

# CORE CONNECTIONS:

## EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY IN THE CLASSROOM



A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR EDUCATORS

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# CORE CONNECTIONS

## EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY IN THE CLASSROOM

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# Welcome

DR. SANDRA ALBERTI

Dear Core Advocates,

It is with great joy that I welcome you to the first edition of the Core Advocate Magazine. The Core Advocate Network was founded nearly eight years ago so that teachers could be the voice of college- and career-ready expectations. Policy makers, both supporters and critics, as well as support organizations could not speak to the day-to-day needs, challenges, and victories of this work the way that educators can.

We started with a small group of educators interested in learning more about the expectations of Common Core and have grown into a network of over 14,000 educators from all over the country committed to learning and leading in this work. My colleagues and I at Student Achievement Partners continue to be inspired by and learn from your amazing work and commitment in supporting all students. You have taken actions that have improved the opportunities for students in your classrooms, changed conversations in your grade-level teams, and, for some of you who took even bigger steps, impacted district work, organizational impact, and statewide conversations.

From the start the Core Advocate Network was set up to be a dynamic, action-oriented network. We hope that you find this magazine to be yet another tool to support your advocacy in supporting all students. Share the magazine with your colleagues. Try something new in your classroom or with the teachers with whom you work. Share your thoughts or your actions with others in the network through social media #CoreAdvocates.

As always, I appreciate each of you and the important work that you do every day. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best,  
Sandra Alberti  
Senior Fellow for Strategic Partnerships  
Student Achievement Partners





# Welcome

DR. MELISSA COLLINS

Welcome to the inaugural edition of Student Achievement Partners' digital magazine! Student Achievement Partners has a rich history of providing resources to help Core Advocates navigate college- and career-ready standards. Over the years, I have worked with multiple organizations to support educators in understanding and owning the standards as a part of their practice by leading professional development sessions, speaking on panels, writing blog posts, and using social media to inform and engage educators locally, nationally, and internationally. Many of my best experiences in being an ambassador of this work have come from my work with Student Achievement Partners.

I have been a Core Advocate since 2013, and I have seen the organization grow as educators have grown through utilizing professional learning experiences and standards-aligned tools and resources. I became a Core Advocate because of my belief in providing ALL learners with high-quality educational experiences regardless of zip codes. The Core Advocate Network continues to carry on the torch of supporting, informing, and training educators across the country through a variety of collaborative opportunities to cultivate equitable instruction and student success. This work has been implemented in schools, districts, states, and at the national level, with teachers advocating for effective educational standards and the Shifts of instruction in ELA and Math. The Shifts are the spine of the work that ensures that students are prepared for college and their careers.

Students, teachers, and administrators need passionate educators to work in partnership to support content knowledge and resources for all learners to engage in high-quality learning experiences. I hope that you enjoy the updates and opportunities to stay engaged and connected with the Core Advocate Network this year.

Happy reading!

Melissa  
Second-grade teacher  
John P. Freeman Optional School

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

When we decided to create a new magazine, we knew we needed a name that reflected the inspiring work of Core Advocates. One of the goals in switching from a newsletter format to a magazine was to create space for you, as Core Advocates, to share your ideas, your struggles and your accomplishments. So we decided it only made sense to let you name it! We submitted an open call for names and were overwhelmed by the amount of creative, funny, and motivational titles. Thank you! We decided on a hybrid of several submissions--so many of you may recognize your ideas! Below, you'll find two rationales we found particularly powerful.



When I was brainstorming names, I thought back on how, as a teacher and Early Literacy Specialist, I have relied on classroom materials, articles, and training resources from Student Achievement Partners to help me level the playing field for students by pairing high expectations with high levels of support. I've seen firsthand how carefully scaffolded and rigorous lessons, complex texts, and intentionally building knowledge and vocabulary, can help students at all stages of mastery achieve excellence. When we first started digging into the close reading lessons and scaffolded analytical writing tasks, one of my students with a learning disability declared, "Mrs. Schwartz, this makes me feel really smart!"

-- Christy Schwartz, Core Advocate, Early Literacy Specialist, June Harless Center for Rural Educational Research and Development at Marshall University.  
@clwschwartz



The magazine will be one of the primary ways that we stay connected to each other as Core Advocates, and to the work that we have done and will do. In this busy world and with our hectic lives as educators, we need to stay connected to a group of like-minded, passionate educators who will share with each other their insights, their best practices, and new opportunities for us to grow both as individuals and together as a community. Teaching can be so isolating, and Core Connections magazine will help us to feel ... connected!😊

-- Cay Freeman, Core Advocate, Math Interventionist, Sage Park Middle School  
@cayfreeman



DREAM BIG AND TEACH  
YOUR STUDENTS TO DO  
THE SAME.

---

The future  
belongs to  
those who  
believe in the  
beauty of their  
dreams

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

# Core Advocate Spotlights

We are excited to spotlight two Core Advocates this month who have been working recently with SAP on a collaborative project with the organization Learning Forward. Myuriel von Aspen lives on the West Coast, in Southern California, and works with elementary teachers and students as a math and ELD (English Language Development) teacher on special assignment (TOSA). Arthur Everett lives on the East Coast, in New York City, and teaches high school social studies. Read on to learn more about these two dynamo educators!

Myuriel von Aspen works in Newport-Mesa Unified School District as a TOSA for K-5 math and ELD. Myuriel says, "Being a Core Advocate has been invaluable to my professional development. Through trainings, webinars, blogs, and a network of amazing and supportive individuals, I have acquired a deep understanding of the Shifts, the Common Core Standards, and equitable instructional practices. The professional development I have received as a Core Advocate on tools such as the Instructional Practice Guide has helped me with my vision of high-quality, standards-aligned instruction." This past summer, Myuriel had the opportunity to act as a facilitator at UnboundEd's Standards Institute. Myuriel says the experience inspired her to keep equity at the forefront of everything she does and to be brave in challenging practices that are not equitable. "All children, regardless of their circumstances, deserve high-quality, equitable instruction from teachers that value



them and what they bring to the classroom, help them see themselves as competent learners, and support them to be college- and career-ready. In particular, we need to elevate the needs of English learners, students of color, students living in poverty, and students with disabilities who are the students that have been traditionally marginalized by our educational systems." When Myuriel is not working on behalf of students, she enjoys reading, and especially reading to her husband and daughter. She also enjoys spending time with her family and friends, running, shopping at farmers' markets, and traveling.

Arthur Everett is a high school social studies teacher in New York City. Arthur says, "Being a Core Advocate has provided opportunities for me to continually hone and enrich my instructional practices around literacy in the service of improving student achievement. As a result of being a Core Advocate, I have had the opportunity to develop content and to facilitate professional development around literacy instruction and practices aligned to the Common Core standards. It's phenomenal work!" Arthur shared that working with high school students can be extremely trying and is often thankless, but the rewards are tremendous. He spoke with us about a recent success he had with a student: "I had a former student with cerebral palsy return to address several sections of my senior classes. Currently, he works for one of the largest technology firms in Manhattan, which is awesome in itself. However, to hear him speak so poignantly about his experiences as a high school student, and particularly about how my high standards and expectations as well as my instructional practices, though challenging at the time, really prepared him for the rigorous expectations of college, was humbling and inspiring." When not teaching students or other teachers, Arthur enjoys reading a good book on the beach!







# CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

ANet: [Director of School Support - New Mexico](#)

ANet: [Director of School Support - DC/Maryland Network](#)

ANet: [Director of School Support - Louisiana](#)

ANet: [Director of School Support - Nevada](#)

ANet: [Director of School Support - Ohio](#)

EdReports: [Instructional Materials Manager, Math](#)

Instruction Partners: [New Orleans Math Lead](#)

Instruction Partners: [Director of Instructional Support](#)

Instruction Partners: [Director, Math Learning Design](#)

Instruction Partners: [Executive Director - District Partnerships](#)

Instruction Partners: [Math Lead - Flexible](#)

Student Achievement Partners: [Administrative Coordinator](#)

Student Achievement Partners: [Project Manager, Professional Learning](#)

UnboundEd: [Standards Institute Math Facilitator Application \(Winter 2020\)](#)

UnboundEd: [Standards Institute Leadership Facilitator Application \(Winter 2020\)](#)

UnboundEd: [Standards Institute ELA Facilitator Application \(Winter 2020\)](#)

# ALIGNED BLOG SPOTLIGHT

Do you read Achieve the Core's blog, [Aligned](#)? Many of the articles are authored by Core Advocates and are filled with practical advice, new resources, and honest reflections. Here are just a few! Feel free to reach out to these Core Advocate authors if you have questions or want to learn more about their work.



## CHOOSING TEXT EXCERPTS FOR CLOSE READING

A teacher's recommendations for how to select text excerpts that make students love reading

By: Carolyn Durante

## STUDENT CLOSING STATEMENTS

Use this routine to check for understanding and identify misconceptions

By: Celia Jimenez



## KIDS GIFT US WITH THEIR TIME

Increase achievement, motivation, and connection with students through classroom games

By: Bryan Drost

## THREE SIMPLE STEPS TO EMPOWERED WORD-LEARNING

Using morphology, context clues, and outside resources to help students decipher word meanings

By: Kenny McKee







# DESMOS IN THE MATH CLASSROOM

How a free tool changed my classroom

By: Nick Corley

# USING DATA BINDERS TO INCREASE STUDENT INDEPENDENCE

A tool for fostering intentional and purposeful learning

By: John Silverthorne



# USING EXIT TICKETS STRATEGICALLY

Educators share how they've made exit tickets a powerful tool for supporting students

By: Tika Epstein, Cathy Carter-Shide, Morgan Stipe, Karen Hernandez, Dina O'Brien

# FRACTION LAB SERIES

An in-depth look at Fraction Lab, a professional learning model focused on improving content knowledge and instructional practice at the same time

By: Jody Guarino and Jennie Beltramini



# GIVING STUDENTS A CHOICE WITH THEIR LEARNING

Using academic choice boards to build metacognition

By: Tika Epstein

# Most Misunderstood Math Standards

Uncover some of the most common mistakes happening in math instruction in this grade-by-grade series of blog posts by Core Advocates Angie Miller, Rebecca Few, and Brian Dean

We're always looking for new voices for our blog. Have an idea you'd like to write about? Please send your idea to [crivero@studentsachieve.net](mailto:crivero@studentsachieve.net)







# Edcite.com Core Advocate Content Developers

Edcite is a free platform for teachers to design their own tech-enhanced assignments and deliver them digitally to their students. The platform also has a library of free, standards-tagged assignments for teachers to use in their classrooms or items they can integrate into their own assignments. Last year, Edcite approached Student Achievement Partners with a request: "Can you help us find more content designers who are experts when it comes to educational standards?" We said, "Of course!"

Thus, Cohort 1 of the Edcite Core Advocate Content Developers group was created. Four Core Advocates completed new assignments that are now a part of Edcite's permanent collection. Congratulations, Core Advocates!

## 9TH/10TH ELA FRANKENSTEIN

By: Jenni Aberli  
[@jenniaberli](#)

## 7.EE.A.1 AND 7.EE.A.2 MINI-ASSESSMENT

By: Brian Dean  
[@FLMathNinja](#)

## "ANNABEL LEE" TEXT-BASED QUIZ

By: Amy Dempsey  
[@MrsAmyDempsey](#)

## QUIZ ON 8.G.1, 8.G.2, 8.G.3 ON TRANSFORMATIONS

By: Jessica Hunter

# UPCOMING CORE ADVOCATE WEBINARS

4  
September

## Formative Assessment Strategy: Thinking Beyond the Paper Pencil Test

This school year, think differently about what it means to assess your students. Learning about what your students know (and don't know) is a critical component of instructional planning and reflection. In this webinar, you'll learn how to design a formative assessment process that allows you to understand students' progress in an ongoing way throughout the year. You'll learn some creative ways to naturally embed assessment into your instruction, providing thoughtful, supportive feedback to students, and timely data for yourself as an educator. We'll discuss the components of formative assessments that are worthy of student and educator time, and explore how data should be used responsibly to avoid inequitable outcomes that limit the expectations we have for students.

2  
October

## Math Language Routines: Vibrant Discussions in the Math Classroom

As in other subjects, math students must be able to read, write, listen, speak, and discuss the subject at hand. Often, these multimodal ways of learning and using math skills are given too little attention in curricular materials, and teachers may want to supplement with classroom activities that provide opportunities for students to use language to discuss the math content they're learning. Math Language Routines (MLRs) support a variety of language-focused skill growth--from reinforcing mathematical terminology to scaffolding conversations to providing opportunities for students to deepen their conceptual understanding by describing their work. These routines, done regularly, can benefit all students, though they are particularly supportive of English Language Learners or those struggling with the linguistic components of math. In this webinar, you'll dig deeply into several routines you can implement in your classroom tomorrow and hear from educators about how the routines have changed their math classes.

6  
November

## Observing Foundational Skills

*Description coming soon*

4  
December

## Why Math Modeling Is Important for Equity

*Description coming soon*





New virtual  
mini-course for  
Core Advocates  
starting in October!

# Building Educator Content Knowledge:

*Dig into important fraction concepts to increase student achievement*

## **What do teachers need to understand about fractions to ensure student success in math through high school?**

How were you taught fractions in elementary school? Most likely, the way you learned doesn't reflect today's college- and career-ready standards, and what research shows to be the most powerful way to set students up for future success in math.

Fractions are important! One of the more noticeable shifts in college- and career-ready standards was emphasizing how fractions fit into the larger number system. Traditional curricula and instruction, and even current aligned curricula, fail to communicate one of the most critical points about fractions: fractions are numbers. Research has consistently shown the downstream impacts for students of this fundamental oversight in curriculum and instruction. Many students struggle in middle school and high school because of their lack of understanding of basic fraction concepts. To help all students be successful, educators need to relearn fractions!

In this virtual, self-paced mini-course, we will unpack the definition of a fraction and think about how powerful understanding fractions and how they are built out of unit fractions can be for teachers and their students. Participants in this course will have the opportunity to:

- Learn about fraction concepts
- Think about the standards and progression of learning in 1st through 5th grades that leads students to math success
- Do math in order to uncover important ideas
- Analyze student thinking of the important fraction concepts.

This course would be fabulous to build fraction content knowledge of teachers, instructional coaches, math specialists, and leaders of professional learning. The focus of the course will be on fraction concepts in elementary grades 1 through 5.

This course will run from October 15 to November 26. It will consist of 4 units (4 weeks) and can be completed over the 6 week window. A certificate for 12 hours of professional learning will be given for successful completion of the course.

**Register Here!**

## New ELA Mini-Assessments

### → Springtime Poetry Pair Grade 4

Includes two poems, twelve text-dependent questions, one constructed-response writing prompt, and explanatory information for teachers regarding alignment to the CCSS.

### → Esperanza Rising Grade 5

Includes an excerpt from the novel *Esperanza Rising*, ten text-dependent questions (including one optional constructed-response prompt for students), and explanatory information for teachers regarding alignment to the CCSS.

### → Natural Resource Grade 6

Includes two nonfiction texts and 12 text-dependent questions (including one optional constructed-response prompt for students). Also includes explanatory information for teachers regarding alignment to the CCSS.

### → Boston Massacre Grade 7

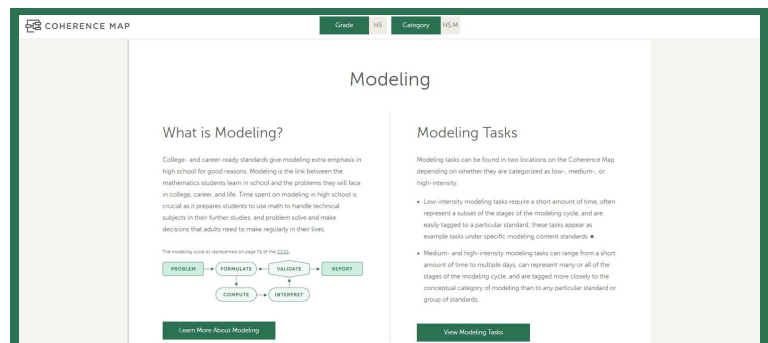
Includes two nonfiction texts, including an excerpt from Nathaniel Hawthorne, twelve text-dependent questions (including one optional constructed-response prompt for students), and explanatory information for teachers regarding alignment to the CCSS.



## NEW RESOURCES ON ACHIEVE THE CORE

### New Modeling Section on the Coherence Map

Did you know that the extended [Coherence Map](#) contains a new section dedicated to Modeling? The new modeling section is in the High School part of the Coherence Map since modeling is a Conceptual Category in high school, however, the section is helpful for anyone across grades who wants to learn more about modeling. In this section, you can deepen your understanding of modeling, view a video of Jason Zimba talking about the topic, and see high school modeling tasks. More tasks will also be added soon!





A photograph of a classroom scene with a green tint. A teacher is sitting on the floor on the left, gesturing while talking to a group of young students sitting on the floor on the right. The students are looking up at the teacher. In the background, there is a bookshelf with various children's books and a window with colorful paper flowers hanging from it.

It takes a big  
heart to help  
shape little minds.

- UNKNOWN



# NEW RESOURCES FROM OUR PARTNERS

It's a new school year and an opportunity to discover new resources and learn new things! Check out some of these resources we've curated from our partners.



1

## **GRADUATING READY: HIGH SCHOOL DATA EXPLORERS**

*FROM  
ACHIEVE*

This tool is a must-visit for anyone wondering “Are the students in my state actually receiving an education that prepares them for college and their careers?” This Data explorer will help you compare graduation requirements and assessments by state, and explains where gaps exist between graduation requirements and post-secondary admissions.

2

## **ANET BLOG: LEARNING TOGETHER**

*FROM  
ANET*

This is a wonderful blog that blends case studies with practical strategies for educators and school leaders.

3

## **MATERIALS MATTER INFOGRAPHIC**

*FROM  
EDREPORTS*

This beautiful infographic can help you review the facts about the influence of instructional materials on students. It will help you make the case for change!



## THE OPPORTUNITY MYTH ACTION GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

FROM  
TNTP

The [Opportunity Myth](#) report illustrated how far we have to go to ensure equitable education for all students. Each year, students graduate from high school believing they've been prepared for the next step in their education or careers only to find they aren't ready. This Action Guide names four recommendations for classroom teachers to help them start to dismantle the opportunity myth.

## LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

FROM  
ANET

Looking for open educational resources to support all facets of the education system? ANet is a leader in helping schools reach their goals for student achievement. They've created OER resources in the following categories:

- Connect Standards to Instruction
- Harness Data and Student Work
- Commit to a Priority
- Promote a Culture of Adult Learning
- Empower Your Team

## TEACHER ADVISOR WITH WATSON

FROM  
IBM EDUCATION

If you know you'll need to supplement and adapt your math curriculum this year, Teacher Advisor is a wonderful resource. It's a curated collection of K-8 classroom resources. The platform is powered by IBM's Watson, so you'll get highly targeted and accurate support for every query you enter. Great for lesson planning as well as professional learning!

## Spotlight: Resources from the English Learners Success Forum

### EDUCATOR RESOURCE PAGE

If you teach English Language Learners (ELLs), don't miss this great collection of free resources and strategy sheets. You're sure to find something you can implement right away!

### TAKING THE PULSE

Does your current curriculum include the right supports for English Language Learners to fully engage with grade-level content? This list of questions will help you identify the strengths and weaknesses of your curriculum when it comes to supporting ELLs.



7

## THE PATH TO INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

*FROM*  
LEARNING  
FORWARD

D.C.'s LEAP program helps teachers become experts at teaching high-quality, standards-aligned content so that every student experiences rigorous and engaging instruction every day. This paper explores District of Columbia Public Schools' innovative approach to supporting teaching instruction, called Learning Together to Advance our Practice, or LEAP.

8

## CURRICULUM SUPPORT GUIDE

*FROM*  
INSTRUCTION  
PARTNERS

Identifying a strong, standards-aligned curriculum is only the first step if your end goal is student success. The Curriculum Support Guide walks decision makers through the process of selecting, launching, and implementing (teaching and learning about) a new curriculum.

9

## 5 WAYS TEACHERS CAN ADVOCATE FOR BETTER MATERIALS

*FROM*  
EDREPORTS

Every educator can influence curricular decisions. Here are some "first steps" you can aim for this year.





## QUARTERLY QUESTION

Submit your  
answer for a  
chance to win  
a \$25 gift card!  
([click here](#))

What do the terms  
**diversity, inclusion,  
& equity** mean to  
you as an educator,  
and how are they  
reflected in your  
classroom?





# Early Literacy by the Numbers

## 3 Ways to Provide Equitable Foundational Skills Instruction for ALL Learners

By **Adrianne Robinson Sublett**

### Why is early literacy instruction important and how can educators promote instructional equity?

Equitable foundational skills instruction is an important lever that affords educators opportunities to provide our youngest learners with the tools needed to be successful as they embark on their respective journeys for college and career readiness.

**30 million**, **three**, **forty-five**, **forty-four**, and **twenty-four** are numbers that all relate to some of the research, theory, and practice of early literacy instruction.

*Why is early literacy instruction important and how can educators promote instructional equity?*

1. Provide daily foundational skills instruction.

In “The Early Catastrophe: The **30 Million** Word Gap by Age **3**” researchers Betty Hart and Todd Risley (2003) determined that a 30 million word gap existed between students from high-income families and students from low-income families because of exposure to more skills and experiences. As a result, there are lasting effects on a child’s performance later in life.



# "Reflect and seek opportunities to grow in your practice as you empower your students through the gift of literacy."

-ADRIANNE ROBINSON SUBLETT

*How can this gap be decreased in a school setting?*

Follow a research-based scope and sequence of explicit instruction for at least **45** minutes daily. The [Foundational Skills Guidance Document](#) from Student Achievement Partners outlines essential instructional components to teach early reading skills. Some educators need access to an effective curriculum to support this work. There are a number of open source curricula available if you need access to one. [EdReports.org](#) is a great starting point if you are looking for a curriculum.

## 2. Perfect practice makes perfect.

There are **44** phonemes, or units of sound, in the English language that comprises all of the words that are spoken or read.

*What can educators do to support students with understanding how these phonemes translate into words?*

Provide frequent opportunities for students to practice the acquired foundational skills through a variety of ways both in context through [decodables or controlled texts](#) and [out of context](#). Regularly assess student understanding of the skills and clear up misconceptions directly to a student, small group, or entire class. Student Achievement Partners has a Foundational Skills Assessment Protocol that includes ways to assess student progress.

## 3. Sharpen your skills.

In 2012, Harvard posted a memo that spoke to the duality of literacy instruction through both skills and knowledge-based competencies. With adequate instruction, skills-based competencies are mastered by grade **3**.

*Where can educators go for additional support with understanding this work?*

It is crucial that every early literacy teacher and observer have a solid personal understanding of effective foundational skills instruction to provide the best support for ALL students. The [Foundational Skills Mini Course](#) builds content knowledge for teachers and those who support teachers. Educators who support teachers should utilize tools that ensure effective standards-based instructional practices. The [Foundational Skills Observation Tool](#) provides a process for engaging in meaningful conversations to both build teacher capacity and improve student outcomes.

We have **24** hours in a day to plan, teach, monitor, and adjust instruction to support our students with reading (decoding) and writing (encoding.) Reflect and seek opportunities to grow in your practice as you empower your students through the gift of literacy.



Written by  
Core Advocate  
Adrienne Sublett



## Submit a Core Advocate Perspective Article!

Do you have an idea for a magazine article topic? We are looking for Core Advocates to submit article ideas they would like to write about to be featured in an upcoming edition of the Core Connections magazine! Articles should reflect the magazine's theme of Excellence and Equity in the Classroom.



Email your idea for a Core Advocate Perspective article to Jennie Beltramini at **[jbeltramini@studentsachieve.net](mailto:jbeltramini@studentsachieve.net)**



# What Does Being a Core Advocate Mean to You?



**Janine Fernandez** @pinksmink · Jul 3

Replying to @achievethecore

Being a #coreadvocate allows me to stretch my thinking in ways that impact not only my Ts and Ss, but myself. I have become a better educator because of the interactions I have with core advocates I encounter on the daily basis. It's being a part of perfection! @achievethecore



**Myuriel von Aspen** @myurielvonaspen · 22h

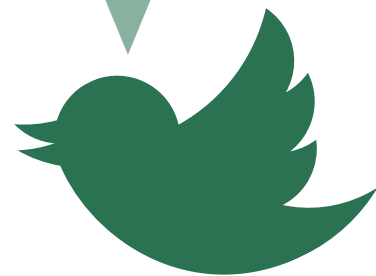
It means that I am empowered to support instruction that's aligned to the Shifts. It means I have resources like the Coherence Map. It means that more students will benefit from equitable instruction as more teachers align their instruction to the Shifts. @achievethecore



**Brian Dean** @FLMathNinja · 9h

It means that I'm part of something much bigger than myself. It means I have a community of educators to lean on when I have questions. It means I have a PLN to learn and grow alongside. It means Ss will learn more bc I'll be better today than I was yesterday. #CoreAdvocates

We asked, and you answered! Take a look at what being a Core Advocate means to these educators. Do you have a story to tell? We'd love for you to share it with us via Twitter! Use #coreadvocates and make sure to tag @achievethecore! Or submit via this [form](#).



# Congratulations to the following Core Advocates:

**Leslie Catano from Carlsbad, New Mexico**

She earned an Education Administration Certification from Eastern New Mexico University

**Dr. Christina Lutz-Doemling from Catasauqua, PA (@DoemlingC)**

She received the Lehigh University 2019 Excellence in Educational Leadership Award in recognition of extraordinary commitment and support for improved preparation of school administrators.

**Pamela Sed from Ellenwood, GA (@Pamseda1)**

She was promoted to Math Coordinator in a neighboring district.

**Ana Filomia from Lancaster, Ca (@AnaFilomia)**

She was voted teacher of the year for Sierra Elementary School for 2018-2019.

**Anthony Lawson from Denver, CO (@principallawson)**

He accepted his dream job to be the Regional Director of Mathematics for KIPP Colorado.

**Jenna Parker from Wilmington, NC (@principallawson)**

She won Teacher of the Year at Anderson elementary school.

**Shruti Raman from Titusville, FL (@SRamanteach)**

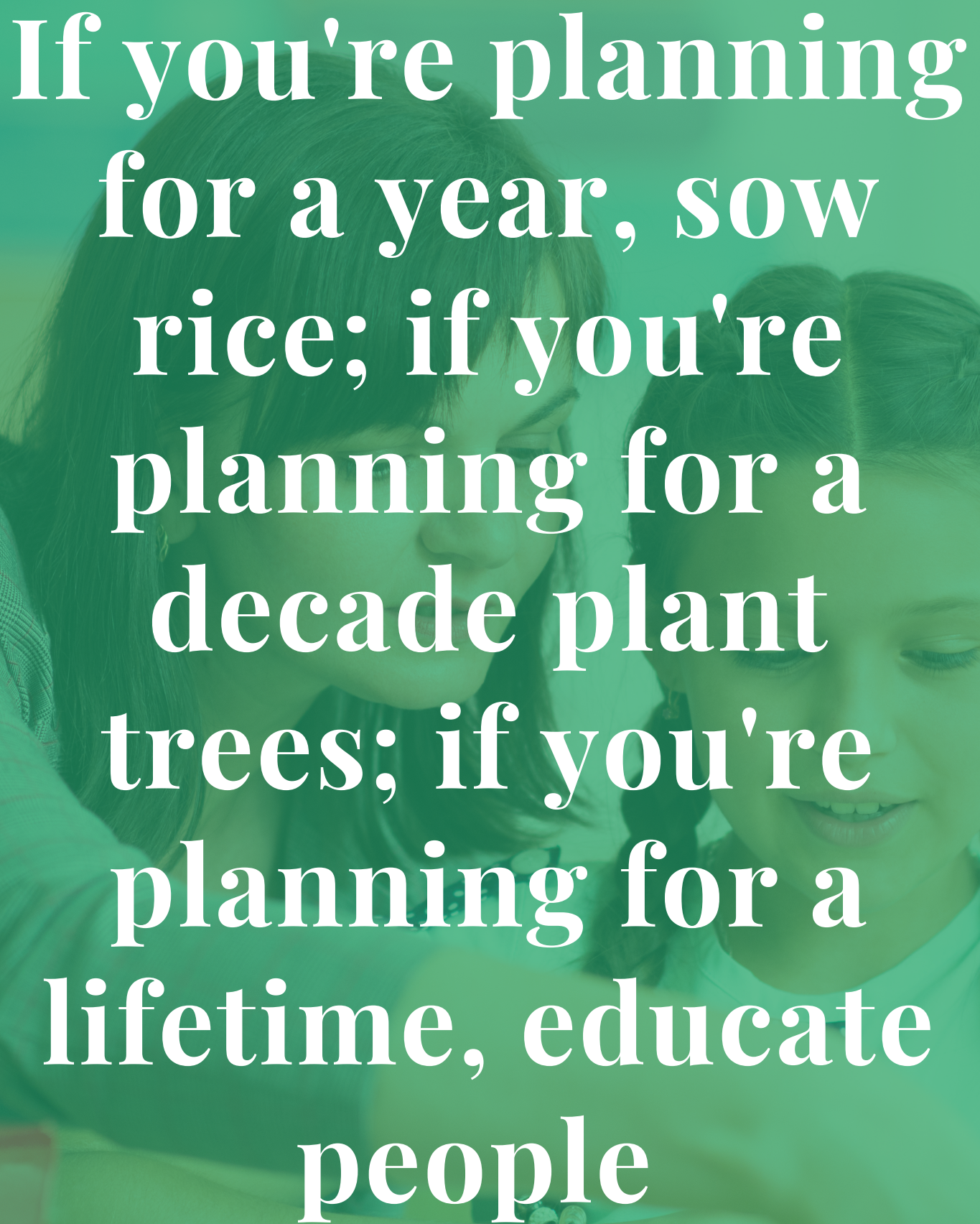
She finished her Master's in Ed. Leadership and won the FCTM Tom Denmark Teacher Enhancement Grant to attend FCTM.

**Altamese Larkins from Atlanta, GA (@ALarkinsNBCT)**

She renewed her National Board Certification.

Click here to  
share your  
celebrations!



A background image of two young girls with dark hair, one with pigtails, looking down at an open book. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The text is written in a large, white, serif font, centered over the image.

If you're planning  
for a year, sow  
rice; if you're  
planning for a  
decade plant  
trees; if you're  
planning for a  
lifetime, educate  
people

- CHINESE PROVERB

# SCREENCASTIFY: THE FREE DIGITAL TOOL YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEEDED!

by Chris Kalmbach, @ChrisKalmbach

Screencastify is an easy way to provide short professional development tidbits. One of my goals in 2018-2019 was to send a regular screencast featuring some aspect of our new math curriculum. I prepared a short slideshow and then record myself as I unpacked certain key features of the curriculum for teachers. I tried to keep my screencast short - between a minute and a half and three minutes, though sometimes the screencast would run longer. This format provided teachers with information they could use right away while at the same time giving them something they could listen to in the background while they worked on other things. Teachers could relisten to the screencast if they needed to and I also provided the slideshow in the email I sent the screencast in as well so they could take more time with the information if they needed to.

Aside from communicating with colleagues, I've also used Screencastify in working with students while diagnosing conceptual or skill gaps in math. While working through problems on my laptop, I recorded my conversation with students using Screencastify. In doing so I was able to share our conversation with the student's teacher via the screencast and call attention to specific points in the recording that signified areas of concern and areas of strength.

I was then able to use the video evidence to help the teacher design an appropriate intervention to meet the student's needs.

Screencastify is a tool that could easily be used across the school day regardless of grade level or content. Some ideas I've seen from my colleagues include:

- Teachers record sub plans and notes for subs regarding classroom routines, schedules, etc.
- Teachers screencast lessons, directions, or content for students to watch and respond to.
- Teachers provide lessons and classwork to students who are out of school for an extended period of time.
- Students create a slideshow as part of a research project and recording the presentation.
- Students record their developing thinking of a problem the class is working on and share their recordings with their classmates.
- Students explain their solution strategies for a particular problem (think Khan Academy, but with student-generated strategies instead).
- Students create a book report using three pictures, drawings, images that best represent the beginning, middle, and end of the book and record their book report.
- Students record their reading of a passage and the teacher is able to use the recording to check reading fluency.
- Students use Screencastify to share their developing thoughts, opinions, etc. regarding a class topic.
- Coaches provide PD through short (2 - 5 min.) recordings of slideshows.



(continued)

Screencastify is a powerful tool for deepening learning because it allows for equity of voice and empowers students to share their creations with the world around them. You can learn more by going to [Screencastify.com](https://screencastify.com), or simply add it to your Chrome browser by going to the Chrome Web Store and searching for “Screencastify.”

Be sure to share your ideas for using Screencastify with us on Twitter and make sure you use #CoreAdvocates and @achievethecore to tag your tweet!

## LEARN MORE!

### Record

- ▶ Desktop, browser tab, or webcam capture
- ▶ Narrate with your microphone’s audio
- ▶ Customize your resolution and FPS
- ▶ Embed your webcam into the screencast

### Edit

- ▶ Annotate your screen with a pen tool
- ▶ Focus a spotlight on your mouse

### Share

- ▶ Videos automatically save to Google Drive
- ▶ Publish directly to YouTube
- ▶ Save and manage videos locally



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# What We're Reading

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Doing the Math. What it Really Takes to Build a Highly Expert Cadre of Mathematics Teachers

-- Grace Tatter *Usable Knowledge*

02

Is Round Robin Reading Really that Bad?

-- Timothy Shanahan, *Shanahan on Literacy*

03

A Case Study in Equity through Untracking Students

--Michelle Higgins, *Teaching Tolerance*

04

Influential Reading Group Makes It Clear: Students Need Systematic, Explicit Phonics

-- Stephen Sawchuk, *EdWeek*

05

PHOTOS: Where The Kids Across Town Grow Up With Very Different Schools

--NPR

06

Unpacking Your Why

Robert Barry, *NCTM*



