



Humanities Unit Newsletter

From the Academic Office
Standards, Curriculum and Assessment

March 2015

Welcome!

The Humanities Unit Newsletter is published throughout the year and contains information about activities and updates from the Academic Office with a focus on English/language arts, social studies and the arts. To subscribe (or unsubscribe) to this publication, please e-mail your request to CSDEHumanitiesUnit@ct.gov.

Meet the Humanities Staff

Cristi Alberino

Education Consultant, ELA
cristi.alberino@ct.gov

Gil Andrada

Education Consultant
gilbert.andrada@ct.gov

Stephen Armstrong

Education Consultant, Social Studies
stephen.armstrong@ct.gov

Jackie Coleman

Education Consultant, Arts
jacqueline.coleman@ct.gov

Joseph Di Garbo

Education Consultant
joe.digarbo@ct.gov

Deirdre Ducharme

Education Consultant, ELA
deirdre.ducharme@ct.gov

Steve Martin

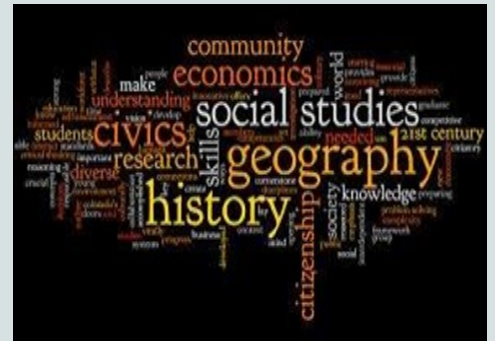
Education Consultant, ELA
steve.martin@ct.gov

Jennifer Webb

Education Consultant, ELA
jennifer.webb@ct.gov

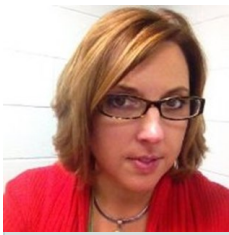
Social Studies Frameworks Approved by the State Board of Education

On February 4, the State Board of Education approved the Social Studies Frameworks which have been in development for more than a year and a half. These frameworks support teachers in their efforts to provide a comprehensive social studies education that is rich in content and that prepares students to achieve essential and critical-thinking skills indispensable to understanding our nation and the world around them. To complement these frameworks, a robust implementation will be initiated. This plan includes:



- A session for social studies curriculum leaders on implementing the framework at a districtwide level.
- The creation and distribution of a companion document, which outlines content, inquiry activities and assessments in greater detail than is included in the framework.
- A series of workshops to be held across the state, where teachers and curriculum leaders will be introduced to the framework.
- A webinar series on the framework.
- Two summer workshops for social studies educators on the new framework and teaching social studies through inquiry.
- The creation of a Center for Inquiry in Connecticut History to be located at Central Connecticut State University.
- The identification of eight model districts, that will create units and lessons, inquiry activities and assessments that will be shared statewide.
- Professional development activities for individual schools and districts.

For more information, please contact Stephen Armstrong at stephen.armstrong@ct.gov.



Welcome Jacqueline Coleman, Education Consultant for the Arts!

Jackie Coleman learned early on that the arts were a part of her DNA. Dancing in the Nutcracker with the Youngstown Ballet during second grade, singing with the Vocal Ensemble in a high school music class and rallying friends to rehearse an original play after school all prepared her to be the professional she is today.

Jackie serves as the Education Consultant for the Arts with the Connecticut State Department of Education.

In her last position as Senior Executive Advisor for the Arts with Hartford Public Schools, Jackie galvanized Hartford's arts and business community along with the school district's staff to form a public/private partnership intended to inspire student success through the arts. (This partnership is now formally a non-profit organization called Hartford Performs.) While in Hartford she also designed an 18-month plan to problem-solve curriculum challenges in an urban portfolio school district. Her strategy to fortify the position of the arts in the district through increased public student performances, national conference presentations and ongoing advocacy has engaged not only the students of Hartford but the district staff and parents as well.

Prior to Hartford Schools, Jackie worked as the Director of Education at Hartford Stage. Her most exciting accomplishment during her time there was expanding the reach of *Connections* – a theatre literacy program – across the state. Additionally, she created *Innovations* – a science/theatre residency, formed the Hartford Stage Young Company, designed a multitude of interdistrict and after school programs, increased professional development opportunities and initiated their adult acting series.

Jackie is a Master Teaching Artist on the roster for the Connecticut Office of the Arts visiting classrooms with arts integrated lessons aligned to curriculum. She has 15 years of acting credits in and around New York City and Connecticut. She holds an MFA from the University of South Carolina and a BFA from the University of Connecticut.

Jackie can be contacted at jacqueline.coleman@ct.gov.

Arts Mini-Grants Update

The December 2014 issue of the Humanities Unit Newsletter included a brief article about the Arts in Education Mini-Grant program. Grant applicants wrote proposals covering a wide range of creative projects involving students in the arts, and connecting that experience to the content found in other academic domains. Eight grants were awarded funding and proposed various arts integration ideas such as hiring artists in residence to provide workshops, partnering with area theaters and art institutions, creating works of art depicting local historical events, creating interactive art utilizing modern technologies, using the school hallways as the canvas for an ever-evolving student-created mural and inaugurating an after-school program with sessions often taking place at a museum.

One award-winning proposal came from the Newtown School District. The Newtown project “Unified Theater at Newtown High School” is an illustrative example of a project that attempts to integrate the arts directly with what is going on in the school's other content domains. The Newtown grant is especially comprehensive in that it will make the arts available and accessible to all the students in the high school. It also builds what is hoped to be a sustainable relationship between the school and the performing arts community by working closely with the Unified Theater program in Hartford.

Apart from the work directly with the Unified Theater and a planned student-led dramatic performance, one aspect of the Newtown proposal is to expand access to the arts through a “Visiting Artist Program.” This initiative calls for visiting artists to provide workshops or presentations to students (and their teachers) in classes that are outside of Theater, Music or Art. These ideas of arts integration are worth supporting and the state grant money will assist Newtown in these efforts.

We extend our congratulations to all awardees and wish them success in their implementation!

Smarter Balanced Digital Library

As Smarter Balanced states prepare to implement the operational assessments this spring, it is only natural that much of the focus has been on the summative assessment component.

But Smarter Balanced is more than just a year-end test. Another essential component of the assessment system is the formative assessment process and the Digital Library.

As a reminder, the [Digital Library](#) is an online collection of instructional and professional learning resources contributed by educators for educators. These resources are aligned with the Common Core State Standards and will help educators implement the formative assessment process to support teaching and learning. The resources are fully vetted against a set of quality criteria.

The [Digital Library Factsheet](#) which outlines the innovative design features and collaboration features is now available. The [Digital Library Modules](#) slide deck provides useful information about the formative assessment process, as well as links to three sample resources. (*Please note: To view the Digital Library Modules, first download and save the presentation, then view in Slide Show mode*).

Teaching Channel features the Smarter Balanced Digital Library

“[Formative Assessment Practices to Support Student Learning](#)” includes links to videos featuring two Connecticut teachers demonstrating each attribute of the Formative Assessment Process.

For more information, visit the CSDE Web site @ <http://www.sde.ct.gov> and select the Smarter Balanced link.



CT CORE STANDARDS Web Site

The CTCORESTANDARDS.ORG is a Web site devoted to providing Connecticut educators, families and community members with valuable and accurate information as well as concrete supports such as:

- Model units and lessons and standards-aligned classroom materials;
- Program models to assist leaders and educators in their transition to the new standards;
- Resources for professional development and learning; and
- Parent-, student- and community-friendly materials to learn more about the Common Core State Standards.

For more information, contact Jennifer Webb at jennifer.webb@ct.gov.



Home CCSS Teachers School/District Curriculum Family and
Overview Leaders Designers Community

Home / Materials for Teachers

Materials for Teachers



March is designated by the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) for the observance of Music In Our Schools Month (MIOSM[®]), the time of year when music education becomes the focus of schools across the nation. MIOSM[®] began as a single statewide celebration in 1973, and has grown over the decades to encompass a day, then a week and then in 1985 to become a month long celebration of school music. The purpose of MIOSM[®] is to raise awareness of the importance of music education for all children – and to remind citizens that school is where all children should have access to music. MIOSM[®] is an opportunity for music teachers to bring their music programs to the attention of the school and the community, and to display the benefits that school music brings to students of all ages.

Professional Learning Opportunities



The CSDE sponsors a variety of professional learning opportunities for teachers, school principals, instructional coaches and higher education faculty. Upcoming sessions include:

CSDE Principal Webinar Series, hosted by the Academic Office on the last Wednesday of every month from 1-2:00 p.m., will provide participants with information on various topics of interest for administrators. The next webinar, “Supporting ALL Learners” with a focus on rigor in classroom instruction and MTSS/SRBI, will be held on March 25. Though registration is required, recordings are available at <http://ctcorestandards.org>.

Continuing through the month of June, the RESC Alliances will present workshops developed by the Academic Office on **Smarter Balanced: Connecting the Claims to Instruction** for Math and ELA teachers. Throughout these presentations, strategies and engaging activities are modeled to complement CT Core Standards aligned instruction, while also demonstrating connections to the Smarter Balanced assessments.

Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards Success for English Learners and Students with Disabilities: In an effort to empower educators who implement CT Core Standards aligned curriculum, instructional practices and assessments while meeting the needs of a wide variety of learners, Public Consulting Group’s (PCG’s) national experts in Special Education and English as a Second Language have designed a series of three professional learning modules for school teams. For more information, contact Jennifer Webb at jennifer.webb@ct.gov or Steve Martin at steve.martin@ct.gov, or visit <http://ctcorestandards.org>.

Connecticut Core Standards Community of Practice Series for School Administrators: The CSDE is partnering with Connecticut Association of Schools to offer professional development opportunities to CT school principals, central office administrators and other invited guests for a series of workshops to support the implementation of the CT Core Standards. Upcoming workshops include:

March 23, 2015	Learning Progressions: A Guide to Vertical Alignment	Jennifer Michalek, CSDE Math 6-12 Consultant
April 13, 2015	Communication with Parents and the Community	Dr. Miguel Cardona, Performance Evaluation Specialist, Meriden Public Schools
May 11, 2015	Get Close for Deeper Thinking: Close Reading	Jennifer Webb, CSDE ELA Consultant

To register, go to <http://ctcorestandards.org>, and select the Professional Development Opportunities link.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut State Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of **race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws.** The Connecticut State Department of Education does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education’s nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/American with Disabilities Act Coordinator
Connecticut State Department of Education
860-807-2071 Levy.Gillespie@ct.gov