



Connecticut Systems of Professional Learning

I hope this newsletter finds you well rested and energized for the start of the 2015-2016 school year! In this newsletter edition you will find information about the online modules available for all Connecticut educators through Public Consulting Group's interactive and collaborative professional learning platform called Pepper™. Through the networking features in Pepper, CT Core Coaches can engage with teachers in their schools anytime and anywhere to support professional learning. Look for more information on the [CT Core Standards website](#) to sign up and join the Pepper community.

Another exciting announcement is that the *Meeting the Challenge* professional learning series for educators of English Learners and Students with Disabilities is open for registration! This series, designed for school teams, was an exciting learning opportunity last spring, and we look forward to repeating the sessions for a new cohort of educators this fall.

I'm looking forward to a great school year and hearing more of your success stories as you continue to implement the Connecticut Core Standards and make it accessible for all of your students.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robb Geier', is positioned above the typed name.

Robb Geier, PCG Education
Project Director, Systems of Professional Learning for Connecticut Core Standards

Professional Development Register Today!

**Meeting the Challenge: CT Core Standards Success for
English Learners and Students with Disabilities**

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The series consists of professional learning modules for school teams. By attending as teams, educators are empowered to align efforts resulting in an inclusive environment for all students, and increase their capability to foster change in their school systems. Each team includes five members: a building leader, Special Education teacher, EL teacher, and two general education teachers. Teams are committed to attending the entire series of professional learning. Sessions are designed to provide educators with engaging learning experiences that embrace practical knowledge and application of newly acquired knowledge and skills.

Module 1 sessions will begin in September. Module 1 is for the full school team and focuses on Academic Optimism and Universal Design for Learning.

School teams will explore the positive results of establishing a culture of "**Academic Optimism**," found to be a significant factor in raising achievement of all student groups. Schools with Academic Optimism pursue academic excellence, collectively believe in their capacity to achieve, and have deep trust in students and parents. Participants will learn about the power of a growth mindset and discuss implications of adopting a culture of academic optimism in their schools and the collaboration required to achieve that goal. Teams will also gain a common understanding of **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** - the foundation and springboard for two subsequent modules that will expand participants' ability to support all learners through an innovative approach to instructional planning and teaching.

Modules 2 and 3 are specific focus workshops. Teams will break into small groups to focus on the specific needs of English Learners and Students with Disabilities. Team members should attend their appropriate discipline-specific workshop, with half of the team going to the EL workshop and half going to the SwD workshop. Building leaders may attend either or both sessions.

Module 2 English Learners Workshop: Participants will deepen their understanding of the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) for **English Language Arts and Literacy** in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects and their impact on instruction in meeting the needs of ALL learners, with an emphasis on English Learners. The agenda includes:

- Opportunities for English Learners using the Connecticut Core Standards
- Speaking and Listening to Work Collaboratively
- Reading to Engage with Complex Texts
- Using Evidence in Writing and Research

Module 3 English Learners Workshop: Participants will continue to learn how to support EL students in the Connecticut Core Standards by exploring the **mathematics** standards. The agenda includes:

- The Language of Mathematics
- Digging Deeper - Language Scaffolds
- Collaboration is Key

Module 2 Students with Disabilities Workshop: Participants will focus on **adapting the curriculum** in Universal Design for Learning style. The agenda includes:

- Understanding Learner Variability
- Aligning the Connecticut Core Standards, IEP Goals, Learning Targets, and UDL
- Maintaining High Expectations for All Learners Through Meaningful Adaption

Module 3 Students with Disabilities Workshop: Participants will focus on **designing curriculum** with intention and rigor. They will build upon an understanding of UDL and scaffolding instructional design to create rigorous learning environments where all students may access high expectations. The agenda includes:

- Four Components of Curriculum Design in the UDL Classroom
- Attributes, Examples, and Applications of Formative Assessment
- Making Effective Instructional Decisions

Register Today!

Plans are underway to add an optional fourth module for full teams to come back together and synthesize what they have learned in order to take action in their schools.

You can register your school team for the Meeting the Challenge series here: <http://surveys.pcgus.com/s3/CT-Team-Reg>

If you have any questions regarding registration, please contact Melissa Pierce at mpierce@pcgus.com

Module Dates and Locations:

Module 1	September 21st - Meriden, CT September 22nd - East Hartford, CT September 28th - Meriden, CT
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	September 29th - Mystic, CT October 5th - East Hartford, CT October 6th - Southbury, CT
Module 2 (Both EL and SwD Sessions)	October 14th - Meriden, CT October 15th - East Hartford, CT October 19th - East Hartford, CT October 20th - East Hartford, CT
Module 3 (Both EL and SwD Sessions)	November 2nd - East Hartford, CT November 3rd - East Hartford, CT November 12th - Meriden, CT November 13th - East Hartford, CT

Online Learning Available Now!

Free Connecticut Core Standards online learning modules are now available on PCG's professional learning platform Pepper! Pepper provides an online learning community where educators have on-demand access to engaging, high-quality professional learning content. The interactive content for educators can be applied immediately in the classroom including instructional resources, teaching videos, and opportunities to share resources while networking with others. As teachers participate in the activities, they will build a portfolio of work that can be shared with coaches and other teachers.

Current modules include:

English Language Arts

Module 1 - Focus on Instructional Shifts

- Deepen understanding of the CCS-ELA and the implications of the standards for instruction; i.e., foundational reading in early grades, and literacy across the content areas.
- Explore key instructional practices and engage with the standards through video analysis and interactive activities.
- Develop aligned lessons using a lesson planning template that is consistent with CSDE's sample lessons and resources.
- Use the EQUiP rubric and evidence guides for planning instruction that aligns with the CCS-ELA & Literacy standards.

Module 2 - Focus on ELA & Literacy Instruction

- Become familiar with components of the backward design process for CCS-ELA & Literacy units and lessons.

- Know elements of a high quality CCS-ELA & Literacy unit or lesson.
- Become skillful in creating sequences of text-dependent questions, including those related to academic language.
- Deepen understanding of the relationship between reading and text-based discussion and know how to incorporate discussion into lesson design.
- Understand the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and learn some strategies for incorporating UDL into lesson design.

Math

Module 1 - Focus on Practice Standards

- Gain an initial understanding of the CCS-Math and the embedded changes and instructional shifts.
- Explore the eight Standards for Mathematical Practice and identify how they are related.
- Identify evidence of the practices.
- Discuss descriptors for the eight practices, and create formal grade level descriptions.
- Explore how specific instructional strategies (e.g., questioning, engaging students in mathematical discourse, and requiring multiple representations) can help students meet major learning goals.

Module 2 - Focus on Content Standards

- Examine the implications of the language of the content standards for teaching and learning.
- Identify CCS-aligned tasks that combine high-level content with mathematical practices.
- Identify and adapt tasks that combine high-level content with the practice standards.
- Analyze the progression of topics in the content standards both within and across grade levels.
- Deepen understanding of the potential of the CCS-Math to change mathematics teaching and learning.

** To register your entire district or school contact ctcorestandards@pcgus.com or to sign up individually visit <http://surveys.pcgus.com/s3/Connecticut-Core-Standards-Online-Course-Registration> **

Additional Online Modules are Launching Soon!

- Facilitated online modules for curriculum development will be available October 2015.
- Self-paced modules based on the Meeting the Challenge series of professional development will be available January 2016.
- More information will come from the Academic Office, postings on the CTCoreStandards site, and future newsletters.

Spotlight on Resources

Have you checked out all of the Systems of Professional Learning resources on ctcorestandards.org? There is a wealth of information to explore!

Library of Professional Learning Materials (Including PowerPoint Presentations, Participant Guides, Facilitator Guides, and Handouts) for Modules 1 - 5, and Meeting the Challenge Modules 1 - 3:

http://ctcorestandards.org/?page_id=3794

On-Demand Professional Learning Videos of Modules 1 - 5, Meeting the Challenge Modules 1 - 3, and the Principal Webinar Series:

http://ctcorestandards.org/?page_id=5537

Questions? Need More Information?

Visit: ctcorestandards.org

Email: ctcorestandards@pcgus.com

