



## February Core Advocate News!

As we head toward spring, we get even more excited about the classroom learning that has happened so far! We know many Core Advocates are also searching for professional learning resources, classroom tools, practical lessons and assessments, and the inspiration to finish the year strong. This month's Core Advocate newsletter has you covered!

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## Core Advocate Learning

### Webinars

#### Monthly Core Advocate Webinar Series

##### [Making Materials Better: enVisionmath 2.0 MAP](#)

Join us on March 7 at 7:00 p.m. ET for an exclusive sneak peek of the yet-to-be-released adaptation guidance documents on the mathematics program enVisionmath 2.0. Throughout 2017, SAP partnered with districts using enVisionmath 2.0 to develop guidance documents to better align the program to the math Shifts and standards. The guidance documents were piloted in classrooms over the fall and winter and will be published on [achievethecore.org](http://achievethecore.org) in May 2018. Join this webinar to hear from pilot users, learn more about the adaptations made to the program, and receive early access to the guidance documents.

Register for the March Core Advocate Webinar!

### Supporting English Language Learners with College- and Career-Ready Content

College- and career-ready (CCR) standards are for ALL students, but how do we help our English Language Learners (ELLs) access grade-level, CCR-aligned content when they are still acquiring English language skills? Join our April Core Advocate webinar, Supporting English Language Learners with College- and Career-Ready Content on Wednesday, April 4 at 7:00 p.m. ET! This webinar will introduce key research behind best practices for supporting ELLs, preview some of the new adaptations being integrated into Achieve the Core resources, and spotlight some of the reflections of Core Advocates who worked, first-hand, with the newly adapted resources.

Register for the April Core Advocate Webinar!

## Core Advocate Convening

We are excited to let you know that applications are open for the May 2018 Core Advocate Convening: Learn, Lead, Impact!

The convening will take place in Denver, Colorado at the Stapleton Renaissance Hotel on May 19 and 20, 2018. Our 4th annual convening offers the opportunity for Core Advocates to select their own pathways of learning through a variety of breakout sessions led by Student Achievement Partners, Core Advocates, and partner organizations.

In six years of building and supporting the Core Advocate network we have grown to over 13,000 strong, with members all across the country. We intend to continue to be a source of learning and fellowship in the work you do to align instruction to college- and career-ready standards for every single student. Because of that intention, we're looking for ways to engage in professional learning with a broader group of Core Advocates on a much more frequent basis than the annual convenings afford. This spring's convening is the last planned large-scale, in person, face-to-face meeting open to the entire Core Advocate network. In the years ahead we look forward to designing and hosting multiple opportunities for learning through our virtual platforms and engaging with you directly in our initiatives based in schools and districts.

Please submit your [application](#) to attend by February 23, 2018. Space is limited.

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## In the News

How well do state tests measure mastery of states' academic standards?

Have you been following the federal peer review process for state assessment? There was **big news** out of Maryland recently, where the PARCC test became the first test to meet expectations of peer review. For more information about the status of Peer Review in your state, check out the [Decision Letters on Each State's Final Assessment System](#) page.



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## Showcasing Our Network

### Question of the Month

#### This Month

What strategy, resource, or teaching practice has been effective in helping you meet the needs of diverse learners in your classroom?

## Last Month

Question: What professional organization do you benefit from belonging to, learning from, or collaborating with? How does it help you in your job?

### Winning Answer:

"I am an instructional reviewer for EdReports. I get to collaborate with several other individuals across the U.S. in weekly conversations about instruction materials. We discuss alignment to the CCR standards, focus, coherence, rigor, and many other concepts. We deep dive into the instructional materials and discuss how they are/are not well adapted for teachers and students. This organization has made me think about the instructional materials I use in my classroom daily. I learned how to find great, quality instructional materials that will challenge my students. I will research and adapt my instruction based on the reports from this organization. I get emails from principals across our state asking me my opinion on a series they are thinking about adopting. I provide feedback on that series based on reports from this organization and then share the website with them."

–Stephanie Barnett

### Other Noteworthy Answers:

"I work for Fresno Unified as a teacher on special assignment with curriculum and instruction. My job is to help teachers and principals better understand the standards and how to plan with the standards using our curriculum. The New Teacher Project has absolutely helped not only myself but our district. They have helped us with the Instructional Practice Guide for high quality planning and what to look for in walkthroughs. In addition, last year I worked with TNTP developing trainings for principals around the Instructional Practice Guide, the standards, and how to better utilize the curriculum. From planning to classroom walkthroughs TNTP has been a professional organization that has made a difference with my learning as well as my school district's."

–Rheya Kautz–Cortopassi

"I belong to ISTE and as an Instructional Support Specialist in Technology, I feel connected to others in my area of expertise. I am able to participate in various communities which allow me to learn and grow. Since I am the only ISS in my district, I know that I am part of a bigger community."

–Ann Rose Santoro

"I belong to the Math Twitter Blogosphere (MTBoS). Finding my Professional Learning Community on Twitter has been absolutely life-changing in my teaching. I have found people to bounce ideas off of, have found resources that have made my teaching better, participated in book studies because they were promoted on Twitter, and have even shared ideas (and in return tweaked them to make them better because of ideas people shared with me.) I attended Twitter Math Camp 3 years in a row, making teacher friends from all over the country and getting the best professional development EVER. At these camps I learned about Number Talks, Desmos activities, conducting productive math

discussions and many, many other topics, all of which have become part of my daily teaching."

–Tina Palmer

"National Science Teachers Association (NSTA). The NSTA keeps me in the loop with changes to science standards, best practices for implementing the standards, funding for the classroom, free and paid resources, training, and fantastic listservs where help is provided by teachers and other science professionals from around the world for most any science related matters. It was a great support when I first started teaching and continues to be a great support for my needs as a science educator."

–Cheri Authement

"I am proud member of the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE). Through the Instructional Leadership Institute offered by NCAE, I have gained skills in strengthening my instructional practices in my classroom. The best part is networking with other educators across the state to implement great teaching and learning in our classrooms every day."

–Tamika Walker Kelly

## Showcasing Instructional Advocacy

### Instructional Advocacy Action Form Spotlight

Core Advocates from around the country are making an impact on educators and students through their instructional advocacy! We love to hear stories about the great work being done by Core Advocates in classrooms, schools, districts, states, and beyond! You can share your stories by filling out the quick [Instructional Advocacy Action Form](#) survey each time you engage in work related to aligned instructional practice, materials, and assessment. In the newsletter each month, we will be highlighting a response by one of the Core Advocates. Be sure to tell us about your action for a chance to be selected and win Core Advocate gear!

### January Spotlight

Teresa Ranieri, a New York Core Advocate, is a Universal Literacy Coach with the New York City Department of Education. Teresa reported that, "Cohort 2 is new to the work of Literacy Coaching. There was a need for trusted resources and the ability to learn best practices. Several of us registered for the October 5th Core Advocate Webinar. During our meeting on October 6th, I facilitated a discussion, provided hard copies of the handouts from the webinar and answered questions. My colleagues were introduced to Achieve the Core web site and are now familiar with how to access the resources available. It was discussed how the webinar helped them to articulate feedback to the K-2 teachers we work with."

Thank you for sharing your instructional advocacy Teresa! Keep up the great work in New York!

Share your Instructional Advocacy!

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# Resources

## Classroom Connections

### Teaching Foundational Skills

Our earliest readers need to be learning systematic phonics and reading connected texts as they learn to read! Do you want to better understand this rationale, or try a decodable reader protocol with students? Check out [this blog post](#), and if you are a Journeys user, check out the [kindergarten](#) and [first grade](#) text specific protocols on Achieve the Core!



The literacy team at SAP is currently teaching a foundational skills mini-course. If you've been hearing about the foundational skills mini-course and thinking "I wish I'd joined!" you are in luck! All of the sessions in the mini-course are being recorded and are available [here](#). Check back in the coming weeks as new modules are released.

### Resource for Instructional Coaches

Instructional coaches, consider using a coaching menu to structure efficient, content-focused support sessions with your teachers. Providing a menu of standards-aligned topics and diverse support methods (such as having a coach model a lesson) can help teachers think differently about the value of coaching sessions. It will also help you, as a coach, focus your time on what matters. Read more about how to create a coaching menu, and download a template in [this blog post](#) from Core Advocate Kenny McKee.

### Achieve the Core Resources for Teacher Preparation

Do you work in the field of teacher preparation, or know others who do? Many of the math and ELA/literacy resources on Achieve the Core work well when training teacher candidates. Take a look, or share [these resources](#) with friends and colleagues who are working to teach future teachers!

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## Bulletin Board

### Get Involved

[What's the state of assessments in your setting?](#)

Take a few minutes to share your knowledge about assessment in your school or district

via the [State of Our Classrooms – Assessment questionnaire](#). Help shape our work and be entered our weekly raffle to win Amazon gift cards, Core Advocate totes, water bottles and more.

Professional learning opportunity for AFT members!

AFT is now accepting applications to attend the 2018 Summer Educator Academy, which will be held July 19–27 at the Maritime Conference Center in Linthicum Heights, Md. The eight day academy provides union–sponsored, research–based professional development that addresses the complexities of teaching. Educators receive research–based information to build their pedagogy and content knowledge as well as develop strategies to engage students for academic success. [Click here for details and to complete the application process](#). The deadline to submit the application is Friday, March 23.

### Upcoming Events

March 7

Core Advocate Webinar  
enVisionmath 2.0 MAP  
7 p.m. – 8 p.m. (ET)

April 4

Core Advocate Webinar  
Supporting English Language Learners  
7 p.m. – 8 p.m. (ET)

May Core Advocate Convening  
Learn, Lead, Impact!  
Denver, CO  
May 19–20



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### Social Media Spotlight



**Jody Guarino** @jody\_guarino · Jan 5

Thinking about aligned instruction and the IPG to develop shared understandings.  
[achievethecore.org/content/upload...](https://achievethecore.org/content/upload...) #coreadvocates @achievethecore



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**Tina De La Fe** @LdrshpCchGr · Jan 9

Staring SAP's Foundational Skills course today. Bring on the learning!  
#LeadFromTheCore #AchieveTheCore #CoreAdvocates

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**Dr Victor Gonzalez** @DrVicGonzalez · Jan 10

RT @4flstandards: Formative instruction ... using data about instruction to guide teacher action using @achievethecore #IPG #CoreAdvocates

## Gather data about strengths and needs in instruction

**INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE GUIDE: COACHING**

ELA/LIT 3-12 LESSON

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE/CLASS PERIOD/SECTION \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHING PRACTICES \_\_\_\_\_

LEARNING GOALS \_\_\_\_\_

STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THE LESSON \_\_\_\_\_

OBSERVER NAME \_\_\_\_\_

The Coaching Tool helps teachers, and those who support teachers, to build understanding and experience with Common Core State Standards (CCSS)-aligned instruction. Designed as a developmental rather than an evaluation tool, it can be used for planning, reflection, and collaboration. In addition to coaching, for all uses, refer to the CCSS for English Language Arts and Literacy (LITERACY).

The three Shifts in instruction for ELA/Literacy provide the framing for this tool:

- Regular practice with complex text and its academic language.
- Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.
- Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

This guide is organized around three Core Actions which encompass the Shifts; each Core Action consists of individual indicators which describe teacher and student behaviors that exemplify Common Core-aligned instruction.

The Core Actions and indicators should be evident in planning and observable in instruction. For each lesson, evidence might include a lesson plan, exercises, tasks and assessments, teacher instruction, student discussion and behavior, and student work. Although many indicators will be observable during the course of a lesson, there may be times when a lesson is appropriately focused on a smaller set of objectives or only a portion of a lesson is observed, leaving some indicators unobserved and some portions of this tool blank.

Classroom observations are most effective when followed by a coaching conversation based on evidence collected during the observation. After discussing the observed lesson using the Coaching Tool as a support, use the Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guide to put the context of the lesson in the context of the broader instructional plan for the unit or year. The questions in the Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guide help clearly delineate what practices are in place, what has already occurred, and what opportunities might exist in another lesson, further in the unit, or over the course of the year to incorporate the Shifts into the classroom.

Companion tools for Instructional Practice Guide:

- Instructional Practice Guide: Coaching (Digital) – a digital version of this print tool, view at [achievethecore.org/instructional-practice-guide](http://achievethecore.org/instructional-practice-guide)
- Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guide – for post-observation conversations, view at [achievethecore.org/beyond-the-lesson-discussion-guide](http://achievethecore.org/beyond-the-lesson-discussion-guide)
- Instructional Practice Guide: Lesson Planning – to support teachers in creating lessons aligned to the CCSS, view at [achievethecore.org/lesson-planning-tool](http://achievethecore.org/lesson-planning-tool)

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT PARTNERS

All tools are available at [achievethecore.org/instructional-practice-guide](http://achievethecore.org/instructional-practice-guide).

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**Megan Newsome** @Newsome\_Meg · Jan 11

Have been video taping teachers for them to use the IPG when watching themselves teach and using as a coaching tool! #CoreAdvocates

**FL StandardsAdvocate** @4flstandards

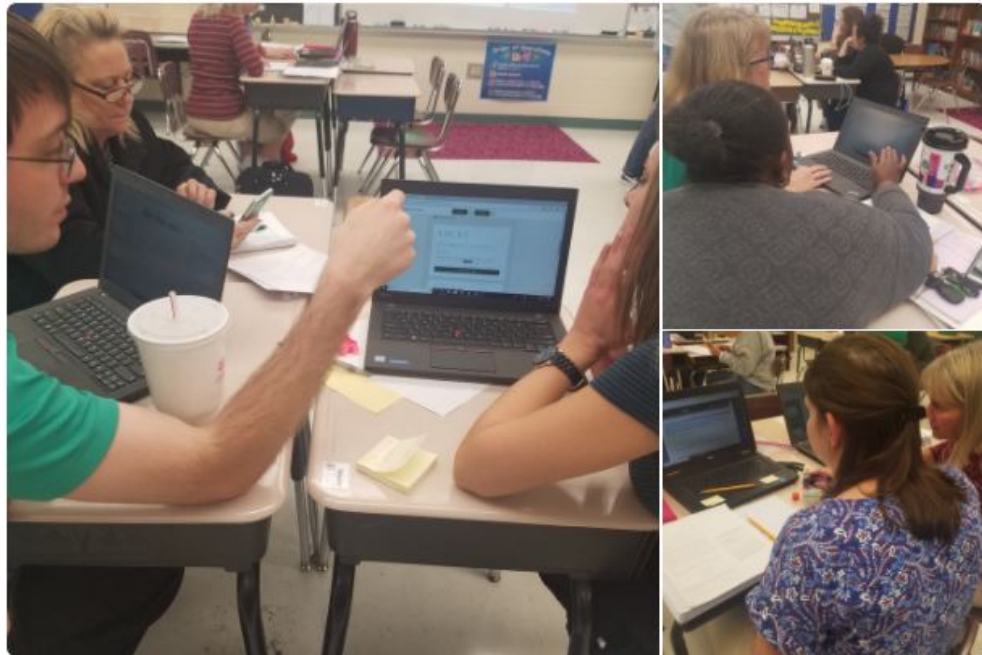
Formative instruction ... using data about instruction to guide teacher action using @achievethecore #IPG #CoreAdvocates

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**Ashley French** @AshFrenchSaid · Jan 17

Zone 4 Grade 4 collaborating to research upcoming standards using the Progressions Documents and Coherence Map. #VCSMath #coreadvocates



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**Chris Kalmbach** @ChrisKalmbach · Jan 29

"Is it 'hands on?'" is another question I've been asked a lot as Ts tour our 3 curriculum finalists. It's important for Ts to see that any problem can be made "hands on," & that the need of the S is what drives the use of tools like manipulatives. #WACoreAdvocates #CoreAdvocates

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## ACHIEVE THE CORE

Assembled by Student Achievement Partners  
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a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

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