



REGIONAL OFFICE of EDUCATION

## *Bi-County Brief*

*Monroe & Randolph Counties*

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### **HAPPY THANKSGIVING FROM THE REGIONAL OFFICE**

As a wonderful history lesson, the first Thanksgiving offers insight into transatlantic exploration, colonization, religious persecution, native American relations, horticulture and geography. Thanksgiving 2013, however, offers family time for the Regional Office's many dedicated teachers, administrators, staff and students. All of us at the Waterloo and Chester offices wish you and your families time to reconnect, relax and anticipate a truly enjoyable holiday season.

### **ROE CHANGES DELIVERY SCHEDULE**

After many years of offering weekly interschool deliveries, funding cuts have made it necessary for the ROE to change its schedule of delivery to once a month. Beginning December 2013 deliveries will be made by Bill Reynolds during the first full week of each month. Bill will go to Monroe County on Tuesdays and Randolph County on Thursdays. Please plan to use the delivery system to send materials to any school or unit office in the bi-county region, including schools within your district, and/or back to the Regional Office of Education Chester or Waterloo office.

### **LEARN MORE ABOUT ILLINOIS' NEW SCHOOL REPORT CARD**

Illinois State Board of Education has announced and released a completely revamped School Report Card. In previous years the data was based on student performance on state standardized tests, which of course does not provide a complete picture of a school. The new online Report Card, which is redesigned to not only help parents and community members understand how a school is performing but to make it easier to access and interpret the data, has a cleaner look and design and new and more insightful school and student information. There is at-a-glance information about school performance, climate and learning conditions; information about school awards and extracurricular programs; measures of student college and career readiness and growth measurements that show how a school's academic results are improving over time. To find a school or district, type its name into the text box in the center of the page under *Find Your School*. When you see your school or district's name, click it, or the *Search* button will take you to that school or district's snapshot page. Information from [www.IllinoisReportCard.com](http://www.IllinoisReportCard.com) will help you be a more informed partner in your child's education and give you ideas how you can take action to improve school for all students.

### **CONSIDER FURNISHING PARENT GUIDES TO COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

Because the Regional Office of Education has received requests for parent information on the Common Core State Standards, following recent parent/teacher conferences, we suggest you provide information about available resources. One the ROE recommends is *Parent Guides to Student Success*, produced by the National Parent Teacher Association. Schools should consider having grade-appropriate copies available in their office or refer parents to <http://pta.org>, and teachers could have the *Guides* available during parent/teacher conferences. On the PTA Web site click on the *For Parents* tab at the top of the homepage. Scroll down and choose from three formats: 2-page color, 4-page color or 4-page black and white. Then choose the desired grade level from K-12.

### **FBI-SOS OPEN TO ALL SCHOOLS**

FBI-SOS (Safe Online Surfing) Internet Challenge is a free, educational, fun online program that promotes cyber citizenship and teaches students in third through eighth grades how to recognize and respond to online dangers. Sponsored and managed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the program provides vital Internet safety guidance in an interesting, competitive format and enables participating students to familiarize themselves with practical information, safety tips and resources to help them stay protected online and grow to be safe, responsible cyber citizens. Each month third- through eighth-grade students compete to win the FBI-SOS Internet Challenge by playing games, completing activities and taking Web-based quizzes. Some of the topics covered are *Protecting Personal Information*, *Online Predators*, *Cyberbullying*, *Cell Phone Safety* and *Copyright and Fair Use*. FBI-SOS is open to all public and private schools, and a teacher or administrator can easily register his/her school at <https://sos.fbi.gov>.

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CORNER

### WHO IS ASKING THE QUESTIONS?

Common Core Standards and the Danielson Framework for teaching both include a focus on questioning. But who should be asking the questions? Obviously teachers need to continue to ask probing, higher-order, thought-provoking questions to scaffold and assess student learning. However, the new standards emphasize students' ability to *ask* and answer questions to demonstrate their understanding.

We need to help students develop their abilities to ask and answer questions. A strategy that provides students practice in asking questions is Round-Robin Questioning. Although there are many variations to the strategy, one method has students individually write at least five questions about a reading assignment. Students are coached to include at least one question that they are curious about, yet unsure of the answer. Students take turns asking their classmates the questions in round-robin fashion. This is one of many specific strategies that help students engage with higher-level questions.

Does this pique your interest? Is this an area in which you would like to improve your skills? The November 20<sup>th</sup> workshop *Engaging Students with Questions* will give you practice in the use of a wide variety of strategies. Take a look at the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) chart at [www.dese.mo.gov/divimprove/sia/msip/dok\\_chart.pdf](http://www.dese.mo.gov/divimprove/sia/msip/dok_chart.pdf).

### WHAT DO YOU MEAN I HAVE TO DIFFERENTIATE?!?

Differentiation stirs a variety of responses in teachers' minds. It is more than a large collection of activities. You can meet students' needs with one activity by varying one or more of these areas: level of abstract thinking, complexity of the task and depth of learning beyond skills and practice. A strategy that does this is Bertie Kingore's Thinking Triangle. Have you tried this? Do you need more ideas? Try the December 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop *Exploring Differentiation Strategies in the Classroom*. In the meantime you can find Thinking Triangles at [bertiekingore.com/thinking\\_triangle.pdf](http://bertiekingore.com/thinking_triangle.pdf).

### FREE ONLINE RESOURCES

[theteachingchannel.com](http://theteachingchannel.com) is a video showcase – on the Internet and TV – of innovative and effective teaching practices in America.

<http://kellygallagher.org/resources/articles.html> Because students have a hard time reading when they bring little or no prior knowledge of the topic, Kelly Gallagher assigns an *Article of the Week*. Check out present and past lists.

[http://www.lexipedia.com/online\\_visual\\_thesaurus](http://www.lexipedia.com/online_visual_thesaurus) Students can have fun searching any word for its parts of speech, synonyms and fuzzynyms.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov. 6, 2013	Teacher Treats K-5	Lincoln Middle Library	4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Nov. 6, 2013	Teacher Treats 6-8	Waterloo Jr. High Library	4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Nov. 15, 2013	Superintendents' Council	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Nov. 19, 2013	Engaging Students with Questions	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	4:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Nov. 20, 2013	Engaging Students with Questions	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	8:30 am – 3:30 pm
Nov. 21, 2013	Engaging Students with Questions	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	4:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Nov. 21, 2013	Principals' Meeting	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	8:30 am – 11:00 am
Dec. 3, 2013	Exploring Diff. Strategies in the Classroom	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	8:30 am – 3:30 pm
Jan. 7, 2014	Exploring Diff. Strategies in the Classroom	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	4:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Jan. 9, 2014	Exploring Diff. Strategies in the Classroom	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	4:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Jan. 15, 2014	Beyond Narrative: Writing for the Common Core	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	8:30 am – 3:30 pm
Jan. 17, 2014	Advisory Board	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	Noon – 3:00 pm
Jan. 24, 2014	Superintendents' Council	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Jan. 28, 2014	Beyond Narrative: Writing for the Common Core	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	4:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Jan. 30, 2014	Beyond Narrative: Writing for the Common Core	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	4:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Jan. 30, 2014	Principals' Meeting	SWIC Red Bud-Room 123	8:30 am – 11:00 am

**THE MONROE-RANDOLPH ROE IS HERE TO SERVE YOU. CONTACT THE WATERLOO OFFICE AT 618-939-5650  
OR THE CHESTER OFFICE AT 618-826-5471.**