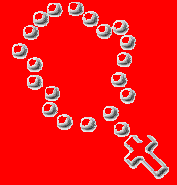




C AND I UPDATE



Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction
www.teacherweb.com/PA/AOP/ElementaryCurriculumandInstruction/index.html

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Curriculum—

PRIORITY TOPICS

Priority topics for Religion and Social Studies are attached to this newsletter. I am grateful to the Curriculum Committees and to the MERIT staff who worked on the preparation of the Social Studies Priorities.

DIOCESAN ART CONTEST

Information on the Diocesan Art Contest has been mailed to every school. A copy is also attached to this newsletter. Please consider participation in this event.

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GRADING---The Bottom Line

A call from a parent last week raised a red flag in the area of marks and grading. The parent wanted to know why her child was not placed in Honors Math because they were coming home with scores of 101 and 105 on their math tests. During the past school year we learned from several sources that report card grades of 100 and higher were being given. Neither of these are acceptable practices.

Test Grades:

If we consider 100 to be a “perfect” score, then we are indicating by these grades that we have students who know everything there is to know about a given priority topic and then some. A well constructed assessment goes beyond acquisition of knowledge to the application of that knowledge provides students with opportunities to give evidence of their thinking in a variety of quadrants. Assessments, too, need to go beyond Quadrant A. Dictating a list of 20 spelling words to students limits them to a Quadrant A experience for that assessment. A score of 100 in such a test merely indicates that the student has memorized a list of words correctly. Is this “perfection?” Where are the skills and the application of the skills

The argument follows that students earned additional points for "Extra Credit." A noted authority on assessment and grading, Rick Stiggins, in his document, *Report Card Grading: Strategies and Solutions* notes that "Extra work should lead to adjustments in grades **only** when it produces evidence of additional learning and demonstrates that the student has attained a new level of achievement." No extra credit, then, should be given simply for doing additional work.

Report Card Grades

Students need to be challenged. Students consistently receiving high scores in classroom assessments should be challenged more with Quadrant C and Quadrant D experiences. Students who consistently perform well in report card grades but give mediocre performance during standardized testing need to be challenged more in the classroom to raise the level of thinking to be more consistent with the rigors of standardized tests.

Primary Report--A reminder from *Policies and Procedures*:

No numerical values should appear on a report card or on primary grade assessments. The verbal interpretation of the letters should be emphasized with parents rather than numerical equivalents and should be consistently followed in all primary grades. O (Outstanding) and U (Unsatisfactory) should not be used with great frequency.

Act 48

Thank you to all who have made sure that their information has been updated. The process of using Coursewhere is getting smoother. Fewer incorrect e-mail returns are being received. To help the process even more, following are a few tips.

- If you do not receive confirmation e-mails or evaluation e-mails, your e-mail address is either incorrectly listed in the system or it has "spam blockers" preventing the e-mail from solutionwhere.com to get through. We can not correct this at our end. It needs to be corrected in your system.
- If you do not complete your evaluations prior to the processing of the forms to Harrisburg or if you have submitted incorrect information, you will lose credit for the hours of the in-service program. Once it has been processed, there will be no recourse. State regulations give us a 30-day window to work with. For the sake of those who did complete the process correctly, we can not wait for those who have not.
- It is not necessary to wait to receive an e-mail reminder to complete the in-service evaluation. It can be completed by clicking on "Evaluations" on your log in page. However, the evaluation can not be completed prior to the in-service. Evaluations completed prior to the staff development program are not valid. Credit will not be given for anticipated evaluations or incomplete evaluations. Evaluations with incomplete/one-word answers are not credited.

- We can not honor requests to process missing hours from the past. No requests to do this should be made to the secretarial staff of OCE as they are not authorized to approve hours.
- All requests for Act 48 should be sent to the Director of Curriculum of your level thirty days prior to the scheduled in-service program. We can not guarantee requests that are sent late or directed elsewhere.
- A new form for the submission of faculty/group in-service programs to be placed on Coursewhere for registration is attached. **Please destroy all old group forms. As of November 1, this will be the only form used for group processing.**

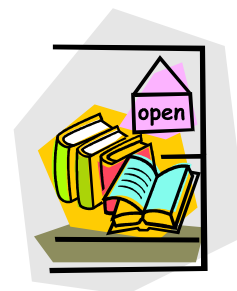
CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

October

- 31 Reading First Conference at St. Martin of Tours School. Cohort II schools.

November

- 3 Vendors' Expo at Conwell-Egan High School
- 4 Election Day
- 5 Vendors' Expo at Cardinal O'Hara High School
- 6 Vendors' Expo at Mary, Mother of the Redeemer School, North Wales
- 11 Early Childhood workshop at Our Lady of Fatima, Bensalem
- 12 Science and Writing workshop at Epiphany, Plymouth Meeting
Opening of Middle States at Our Lady of Lourdes
- 13 Science and Writing Workshop at SS. Philip and James, Exton



Staff Development Opportunities

Art and Writing

The Philadelphia Arts in Education Partnership is working with the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, Inc., The Scholastic Art & Writers Awards, Scholastic, Inc. to disseminate information on their national awards program for young artists and writers in grades 7 through 12.

PAEP will hold an information session on Thursday, November 6 at 4:30 PM Room 1014, Terra Building, The University of the Arts, 211 S. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA. This session is for teachers who have questions about the program. Please RSVP to 215-717-6596.

If you have questions and cannot make the meeting, we will be happy to help answer them either through email - rcohen@uarts.edu - or a telephone conversation. Attached is information on all of the awards and scholarships available through this program of Scholastic, Inc. Submission guidelines and deadlines are also included.

Early Childhood

Another in a series of early childhood presentations will be given on November 11 at Our Lady of Fatima, Bensalem. See the attached flyer for more details. Registration will be done on Coursewhere.

Science and Writing

Workshops focusing on:

- Hands-on Science and inquiry standards
 - Critical Writing
- will be held in two locations on November 12 and 13. A flyer with the details is attached. Registration for these workshops will be done on Coursewhere.

Music and Technology

Information on a workshop integrating music and technology is attached.

“Motivating Students to Be Life Long Readers”

An invitation to participate in the Bucks County Reading Council Annual Conference is enclosed with this newsletter.

Future Cities Competition



An invitation from Sr Marie Esther to participate in the Future Cities Competition is attached. Please consider this worthwhile venture.



THANK YOU

- To all who responded to the call for new curriculum committee members.
- To the Religion, ILA, Early Childhood, Math, Library, Physical Education and Social Studies committees for organizing and overseeing staff development opportunities during the past few weeks.
- To the Administration and staffs of the following schools who have hosted staff development opportunities during this first trimester:
 - St. Andrew, Newtown
 - St. Matthew
 - Mother of Divine Providence
 - St. Cecilia
 - St. Christopher
 - Our Lady of Fatima, Bensalem
 - Mary Mother of the Redeemer
 - SS. Philip and James, Exton
 - Epiphany, Plymouth Meeting
 - St. Pius X, Broomall
 - St. Maximillian Kolbe, West Chester
 - Our Lady of Ransom
 - St. Martin of Tours

**Don't forget—
Vendors' Expo
November 3, 5, 6**

Congratulations. . .

. . .to the schools that were awarded Blue Ribbon status by the Department of Education: St. John the Evangelist and St. Aloysius Academy.

. . .to St. Athasius-Immaculate Conception School and Queen of the Universe School. These schools completed their Middle States visits and presentations during October.

Year of St. Paul. . .

As we prepare for the feast of All Saints, take some time to focus on St. Paul and the wisdom he has shared with the Church from its beginnings.



PAUL
Acts 9:1-19