

## Math E-Alert

From the Academic Office  
Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment

Date: November 9, 2015

### Hour of Code is Coming

MATHEMATICS



The world is surrounded by technology. Whatever field students choose to go into as adults, their ability to succeed will increasingly hinge on understanding how technology works. But only a tiny fraction of students are learning computer science. Computers are everywhere, but fewer schools teach computer science than 10 years ago. In addition, there exists a large diversity gap in computer science with classes that are only 18 percent female and 8 percent black or Hispanic. Hour of Code is a grassroots effort to change this. This exposure to computer science will help nurture creativity and problem-solving skills. In addition, by exposing both, girls and boys to fundamental computer concepts on a level playing field, today's generation of students will be inspired to be builders of technology, just not users of technology.

One-hour students of all ages can choose from a variety of self-guided tutorials for kindergarten and up. These activities work on any modern browser, tablet, smartphone, and can even be done with no computer at all. No prior experience in coding is required for teachers or students to participate. In an effort to continue to grow this event, every organizer of a Hour of Code event will receive a \$10 gift card to Amazon, iTunes, or the Windows Store as a thank you. In addition, one lucky school in Connecticut will win \$10,000 of technology work. Eligibility for this prize is limited to schools who plan to have every student at the school learning an Hour of Code. Last year's winner was the Quaker Hill School located in Waterford, Conn.

Hour of Code is organized by the nonprofit Code.org and over 100 others. The aim is to reach 100,000 Hour of Code events worldwide, introducing millions of new learners to computer science! More than 100 million students have already tried Hour of Code. The time is now to get districts, schools, teachers, students and parents involved. Mark your calendars for December 7-13, 2015, and join [Hour of Code](#).

### Professional Learning Goes Online

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is proud to partner with the Public Consulting Group (PCG) Education to offer professional learning opportunities to Connecticut educators. Educators will be able to access online content to support the implementation of the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) through Pepper, PCG's interactive and collaborative professional learning platform. Currently, there are two self-paced online modules for mathematics. The first is titled, *Focus on Practice Standards* and the second, *Focus on Content Standards*. These modules mirror the content that was delivered to coaches during the Systems of Professional Learning Modules. They are intended to be done by cohorts of teachers within a district or school to share a portfolio of work with coaches and peers, but individual teachers may also use the modules for their professional growth.

In December, a facilitated online module, *Designing Powerful Instructional Units*, will be launched. This module will guide educators in designing the CCS aligned curriculum units using a backward design model. Participants will analyze a model unit and create their own unit with individualized feedback from an expert facilitator. The module will last approximately 5 weeks with about 2-3 hours per week of activities for unit design. Cohorts of 30 educators will be accepted for the December launch, so register now.

Individual teachers can register for any of the modules or registration can be done as a whole school. More information about the modules and registration can be found at <http://surveys.pcgus.com/s3/CT-Links>.

## Professional Development Opportunities

**Using the Digital Library to Support Teaching and Learning:** *Back by popular demand.* The Smarter Balanced Digital Library supports educators and students through four attributes of the formative assessment process: (1) Clarify Intended Learning; (2) Elicit Evidence; (3) Interpret Evidence; and (4) Act of Evidence. Participants will have opportunities to investigate the professional learning and instructional resources and select those that are aligned with their upcoming curriculum and instructional plans. For dates and registration information please see the flyer at [http://ctcorestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/RESC\\_Alliance\\_SBAC\\_DL\\_and\\_Interim\\_Assessment\\_2015-2017.pdf](http://ctcorestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/RESC_Alliance_SBAC_DL_and_Interim_Assessment_2015-2017.pdf).

**Interim Assessment Workshops:** The CSDE is offering one-day workshops across the state designed to support Grade 3-8 classroom teachers, instructional specialists, coaches, ELA and mathematics department chairs, and interested administrators as they become familiar with the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments. Participants will learn how to: administer the Interim Assessments for English language arts/literacy and mathematics; score student responses using anchor and training materials; use the Teacher Hand-Scoring System (THSS); understand how to interpret student scores; and use student performance reports to support instruction and augment daily formative information to gauge student progress. To register please visit [http://ctcorestandards.org/?page\\_id=9785](http://ctcorestandards.org/?page_id=9785).

**ATOMIC Conference:** The Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Connecticut will hold their Annual Meeting & Conference on December 8, 2015, in Cromwell. For more information and to register please visit <http://www.atomicmath.org/>.

**Digital Library Spotlight Forum:** Smarter Balanced is pleased to announce a new Digital Library Spotlight Webinar and Forum series: the Illustrative Mathematics series. Spotlight Webinars, facilitated by national experts and innovative practitioners, highlight Digital Library resources related to timely and relevant topics. Authors of the resource offer a webinar to provide an overview of the resource and highlight strategies that can be used to support teaching and learning. Participants are encouraged to try the strategies featured in the webinars in their own classrooms, then join the Spotlight Forum discussions to share their experiences with each other and provide feedback to the authors. For dates and topics please [click here](#).

## Awards for Teachers

### **The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST):**

This is the highest honor bestowed by the United States government, specifically for K-12 mathematics and science (including computer science) teaching. This award recognizes those teachers who develop and implement a high-quality instructional program that is informed by content knowledge and enhances student learning. Awardees serve as models for their colleagues, inspiration to their communities, and leaders in the improvement of mathematics and science (including computer science) education. Nominations for the 2016 awards, which recognize teachers at the elementary level Grades K-6 will open in the fall with applications due in the spring of 2016. For more information please visit [www.paemst.org](http://www.paemst.org).

### **Rosenthal Prize for Innovation in Math Teaching:**

The annual Rosenthal Prize for Innovation in Math Teaching is designed to recognize and promote hands-on math teaching in the upper-elementary and middle-school classrooms. Each year, the winning teacher is awarded a cash prize of \$25,000, the winning activity is shared with interested teachers across the country. The application window for the 2016 Rosenthal Prize will begin in the spring of 2016. For more information visit: <http://in.momath.org/rosenthalprize/>.

## Stay Up to Date

The Math E-Alert is a great way to stay up-to-date on the latest math information. If you still wish to receive the Math E-Alert electronically, please contact Jennifer Michalek at [jennifer.michalek@ct.gov](mailto:jennifer.michalek@ct.gov) to have your name added to the distribution list.

Do not respond to this e-mail. This alert is provided for your information only. Please contact [jennifer.michalek@ct.gov](mailto:jennifer.michalek@ct.gov) with questions.

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