

November 2016

Volume 1, Issue 3

THE POST

Professional Online Supports for Teaching

In this issue:

- New US Census Bureau website on statistics in schools
- New NJSL Science webpage for families
- NJDOE and National Archives partner for upcoming webinars

Dear Colleagues:

I am honored and humbled by the opportunity to lead the essential work in support of your efforts at the district and classroom levels.

The main goal of the division is to offer classroom teachers the necessary tools to implement the [New Jersey Student Learning Standards \(NJSL\)](#), including the [Blended Online Learning Modules](#). The modules integrate technology through which professional learning communities can come together to discuss the analysis of data and the identification of effective instructional materials focusing on student learning.

Thank you for your continued commitment and dedication to establish welcoming, engaging and challenging learning environments for all our students. I look forward to visiting your classrooms and to hearing your feedback on how we can best support the very important work you do.

Dr. Laura C. Morana
Acting Chief Academic Officer

Division News

Curriculum Partners

Register online to attend several free November programs presented by the [New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education](#). Also visit the [New Jersey Amistad Commission](#) to learn about various locations for the Malcolm Bernard Historically Black Colleges and Universities [2016 College Fairs](#) scheduled for November 12 through 19. Lastly, register for the [New Jersey Italian Italian Heritage Commission](#) (NJICH) monthly newsletter to find free events and programs for teachers and students.

Music Teacher is New Jersey's 2016-17 State Teacher of the Year

[Argine Safari](#), a music teacher at Pascack Valley High School, is New Jersey's 2016-17 State Teacher of the Year. As Acting Commissioner, Kimberley Harrington introduced Argine at the State Board of Education meeting, stating, "Argine's talent and dedication to her students are well known in her home district, and now the story of her love of teaching will be shared throughout the state." As State Teacher of the Year, Ms. Safari will participate in state and national activities, including the opportunity to meet the President of the United States.

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English Language Arts

Teaching Theme Through Art

In this article, a teacher describes a [lesson](#) in which she teaches the concept of literary theme through engaging students in analyzing details in works of master artists. Students determine the details or symbols that signify the artist's theme. Then, to demonstrate understanding, students create self-portraits to capture their personal identity or theme.



Free Weekly Book Reviews from the International Literacy Association (ILA)

[The International Literacy Association](#) (ILA) is a world-wide organization dedicated to "empower educators, inspire students, and encourage leaders with the resources they need to make literacy accessible for all." The ILA requires membership for access to many online resources; however, a weekly list of book reviews is free. Find informative descriptions of books for preschool through secondary grades on their [Literacy Daily](#) posts each week.

Mathematics



New US Census Bureau Website on Statistics in School

The US Census Bureau has introduced [Statistics in School](#), a website offering free K-12 lesson plans to help students see and understand real-life applications for statistics across content areas. The site provides historical and current data for use in suggested classroom activities, as well as a state facts page with [New Jersey statistics](#). The statistics are broken into three categories: population, geography, and business. Highlighted facts include statistics on the population of New Jersey from 1800-2010, given in 50-year increments.

Social Studies

Primary Sources for Classroom Discussions on November Holidays

National holidays on the November calendar provide opportunity to engage students in speaking and listening skills related to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Find primary sources and other teaching resources at these websites regarding [Election Day](#) (November 8), [Veterans Day](#) (November 11) and [Thanksgiving](#) (November 24).



Focus on Classroom Discussions and Debates

Visit [All Sides for Schools](#) for strategies and guidelines for classroom discussions and debates. Find lessons plans and online interactive tools to help students practice critical thinking, civil discourse and collaboration around topics which generate strong opinions and perspectives. Topics include popular election issues like climate change, refugees and national security, and gun control and rights.

Science

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science Webpage for Families

The Department has created an [informational webpage](#) for parents and guardians on the [New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science](#). Find resources, including facts about the new science standards, [FAQs](#) and an overview of recent news to help families understand changes in science instruction.





Visual and Performing Arts

From STEM to STEAM

The author of this [Smart Brief post](#) describes how he integrated arts into STEM curriculum, tapping into maker ideas, local theatre and other arts-related school and community resources. He includes websites for further ideas on connecting arts to science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Technology

Computer Science Education Week and Hour of Code

Does your district incorporate an hour of code? The global [Hour of Code](#) takes place during Computer Science Education Week, December 5 through 11. Learn how to incorporate [coding](#) into local curriculum, and send a brief description of district plans for engaging in this event to the Office of [Education Technology](#) for the possibility of posting on the [Department's Facebook page](#).



Future Ready Schools-New Jersey (FRS-NJ)

Look for a new Department of Education webpage coming soon for [Future Ready Schools-New Jersey](#), an initiative devoted to promoting Digital Learning Readiness in New Jersey schools. The website will be a clearinghouse of information on events and opportunities for districts to get involved. FRS-NJ is a partnership between the New Jersey Department of Education, New Jersey Institute for Technology, and New Jersey School Boards Association. Register for a free workshop to learn more about FRS-NJ on [November 17](#).

["Future Ready Schools-New Jersey \[is\] an initiative devoted to promoting Digital Learning Readiness in New Jersey schools.](#)



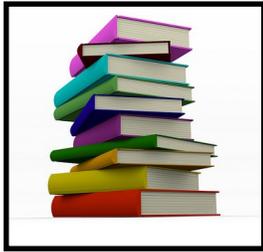
Professional Learning

Education Week Webinar on Mathematical Discourse

This presentation focuses on how educators can "support the development of productive math discourse in the classroom through well-planned and well-sequenced discussions of student work." The webinar is archived and available at the [Education Week website](#), along with other upcoming and archived webinars on various topics at this site.

New Jersey Department of Education and National Archives Partner for Upcoming Webinars

On [November 9](#), the National Archives webinar includes a discussion on how digital devices can provide access to primary sources and a demonstration of new [DOCS Teach](#) features. The [December 14](#) webinar will target online New Jersey specific resources and ideas for instructional strategies to help students analyze documents and use evidence to construct arguments.



Further Reading

Following Online Education Leaders to Improve Practice

In this [Smart Brief post](#), an educator explains how discovering a virtual network of “thought leaders” improved her classroom practice. By following a community of innovative education professionals online, over time, she found the confidence to implement new teaching ideas which led to greater professional satisfaction.

Achieve the Core’s “What I Use in my Classroom”

Student Achievement Partners’ Core Advocates Network introduces [What I Use in my Classroom](#), an online resource including personal recommendations by educators on tools they have found to be effective in improving student performance. The site includes resources for ELA, mathematics, social studies, science, digital resources, as well as professional learning.



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See you in December!

