

Commissioner Update

February 9, 2009

Dear Connecticut Educator:

This edition of Update features information on an important workshop dealing with changes in both state and federal child labor laws, and three opportunities for Connecticut's world language educators.

Minors In The Workplace Is Focus Of April Workshops

A comprehensive presentation on minors in the workplace, sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Connecticut Young Worker Safety Team, has been scheduled for both April 1 and 2 from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Conference Rooms A and B at the Department of Labor, 200 Folly Brook Blvd. in Wethersfield. Attendees may choose either session.

All Connecticut superintendents and principals are being notified about this informative workshop, titled "Working Papers – Who Needs Them and Why." The presentation is seen as a valuable educational tool to help bring all educators up to date on the numerous and recent changes to both federal and state child labor laws.

Carl Paternostro, of the Connecticut State Department of Education, will be the keynote speaker. Other presenters include Donna O'Leary of the Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor; Michelle Morris of the Wage and Workplace Standards Division, Connecticut Department of Labor; Roger Rocheleau of the OSHA Division, Connecticut Department of Labor; and Leona May of the OSHA Division, U.S. Department of Labor.

CSDE To Sponsor Opportunities For World Language Educators

Three statewide opportunities for world language educators, sponsored by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), will be offered free of charge through a grant from the Foreign Language Assistance Act. A brief description of these opportunities follows:

World Language Proficiency Assessment Workshop Series. An increasing number of colleges are using the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) to grant students college credit based on the recommendation of the American Council on Education. ACTFL ratings have emerged as a standard measure of language proficiency in the U.S. and internationally. Through a series of three Saturday workshops, the CSDE would like to provide the opportunity for world language teachers to become more familiar with these ACTFL assessments of oral and writing proficiency. All world language teachers PK-20 are welcome to attend one, two or all three of these workshops. Further information is available at:

http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/curriculum/actfl_workshops_brochure.doc

NOTE: The CSDE is looking into using the ACTFL OPI/WPT (Writing Proficiency Test) for awarding high school equivalency credit. See new law at:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2008/ACT/PA/2008PA-00138-R00HB-05820-PA.htm>.

Technology Workshop Series for World Language Educators. World language teachers will learn how to apply PowerPoint, podcasting, wikis and Smart Board to improve instruction. Further information is available at:

http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/curriculum/free_technology_workshops_for_wl_teachers.doc

World Languages: K-8 Methods, Materials and Curriculum Development, July 6-17. This 10-day institute offers a comprehensive overview of the methods, materials and curriculum development strategies for K-8 world language programs. Institute highlights include a daily live demonstration class, an opportunity to interact with colleagues from across Connecticut, and a chance to develop a thematic unit plan or begin a curriculum individualized to an attendee's school program. Further information is available at:

http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/powerpointpresentations/curriculum/wl/wl_k-8_brochure_2009.ppt

Sincerely,

Mark K. McQuillan
Commissioner of Education