



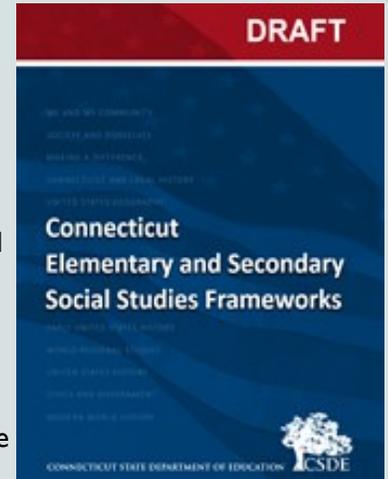
# Humanities Unit Newsletter

December 2014

## New Social Studies Framework

Written by a team of Connecticut social studies educators consisting of elementary, middle and high school, as well as higher education faculty from Connecticut's rural, suburban and urban districts, the Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Frameworks for Grades K-12 is based on the national College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards.

Many social studies educators find this to be an exciting and empowering instructional tool for use with their students. Using an inquiry-based approach to social studies, instruction is based on both teachers and students asking and answering compelling questions. Through the lenses of civics, U.S. and world history, economics and geography, the framework asks students "to do," not only by communicating conclusions in essays and presentations for the classroom or the teacher, but also to take informed action within the school, local, state and national community. This framework presents a new way of teaching social studies by advocating that students "take informed action" and become active and engaged citizens.



While the Board of Education gave initial approval, these frameworks will be brought to the February 2015 State Board of Education meeting for final approval. The frameworks and other relevant resources are available on the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Web site. For more information, please contact Stephen Armstrong at [stephen.armstrong@ct.gov](mailto:stephen.armstrong@ct.gov).

## CT Core Standards Web site

CTCoreStandards.org is a valuable resource where you can find a multitude of meaningful academic materials directed to educators, students, family and community partnerships. Materials, including lessons and units reviewed by teams of teachers and CSDE staff using the rigorous EQulP evaluation tools, are available for math, English language arts (ELA), social studies, science, world languages and career and technical education. Additionally, this Web site provides instructional materials developed by Connecticut teachers. In fact, Connecticut's very own Dream Team created ELA Content Literacy

Close Reading Plans for ELA and content-area literacy teachers and Mathematics Instructional Cycle Guides geared for instructors of mathematics. Both resources are designed to provide teachers with steps and materials needed to elicit student understandings and misunderstandings, while providing opportunities for extra support and/or extension to meet the needs of all learners.

The CT Core Standards Web site also provides a listing of professional development opportunities, access to a library of professional learning materials, and on-demand professional learning through webinars and video resources. Finally, the CT Core Standards Web site is an invaluable resource to Connecticut families and communities that support engagement. For more information, please contact Jennifer Webb (ELA Consultant) at [jennifer.webb@ct.gov](mailto:jennifer.webb@ct.gov), Jennifer Michalek (Mathematics Education Consultant) at [jennifer.michalek@ct.gov](mailto:jennifer.michalek@ct.gov) or Charlene Tate Nichols (Mathematics Education Consultant) at [charlene.tate.nichols@ct.gov](mailto:charlene.tate.nichols@ct.gov).



# Connecticut State Department of Education 2015 SRBI Survey

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has designed a brief 20-item survey to gather information regarding the implementation of Connecticut's Framework for Scientific Research-Based Interventions statewide. This survey is part of the CSDE's ongoing efforts to communicate with and support educators in our collective work to improve student outcomes. We cannot guarantee we will be able to provide all supports that correspond directly to your survey responses, but we can assure you that your input will affect our thinking and planning. We are grateful for your participation in this needs assessment and your continuing partnership to provide all students with a continuum of support. The survey may be accessed at: [http://ctcorestandards.org/?page\\_id=5226](http://ctcorestandards.org/?page_id=5226).

## Smarter Balanced Digital Library



The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is committed to ensuring that all students leave high school prepared for postsecondary success in college or careers. A balanced assessment system – which includes *summative* and *interim* assessments and *formative* assessment practices – provides tools to improve teaching and learning. The formative assessment process is an essential component of a balanced assessment system.

More than 1,300 educators from 22 states (64 from Connecticut) with diverse areas of expertise have been populating the Smarter Balanced Digital Library with professional learning and instructional resources. All resources are vetted by educators using quality criteria before being posted in the Digital Library.

The Digital Library is a searchable, interactive, online collection of instructional and professional learning resources for all content areas developed by educators for all K-12 educators. Currently, there are over 2,500 resources posted in the Digital Library. These resources are aligned

with the intent of the Common Core State Standards and will help educators implement the formative assessment process to adjust teaching to improve student learning. Resources include lesson plans, units, rubrics, instructional strategies, videos of educators in action and professional learning materials. The Digital Library will also include resources to interpret data and reports from the Smarter Balanced summative and interim assessments. This interactive site includes collaborative features that allow educators to rate resources, pose questions and share expertise through online forums with other educators across Consortium states.

The Digital Library uses state-of-the-art tagging, filtering and search features to locate, view, download and rate resources. Users just need to click on one of thousands of resources at any grade level and any content area to read and then download for immediate use!

[Information](#) about the Digital Library is located on the CSDE Web site. Additional information including recorded “Live Tours” and “Help Topic” presentations can be found on the [Teacher page](#) of the Smarter Balanced Web site. The “Live Tours” show how to log into the Digital Library, browse for resources and utilize the Digital Library for collaboration. Access the [Smarter Balanced Digital Library](#) to view resources that support teaching and learning. For access information, contact your District Test Coordinator.

## Questions?

If you would like further information on any of the topics covered in this newsletter, please email [CSDEHumanitiesUnit@ct.gov](mailto:CSDEHumanitiesUnit@ct.gov) .

