Join the Teacher Leader Cadre

Through a partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education, the Teacher Leader Cadre (TLC) was formed early in the 2014-2015 school year as a way to improve communication to classroom teachers. At its most basic level, the TLC serves as a way to stay updated on the most recent developments in standards and assessment. Through the TLC listserv, group members receive news and resources that they can use to better understand the changes in Illinois education.

This fall, in addition to continuing the flow of information, organizers will reach out through the listserv to identify teacher leaders who would like to have a more active involvement in the group. The new regional organization structure will hopefully empower the group as more of a community that will allow for networking and sharing resources. Each region will have representation and leadership from the Illinois Educator Leader Cadre, a group that has been working closely with the standards and assessments since 2010. We hope to schedule various events within the smaller regions and also hold our 2nd annual statewide workshop next summer.

If any teachers would be interested in joining our listserv, they can send a blank email to assessment@isbe.net with “TLC” in the subject line. Joining the listserv will not result in any obligations. Non-teachers are also welcome to join the group. Any questions about the group can also be sent to assessment@isbe.net.

Dan Frederking, Principal Consultant

PARCC for the 2015 2016 Year

In response to feedback from school districts, the PARCC exam will return in spring 2016 with a shorter, simpler format to improve the testing process while providing reliable and valid information about student achievement.

The PARCC Governing Board, voted in May 2015 to consolidate the two testing windows into one and reduce total test time for most students by 90 minutes beginning in spring 2016. The single testing window will be 30 days and extend from when roughly 75 percent of the school year is complete to the 90 percent mark. Most schools will complete testing in one to two weeks during that window. These adjustments will ultimately help the test better serve students, educators, parents, and policymakers.

For more information, click on the links below:
Assessment Hot Topics:
PARCC Primer
Standards-Aligned Lessons/Units Resources

Creating lesson/units aligned to the standards can be challenging. The following resources contain tons of completed lesson/unit plans for classroom use. Keep in mind that the classroom teacher is the expert and should view completed lessons and units with a critical eye for standards alignment.

Lesson/Unit Resources

Scholastic’s Lesson Plan Database hosts thousands of completed lesson and unit plans for grades pre-K-12 in all subjects.

Better Lesson, the National Education Association’s lesson plan site, features over 3000 Common Core-aligned lesson plans developed by teachers participating in the NEA’s Master Teacher Project.

Share My Lesson, the American Federation of Teachers’ lesson plan database, contains nearly 300,000 resources created by teachers. You can both upload lessons to share and download lessons from other teachers.

ReadWriteThink is a site developed by The International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). ReadWriteThink has ELA lessons available for grades K-12.

Achieve has compiled a list of instructional materials that have been submitted to the EQuIP Peer Review Panel and evaluated as “Exemplars” or “Exemplars if Improved.” Each lesson or unit is available to download and use in classrooms. In addition, there is a copy of the quality review feedback from the EQuIP Peer Panel.

Preparing for PARCC: Text Length Guidance

PARCC has established the following grade-level guidelines to inform passage selection with regards to length of texts.

Length of text is only one consideration when determining text selection, but students should have ample opportunities to gradually increase the amount of text they read in a single setting to prepare not just for PARCC but for persevering with complex texts—a life skill.

For additional information, refer to the Passage Selection Guidelines for the PARCC Mid-Year and Summative Assessments, Grades 3-11, in ELA/Literacy. Click here to access this resource. Scroll down to Text Complexity Worksheets and download the document.

Minimum/Maximum Passage Lengths by Grade Band

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Band</th>
<th>Minimum/Maximum Passage Lengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>200– 800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>400-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 9-11</td>
<td>500-1500</td>
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</table>

Planning to Assess: How to Align Your Instruction

The Teaching Channel and PARCC states have released the "Planning to Assess: How to Align Your Instruction" video series. The series focuses on using PARCC tools to carefully analyze how standards, evidence, and tasks interact, and on using this understanding to inform instructional decisions.

The videos show the link between great assessment and great instruction. This process encourages educators to think about answers to important questions, such as:

- What do students need to know and be able to do to answer a sample assessment item?
- How do I design instructional tasks that demonstrate standards to prepare students for assessments?
- How do I choose complex and meaningful texts?

Click here and scroll down to access this resource.
The 2014-15 PARCC testing was done in two parts: the performance-based testing in early spring and the end-of-year testing in late spring, closer to the end of the school year. In May 2015, the PARCC governing board voted to:
Reduce the testing time for students by about 90 minutes overall (60 minutes in mathematics; 30 minutes in English language arts) and create more uniformity of test unit times.

Consolidating the two testing windows in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (which includes reading and writing) into one. The single testing window will simplify administration of the test for states and schools that experienced challenges with scheduling two testing windows. The testing window will be up to 30 days and will extend from March 7th to June.

To help in the transition, there are updated math test documents for the new test design that have been posted on the PARCC website at [http://www.parcconline.org/assessments/test-design/mathematics/math-test-specifications-documents](http://www.parcconline.org/assessments/test-design/mathematics/math-test-specifications-documents).

Scroll to the bottom of the page and look at the Informational Guides by Grade. These have all the things that someone needs to know at each grade/course including evidence.

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PARCC Update

ILClassroomsInAction.org is your first place to stop when looking for resources aligned to the New Illinois Learning Standards. This summer the content specialists have been busy updating and adding to the website. A few key changes to note include:
PARCC website Guide is updated.
ILTeachandTalk.org is now K-8
ILStats.weebly.com has been updated and includes several new videos and classroom activities.
Formative Assessment strategies site has been improved and expanded.

Stakeholder Communication is updated and improved, including new resources.

And much more! If you have not been to the site before or it has been awhile, please take some time to browse the site. All materials have been created or vetted by the ISBE Content Exemplar Lessons Pay $1500

Achieve is continuing to accept submissions for the EQuIP Call to Action. Educators and developers can submit high-quality units aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that address the K-8 high priority standards that were identified by a panel of content experts and educators.

Achieve launched this effort with Student Achievement Partners to strengthen resources to meet teachers’ needs to implement the CCSS. Through Achieve’s Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products (EQuIP) initiative, submitted units will be evaluated for quality and alignment to the specified standards by a panel of peer reviewers representing more than 1,000 years of teaching expertise.

Developers of units submitted through this process and identified as Exemplars by the EQuIP quality review process will receive an award of $1,500 as well as wide dissemination and recognition of their efforts. All Exemplar units will be made freely available for download and use by educators across the country.

Interested individuals, teams, or organizations must register and submit materials online at [http://lessons.achieve.org](http://lessons.achieve.org). The deadline for submitting units is October 1, 2015. Full details about the submission process.
**Goal 1: Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard A: Identify and Manage one’s emotions and behaviors.</th>
<th>Standard B: Recognize personal qualities and external supports.</th>
<th>Standard C: Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze how thoughts and emotions affect decision making and responsible behavior.</td>
<td>Generate ways to develop more positive attitudes.</td>
<td>Set priorities in building on strengths and identifying areas for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Practice time management skills with group projects, long term goals and events.</td>
<td>• Create student journals of personal strengths.</td>
<td>• Analyze how positive adult role models and support systems contribute to school and life success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make predictions on how someone feels when apologizing to someone else.</td>
<td>• Create a student project (poster, comic strip, story) to depict a situation when help was needed and where/how it was sought out.</td>
<td>• Identify strategies to make use of resources and overcome obstacles to achieve goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Role-play how to give/receive help or a compliment from a peer.</td>
<td>• Analyze where students can go to help resist negative influences.</td>
<td>• Apply strategies to overcome obstacles to goal achievement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Practice scenarios on how to deal appropriately with being wrongly accused of something.</td>
<td>• Identify career and volunteer opportunities for students based on their interests.</td>
<td>• Guide students to create actions steps and time frames toward achieving a goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a class list of stress management techniques to handle anxiety related to school tasks (public speaking, taking a test, etc.).</td>
<td>• Guide students to understand situations they cannot change and how to devote energy to what they can control.</td>
<td>• Analyze why scheduling conflicts might require changes to the time frame to achieving the goal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Goal 2: Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard A: Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.</th>
<th>Standard B: Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.</th>
<th>Standard C: Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.</th>
<th>Standard D: Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze similarities and differences between one’s own and others’ perspectives.</td>
<td>Use conversation skills to understand others’ feelings and perspectives.</td>
<td>Analyze the origins and negative effects of stereotyping and prejudice.</td>
<td>Analyze how conflict-resolution skills contribute to work within a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use: Demonstrate respect for individuals from different social and cultural groups.</td>
<td>Evaluate the effects of requesting support from and providing support to others.</td>
<td>Evaluate one’s contribution in groups as a member and leader.</td>
<td>Analyze how listening and talking accurately help in resolving conflicts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discuss how the class can support others who are experiencing problems.</td>
<td>• Role-play responding non-defensively to criticism or accusation.</td>
<td>• Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.</td>
<td>• Analyze how conflict-resolution skills contribute to work within a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brainstorm different types of encouragement.</td>
<td>• Analyze how various social and cultural groups are portrayed in the media.</td>
<td>• Develop the criteria as group for setting priorities in building on strengths and identifying areas for improvement.</td>
<td>• Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create an environment of mentorship between students.</td>
<td>• Discuss what is a positive friend?</td>
<td>• Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.</td>
<td>• Develop the criteria as group for setting priorities in building on strengths and identifying areas for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Compare ways to share and reciprocate feelings among students in classroom.</td>
<td>• Discuss the effectiveness of strategies for preventing or stopping bullying...what can be improved?</td>
<td>• Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Analyze a variety of situations to model empathy with others.</td>
<td>• Analyze how actions of literary characters or historical figures have demonstrated human similarities and differences.</td>
<td>• Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.</td>
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</table>

**Goal 3: Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Standard A: Consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions.</th>
<th>Learning Standard B: Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations.</th>
<th>Learning Standard C: Contribute to the well-being of one’s school and community.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate personal responsibility in making ethical decisions.</td>
<td>Evaluate how social norms and the expectations of authority influence personal decisions and actions.</td>
<td>Plan, implement, and evaluate one’s participation in activities and organizations that improve school climate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate personal abilities to gather information, generate alternatives, and anticipate the consequences of decisions.</td>
<td>Apply decision-making skills to establish responsible social and work relationships.</td>
<td>Plan, implement, and evaluate one’s participation in a group effort to contribute to one’s local community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Analyze how a literary character or historical figure considered societal and ethical factors in making important decisions.
- Discuss how laws reflect social norms and affect our personal decision-making.
- Examine how the depiction of violent acts in the media and entertainment might impact individuals and groups.
- Discuss how social norms influence behavior in settings (hospital, restaurant, sporting events).
- Model effective time management and organizational skills.
- Discuss and identify resources that help students succeed academically and socially.
- Review how ethical conduct might improve valued relationships.
- Demonstrate and analyze how peers can help one another avoid and cope with potentially dangerous situations.
- Identify and support a possible service project within the local community and where/who to contact to become involved to support the project.
- Create a “mock” debate or election modeling current issues or candidates to reflect current interest groups or organizations.

Visit www.isbe.net to download this newsletter.