



ELA Think Tank / Leadership

We will begin our “Think Tank” conversations soon. Feel free to send me any topics you would like to discuss with your peers from around the state, and I can begin to form an agenda for our discussions. We will have a webinar in February and schedule another one at a time that is the least intrusive in your schedule after spring break. An additional goal I have is to be out in different districts / regions between now and June to have some face-to-face conversations with you and your colleagues. I have discussed tentative plans and dates with some folks; if you would be interested in such a face-to-face, please let me know.

News from the Office of Standards & Instructional Support

PSAT, the assessment for Colorado 10th Graders to be administered this spring, has very similar expectations that the PARCC assessment has for students in 9th and 10th Grade. Although the PSAT is exclusively multiple choice, the Reading and Writing tests are both “**Evidence-Based** Reading and Writing” assessments. Accompanying this eUpdate is a document entitled “Transitioning to 10th Grade PSAT” which offers a mini-crosswalk between expectations on PARCC (with CCSS alignment indicated on the document) and on PSAT.

2016 Legislative Session, Board Discussions, New Commissioner

We will, of course, be listening to the key issues that the legislature will identify and discuss over the next few months. If last year is any indication, I think we can anticipate discussions around assessment (e.g. PARCC results, the new PSAT and SAT – see Interim Commissioner Asp’s letter [here](#)), teacher evaluation, graduation requirements, and other issues. You may follow the legislative actions by accessing Chalkbeat’s “Education Bill Tracker 2016” at [this link](#).

In addition, we have a new Commissioner, [Richard Crandall](#), who began on January 19th. As with any leadership change, it will be important to hear his vision for Colorado.

NCTE, CCIRA, CLAS Notes

NCTE: The National Council of Teachers of English ([NCTE](#)) provides great resources for English teachers. If you have not done so, you should check out the #nctechat on Twitter. These are great sessions! To see the archives of #nctechat and a calendar of upcoming chats, click [here](#).

CCIRA: What an outstanding conference delivered by CCIRA in 2016! As I looked around the room at Thursday’s luncheon with Jennifer Serravallo, and again at the Friday morning keynote with Ellin Oliver Keene, I was incredibly excited for the

students in our state. From the elementary teachers and literacy professionals who lay the foundation for strong reading, to the secondary ELA teachers and interventionists who build on that foundation and push students further, our students are in good hands. The enthusiasm, energy, curiosity, collaborative spirit, and joy that you all bring to the profession are incredible.

CLAS: The [Colorado Language Arts Society](#) has information posted for its [2016 Regional Fall Conference](#) -- “For the Love of Teaching / Reclaiming the Classroom.” This year’s speakers include Taylor Mali, Jimmy Santiago Baca, and Sarah Brown Wessling.

CLAS and the **Denver Writing Project** will have an afternoon of writing on **February 20, 2016**, at the [Denver Art Museum from 12 - 3 pm](#). [The \\$25 fee includes museum admission, instruction, and a three-hour professional development certificate](#). The Denver Writing Project also has a morning event at the Clyfford Still Museum from 9-11 am, and information is available at the above link.

Be sure, too, to check out the [CLAS Writing Contest](#), open to all Colorado K-12 Students!

Research & Resources

Edutopia recently posted a library of the [research highlights of 2015](#). The research includes studies on positive messages home, teacher collaboration and increased scores, and other topics. I found the following to be particularly interesting:

- [Research on Homework](#)
- [Top Twenty Principles from Psychology for PreK-12 Teaching and Learning](#) (Great resource! Explores thinking & learning, motivation, relationships and emotional well-being, classroom management, assessment).

Writer’s Notebooks: Do you and your students keep some sort of writer’s notebook? Check out the website “[Sharing Our Notebooks](#)” for examples from other “notebookers.”

Tech Tips & Resources: Two resources I have been exploring are Zaption ([www.zaption.com](#)) and Docent Edu ([www.docentedu.com](#)).

Watch this space in the future for research and resources. If you have a tech resource or bit of research you would like to share, please email them to me!

Contact Info

Please feel free to contact me with any feedback on this e-update or to suggest topics or questions you would like to see addressed in future updates. I want this monthly newsletter to be useful as you do the vital day-to-day work with your students and colleagues. I may be reached at Puzick_v@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6583.