



R/ELA Weekly Tidbits

*Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Framework
Maryland School for the Deaf*

ISSUE 4

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Dear Teachers,

Many of the meetings we have been attending this semester extensively covered the changes the CCSS is bringing to Maryland schools and how we can help teachers be better prepared. It is definitely a daunting journey we, for most of the United States, are facing together, but it is NOT impossible. As we know, the CCSS expects **teachers to cover content areas "an inch wide, but a mile deep."** We need to continually remind ourselves that the CCSS is a mastery curriculum, rather than a spiral curriculum. We need to ensure that students master certain skills during certain grades. We can no longer say to ourselves teachers along the road will cover **this or that skill again later during a student's school years. That is a spiral curriculum, and the CCSS is not.** Now what does this mean for assessments? The Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is committed to have the PARCC assessments ready for states to administer during the 2014-15 school year; however, keep in mind the deadline may change.

We have been asked what major differences there are between the FCPS Curriculum and the Common Core State Standards. The differences are reflected in the depth, the complexity, the rigor, and the emphasis on comprehension, text analysis, and critical thinking that leads to College and Career Readiness. We are no longer to ask ourselves whether the text is easy enough for students, but instead ask ourselves how we can scaffold the information in order for students to be able to handle the text complexity.

As for support for MSD teachers, the Frederick County Public Schools has switched to the use of U drive; thus, we are not able to use its resources. Thanks to the FCPS who continues to invite us to their reading specialist meetings, Elizabeth is working for us to somehow regain access to the FCPS curriculum and its resources that we have learned to appreciate. What can we do in the meantime? Several states have set up web sites for teachers to access to the resources for the CCSS and we thought we would share four of them that we particularly like with you. See page 2.

Enjoy the spring weather,
Bonnie Kramer and Elizabeth Reed
R/ELA Curriculum Coordinators
Columbia and Frederick Campus

Ideas for this
newsletter are
always welcome?

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Useful Common Core State Standards Resources

1. **America Achieves Common Core** offers videos of lessons, links and ideas, and sample student works. The videos are not closed captioned but are accompanied with **"Resources" under the videos. Under Resources, purple icons labeled Lesson Resources, Student Work Samples, and Ideas and Links** can be clicked on for a wealth of information, ideas, etc. The web site address is: <http://commoncore.americaachieves.org>.
2. **The Arizona Department of Education page for K-12 Academic Standards** has detailed documents for the CCSS for each grade level. In these documents (also in PDF form) you will find discussion on the critical areas for each level, plus sample lessons and/or activities for each standard. There are sample lessons for nearly every standard. The web site address is: <http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/academic-standards/language-arts/>.
3. **Achieve the Core**, founded by the writers of the Common Core standards, provides free, high-quality resources to educators. It also has an interesting document which provides information on the CCSS. The document provides content emphasis by cluster for each grade level. For each grade level clusters are broken down by major clusters, supporting clusters and additional clusters. This can help teachers consider which standards should be the focus of their grade level curriculum. Be sure to check out [Steal These Tools!](#) The web site address is: <http://www.achievethecore.org/>.
4. **PARCC Model Content Frameworks** offers resources to support the implementation of the CCSS. Overviews and specific explanations of the CCSS are included in the resources. You will also find more on content specific areas for in-depth focus at each grade level. The web site address is: <http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-content-frameworks>.

If you happen to come across to a terrific resource, please let us all know.

"To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark."
Victor Hugo