as well as a two-day summer institute.

To facilitate the effective use of PARCC student data and the Evidence Statement reports, the office is also presenting PARCC Data: Conversations That Drive the Cycle of Teaching and Learning. Attendees at these interactive, morning and afternoon sessions will look at state, district and school trends to shape best curricular and instructional practices on the school/district level.

The newest OTLS workshop series was announced in a recent broadcast: Conversations around Curriculum and Instruction: Building the Curricular Framework. These sessions will introduce the division’s new curricular framework which are aligned with the newly adopted New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English language arts and mathematics, replacing the model curricula for those subjects. Workshop topics will include shared curricular best practices, as well as the development of the frameworks for local use.

Maintaining a strong connection with education professionals in all roles has been a priority of the office. To ensure ongoing communication, the division has recently convened a Council for Teaching and Learning. Educators have been chosen to serve on the council which will meet quarterly to advise the division that supports the work of classroom teachers and building administrators.

The Blast newsletter, also created and distributed by the Office of Teaching and Learning Support, complements the aforementioned initiatives by keeping educators apprised of division news and resources tied to academic standards. For more information about receiving the Blast, as well as OTLS activities, please contact Robin Knutelsky.

Note: You are invited to register below for sessions with current seat availability:

PARCC Data sessions:
June 9:  9:00am to noon or 1:00pm to 4:00pm
June 16: 9:00am to noon or 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Curricular Frameworks sessions:
June 17: 1:00pm to 4:00pm
June 24: 9:00am to noon or 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Division News

NJ State Board Adopts NJ Student Learning Standards

The NJ State Board of Education has adopted the revised ELA and mathematics standards, based on the Standards Review process undertaken last year, and a new title for NJ’s academic standards. The NJ Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) now incorporate all content areas, including those listed previously in the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards. Learn more at the NJSLS website.

NJCORE Update

Have you NJCORE’d today?! Create an account and start searching for resources to use in your classroom or for your own professional learning. Visit the Featured Content and Professional Learning toolkits to see what’s new each month!
Resources for Teaching the NJ Student Learning Standards

Be sure to visit NJ CORE for these and other newly uploaded resources!

English Language Arts

Achieve the Core’s Read Aloud Project

The Read Aloud Project offers free standards-aligned lessons for K-2 read aloud books. Each lesson is authored, edited, and reviewed by a team of educators and includes text-dependent questions, as well as tasks to strengthen speaking, listening and writing skills.

Mathematics

Engaging Students through Modeling with Math

This author of this blog describes a teaching approach which focuses students on everyday examples of mathematics in the world around them. The educator who developed the modeling with math process suggests that “storytelling (which often involves three acts) gives us a framework for certain mathematical tasks…” Read more about the rationale and steps behind the teaching strategy.

Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM)

President Obama Wants Student Ideas on STEM

The White House has launched a new website to gather feedback from students about science, technology, engineering and math. After a student asked President Obama if he has a “child science adviser,” the President decided that there should be a “kid's advisory group” to advise him. This website was then created to give students the opportunity to submit ideas for improving STEM education.

TeachEngineering Digital Library Resources

TeachEngineering is an online digital library collection with standards-based engineering curricula for K-12 teachers and engineering faculty. The collection provides educators with free access to a growing number of curricular resources including classroom activities, lessons, units and living labs.

New Science Journal Promotes STEM Education

Connected Science Learning is an online journal which highlights STEM education experiences to bridge the gap between in-school and out-of-school teaching and learning settings. It features articles about effective programs and shares research on preK–12 STEM learning, with a focus on strategies for collaboration around STEM education. Editors are seeking contributions for the fall issue (due by June 30) on professional development.

Science

Free On-line Science Education Short Courses

The University of Washington Institute for Science and Mathematics Education has produced “Short Courses” incorporating STEM Teaching Tools. The courses can be viewed individually or in a PLC setting. Explore the first two courses on formative assessment and how to adapt curriculum materials to the NJ Student Learning Standards. Contact NJDOE science coordinator, Michael Heinz, with questions.

NGSS May 2016 Newsletter

Go to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) website to access the May 2016 NOW newsletter. This issue includes an article by a NJ science teacher on transitioning to the new standards.
Social Studies

NJ Amistad Commission 2016 Summer Institutes

The NJ Amistad Commission will offer two summer institutes for educators in two locations. The northern institute will be held at Bloomfield College from August 1 to 3, and the southern institute will be held at Rowan University from July 25-27. For information on the 2016 topics and the application process, visit the Amistad Commission website. Applications are due July 13.

Celebrate Flag Day June 14 at Education World

Education World is an online resource for educators offering free, in-depth original content including news briefs related to education, lesson plans, as well as tips and reviews on various education technology tools. Articles on professional learning are also accessible on the site. Visit the site this month for lesson ideas on Flag Day, June 14.

Career Readiness

The Office of Career Readiness has announced that the 2016-2017 Perkins Secondary Grant Application is now available on the NJDOE website. The due date for the application is June 13. Read more about grant guidelines and the application process in this May 3 Broadcast.

NJDOE Assessments Webpage

Visit the NJDOE Assessment webpage for current information about PARCC and other state assessments. Resources for districts, educators and parents can also be accessed on this page.

Further Reading

How Teachers Get Their Students College-Ready

As a former chairperson for the College Board New England Regional Council, the author of this article was able to gain insights from higher education faculty about the skills that help students to be truly college-ready. She identifies key issues and offers suggestions for high school teachers as to how they can help all students, whether bound for college or career and technical education, to be ready for postsecondary goals.

Misc. Opportunities

ASCD Teacher Impact Grants

ASCD Teacher Impact Grants (TIGs) provide funding directly to teachers for promising teacher-led, administrator-supported ideas, programs, or initiatives to serve as models which can be replicated and scaled. The application deadline is June 16.

National Week of Making is June 17-23

The National Week of Making is June 17-23. Libraries, museums, recreation centers, schools, universities and community spaces are invited to support and grow the number of citizen-makers by hosting events and highlighting new innovations. They can also nominate someone as a Champion of Change.

Before you go…

How else can we help? Contact us!

Did you know NJDOE is on Facebook? Visit us!

...See you in July!