

Language Arts Newsletter: April 2019



Welcome!

Agency Update

Happy spring! I hope April brings us warmth and sunshine (and only a little bit of rain). It has been a long winter, but we have accomplished so much as a state and community. We celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday; crowned our Poetry Out Loud winner; celebrated public schools week; engaged in professional learning; and enjoyed a much needed spring break!

As we move into our busiest month with the fewest number of days off, it is important that we stay motivated and engaged to end the year on a positive note. April tends to be filled with many testing days and fewer days for instruction. While this can sometimes feel like a hindrance in our pursuit to educate students, we know that when administered and used correctly, assessment data can benefit the academic environment and programs we offer our students. Let us be sure to remember the students whose lives we better by coming to work and giving it our best every single day-even when the days are long and full of assessments. Teachers matter, and I greatly

appreciate all you do to empower our students and help them achieve.

We also know that schools thrive when communities are strong. One way we strive to improve the school communities in Kansas is by partnering with the Spanish Ministry of Education to bring teachers from Spain to Kansas as part of a cultural exchange. I am excited to share that I will be in Spain from April 5-14 screening potential candidates for placement in Kansas schools. I will be available by email, but I ask for your patience as my response time might be longer than usual.

As we move into the last part of the school year, begin thinking about how you will continue your professional growth and reflection. I encourage you to take advantage of our online and in-person professional development offerings. As always, if there is anything I can do to better support you, please let me know.

-Sarah Perryman

Professional Learning Opportunities

Online Webinar over Depth of Knowledge: March 27 3:30-4:30 pm (zoom link [here](#))

Online Learning: April: Growing Teacher Leaders

(url for course: <https://learning.ksde.org/course/view.php?id=147>) (key: APR2019)

Online Webinar- April 18 3:30-4:30 pm (zoom link [here](#))

April 4, 2019: KSDE Civic Engagement Conference

Learn more and register by going [here](#)

June 27-28 (Topeka) & July 17-18 (Pratt): KSDE Summer Impact Institutes

Learn more and register by going [here](#).

June 2019: KATE Camp

Learn more and register by going [here](#).

October 25-26, 2019 in Wichita: KATE Annual Conference

Learn more and register by going [here](#).

October 28-30, 2019 in Wichita: KSDE Annual Conference

Learn more and register by going [here](#).

****Have you ever wondered how your schools' resources measure up to the rest? Visit <http://www.edreports.org> to review their evaluations of the many instructional resources schools have available to them today.**

****Have you ever wondered what curricular resources were being used across the state? Greenbush recently surveyed curriculum leaders to find out the answer to that popular question. You can access [elementary](#) and [secondary](#) results.**

Standards and Assessment News

Structure of the Month: [Vocabulary Program](#) (Hattie- .54 Effect Size)

On the path toward reading comprehension, students must pass through the sometimes difficult terrain of complex vocabulary. Ensuring that your teaching of vocabulary is explicit and uniform is one key to a strong ELA program. In order to better support schools in teaching vocabulary, a resource guide was created and is linked above; it is also available on the KSDE ELA page under the 'Standards' tab. Learn more about the three types of vocabulary and how to best teach vocabulary by reviewing the Vocabulary Program Fact Sheet.

ELA News:

The Kansas Book Festival is currently accepting student essays for their Youth Writing Contest. Entries will be accepted until April 30, 2019. The theme for this year's contest is "To the Stars". Students in grades 3-12 are eligible to participate, and winners can earn cash prizes! What a great class assignment and opportunity for our kids! Learn more [here](#). We have assembled a well-rounded and diverse handwriting committee that will begin updating our Kansas Handwriting Standards this spring and summer. I am excited to begin this work and share the outcomes with you all next fall.

Agency News:

The theme for this year's KSDE Summer Impact Institute is: [Kansans Can Ignite!](#) Our first summer institute will be held at Washburn University in Topeka on June 17 and 18. The second institute will be held in Pratt, Kansas at Pratt Community College on July 27 and 28. You can register using the link above. Furthermore, we are currently accepting applications for schools wishing to join the redesign initiative as Apollo schools. Applications are due April 5! Don't wait to join the Redesign process. Learn more [here](#).

Assessment News:

The state makeup day for ACT testing is April 2. Please review our '[Assessment](#)' page for additional support regarding the ACT exam. The state assessment window is currently open and runs through April 26. Please do not forget to find ways to make the learning environment fun and inviting even during this busy testing season. Remember, www.ksassessments.org is also a great resource for all things KAP!

Good Things

The Kansas Masonic Foundation – They offer scholarships to many Kansas Students wishing to attend two year or four year universities. Learn more about this opportunity for your Juniors and Seniors by going [here](#). They also sponsor a book club that offers incentives and recognition for students to improve their reading. You can learn more, and get involved, by clicking [here](#).

Kansas Association for Teachers of English (state NCTE affiliate) is pleased to announce the [keynotes](#) for their 2019 Fall Conference: authors Tiffany Jackson and Alan Gratz will be both be there! KATE is also planning an Ed Camp for this June, so stay tuned for more details. Also, if you are not a KATE member, now is the time to join. Not only will you have the chance to connect with strong ELA leaders and teachers, you will also have access to professional learning resources produced by KATE teachers.

For more information, contact:



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