

# ACHIEVE THE CORE

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## Core Advocate Newsletter

New Tools, Core Advocate Stories and Ways to Get Involved

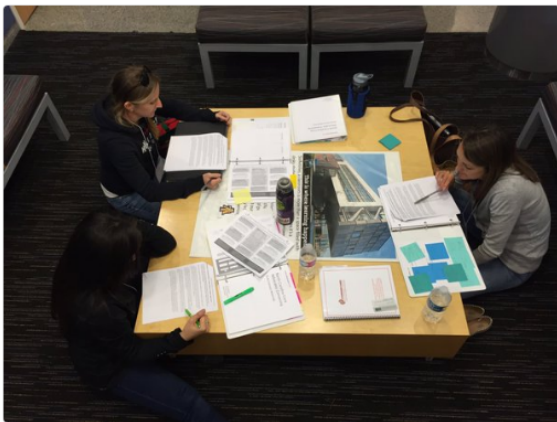
### We Appreciate You, Teachers

Since 1985, the first full week of May has marked Teacher Appreciation Week. This recognition dates back to 1953 when Eleanor Roosevelt convinced the 83rd Congress to proclaim National Teachers' Day, and was extended to a week-long celebration 32 years later by the National Parent Teacher Association. We hope that all the teachers in our network enjoyed kind words, gifts, and perks (free Chipotle, anyone?) last week. Student Achievement Partners joins in thanking teachers for their commitment to student learning and the challenging work of Instructional Advocacy in their classrooms, schools, districts, and states. We are dedicated to supporting and appreciating you, this May and all year long with our tools and resources on **Achieve the Core**. Thank you for all you do!

### North Carolina Expands Core Advocate Network

On April 23-24, over 80 North Carolina educators launched the state's ELA/literacy and math campaigns with a weekend of learning and collaboration. Teams of teachers worked on creating high-quality Text-Dependent Questions, and on using Focus and Coherence to support conceptual understanding of mathematics. The work of these catalysts will continue into the 2016-17 school year and will expand within their individual schools and districts. Kudos to the North Carolina Core Advocate leadership team for designing and presenting meaningful experiences for these new Core Advocates!

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## Core Advocate Question of the Month

Core Advocate Pamela Seda is the winner of a \$25 Amazon Gift Card for her answer to last month's question, ***What makes a Professional Learning Community (PLC) effective?*** Read Pamela's and other responses below. Be sure to submit a response to this month's question for your chance to win!

### **Vulnerable enough to truly learn**

An effective PLC is one where teachers trust each

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other so much that they make themselves vulnerable enough to truly learn from each other. They are engaged, not simply compliant. They are focused on the right work of improving learning outcomes for their students.

*-Pamela Seda*

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### **Dedication**

Dedication to the work, the goals and objectives is key to an effective PLC. Common knowledge and understanding can be built and personality differences settled, but if some are more invested than others, a team will struggle.

*-Carina Stillman*

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### **Include student voice**

Our PLC always includes students. We discuss our content and lessons then gather student voice. Including students gives them a role in their learning. I believe our PLC is effective because students participate, teachers listen, and a mutual, respectful, learning environment unfolds.

*-Stephanie Barnett*

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### **Additional Reader Responses**

PLCs are effective when there is a culture of candor. *-Jennifer Jump*

Effective PLCs require trust built through shared time and effort. *-Brandon Dorman*

**This month's question:  
What professional learning experiences will you engage in this summer?**

**Submit Your Answer**

**Instructional Advocacy to Improve Practice**

In the years since the release of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teacher leaders and other educators have worked hard to advocate for and implement these college- and career-ready standards, even while misinformation and often unfounded resistance abounded. Although the CCSS remain politically charged in some places, the vast majority of states have adopted, implemented, and moved past the resistance to the Standards themselves. With a decreased need for political advocacy, our Core Advocate network has shifted to a focus on classroom practice that aligns to the Shifts, the Standards, and the intent behind the CCSS. Core Advocates across the country are working as Instructional Advocates, collaborating, learning, and supporting systems, structures, and teaching that aligns with high student achievement. Four states have launched state-specific campaigns, allowing for teacher-led professional learning to infiltrate their state, and ten more states will join these efforts in the upcoming school year.

The June Core Advocate webinar will explore the concept of Instructional Advocacy, and provides the opportunity to connect to the efforts of Core Advocates in other states and regions. Join the Field Impact Team and your fellow Core Advocates on Tuesday, June 19, 2016 from 7:00-8:00 pm EDT for *Instructional Advocacy to Improve Practice*, the next in our monthly webinar series. Registration is open now, and can be found [here](#). Invite your colleagues to join in the conversation and join the work in your state!

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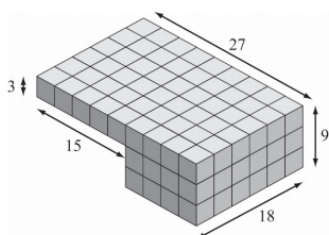
## Every Student Succeeds Act

Are you involved in state work regarding the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)? We want to hear from you! Please click below to let us know if you are working formally on a state-level committee or work group. We will connect you with others doing the same work!

I'm doing ESSA work in my state!

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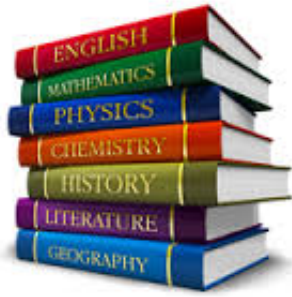
## Resources for Your Classroom



### Grade 5 Mini-Assessment

Check out the newly-posted [grade 5 mini-assessment](#). This multi-domain assessment is designed to evaluate students' ability to solve grade-appropriate real world problems. This is a great end-of-year tool for 5th grade teachers, or a way to start next year with 6th graders.

**Training Modules: Using the IMET**



Will you be reviewing instructional materials over the summer, either for purchase or simply to understand their strengths and weakness in Common Core alignment? The professional learning modules for **math** and **ELA** can help you familiarize your team of teachers with the IMET and it's effective use. Download these ready-to-go modules today!

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## Core Advocates at NCTM

Student Achievement Partners hosted our first ever exhibitor booth at the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics annual conference in San Francisco, CA April 14-16, 2016. A big shout out to Core Advocates **Jennie Beltramini, Sarah Galasso, Jody Guarino, Chris Kalmbach, Triscia Hochstatter, Jeanne Simpson, Robbie Torney, and Tara Warren** for helping to staff the booth and to the many math educators that stopped by to say hi and learn more about Achieve the Core! The booth was a huge success.



Members of the math team at SAP presented several sessions highlighting our tools. Additionally, Core Advocate **Amy Guzi Parkinson** presented a session about how she and her colleagues used the Instructional Practice Guide: Coaching Tool in an American Federation of Teachers Innovation Fund Grant project in the Cincinnati Public School District to build knowledge about the Common Core State Standards for math, and to gauge implementation of the Standards and the instructional Shifts. Learn more about the project in [this blog post](#). Great work, Amy!

Share what you're doing!

## Upcoming Opportunities

### **Elevating Instructional Advocacy**

On May 14-15, over 300 educators will join Student Achievement Partners for our annual Core Advocate conference *Elevating Instructional Advocacy*. Be sure to follow the hashtag #coreadvocates on Twitter throughout the weekend to keep a pulse on the 40 breakout sessions offered, and hear more about the conference in upcoming newsletters.

### **Writing is Thinking**

Writing is Thinking is a blog focused on the experiences and challenges faced by middle school students that are English language learners or have learning disabilities, and their educators. The blog features pieces on instructional practices, book reviews, and helpful tips or ideas for working with this segment of the student population. If you're an ELL or special education teacher with an interest in blogging, check out the [website](#) and contact Jennifer Dines at [jdines@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:jdines@bostonpublicschools.org).

### **GO Math! Users ...**

SAP's Math team has recently begun a project working with districts across the country who are using *Go Math!* Participants are working collaboratively to create grade-level guidance documents to help teachers use *Go Math!* in K-5 in a more aligned way. If you are using *Go Math!* or will be using it next year, please click [here](#) to receive updates on the project and hear how you can become more involved. If you have questions about the work, please reach out to [Marni Greenstein](#).

### **... and Journeys Users**

SAP's ELA team has recently begun a project working with districts across the country who are using HMH *Journeys* (2014 or newer). Participants are working collaboratively to create sample grade-level revised lesson plans to help teachers use *Journeys* K-5 in a more aligned way. If you are using *Journeys* or will be using it next year, please click [here](#) to receive updates on the project and hear how you can become more involved. If you have questions about the work, please reach out to [Cathy Schmidt](#).

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## **Social Media Spotlight**



**Dan Alderson** @alderson\_dan · May 3

Pasco SD admin making sense of ELA CCSS. Thanks for your hard work! @JennieBeltro @WACoreAdvocates @achievethecore



**Amy Briggs** @AmyBriggs10 · May 3

Of course! Ms Johnson, Mrs Page & Mr Ortiz: inspired my love of gorgeous books, space, and Descartes, respectively.



[achievethecore.org](http://achievethecore.org) @achievethecore

It's Teacher Appreciation Week! Do you remember a

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Past Issues

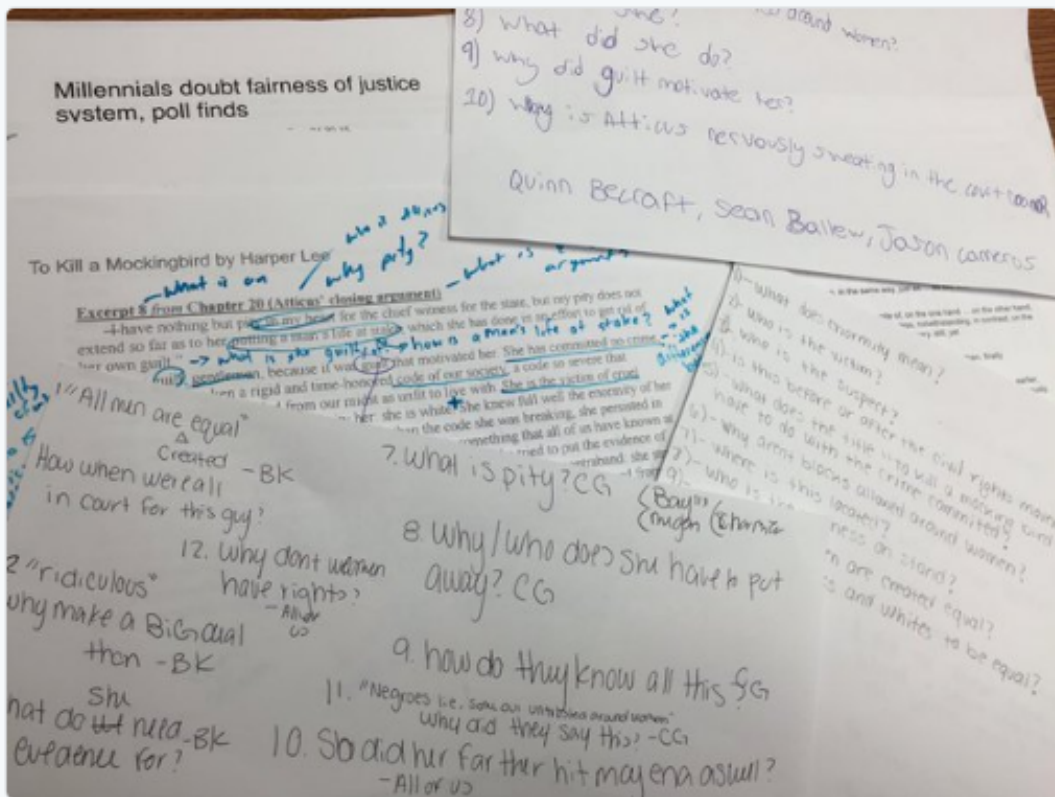
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**Amy Youngblood** @EduOptimus1 · Apr 30  
 Instructional Practice Guide #coreadvocates @achievethecore  
 @leadingedsDC



**Theodore Mueller** @MuellerTheodore · Apr 25  
 @CMSDisLiteracy What if Ts had Ss develop the ?s that require Ss 2 dig  
 deeper N2 a text? #CoreAdvocates



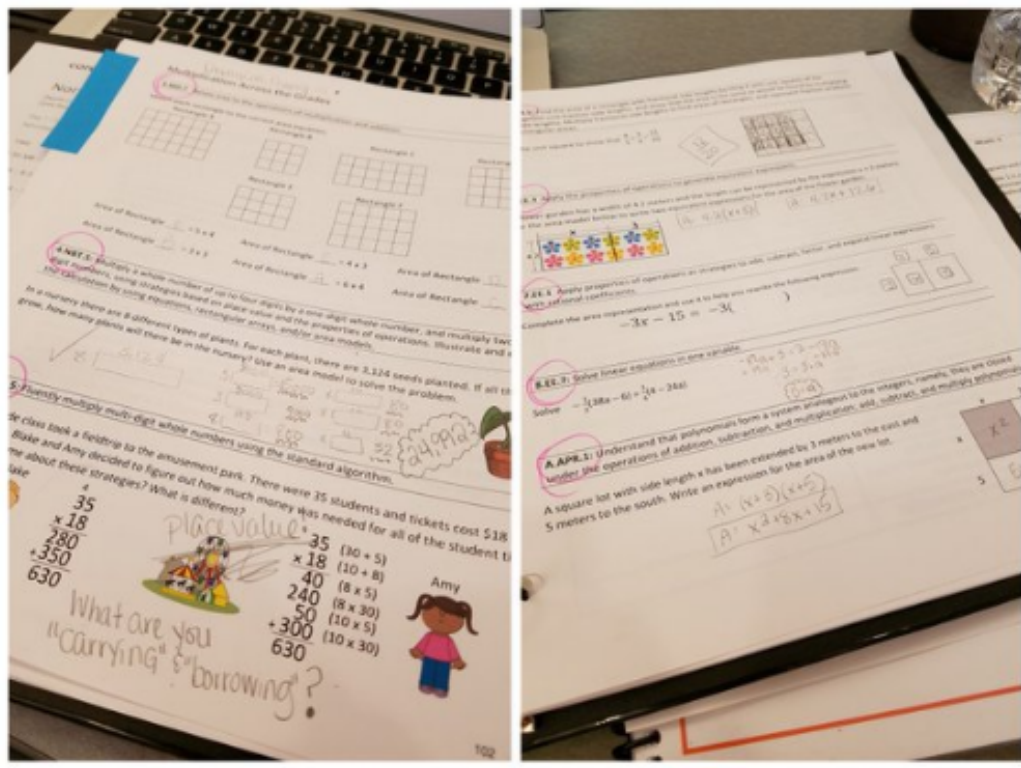
**Dee Crescitelli** @dcrescitelli · Apr 19  
 If we teach the standards w/ #coherence between grades & concepts, there's  
 no need for additional test prep. Same blueprint. #coreadvocates





Sumer Williams @Sumer\_Williams · Apr 24

What does multiplication progression look like? Why, hello area models! What you do matters! #coreadvocates



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