

Office of Digital Learning Newsletter

February 2016 | Issue 2

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#DLDay



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Office of Digital Learning provides policies, guidance, professional development and support in the following areas: district technology and infrastructure capacity; classroom level instructional tools; assistive technology resources; virtual schools and online courses; and emerging digital learning trends. The Office collaborates with the Digital Learning Advisory Council, which provides advice and guidance to the Board and to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.



[Digital Learning Day](#) is just 6 days away! Who will win the coveted Digital Learning Day state shout out this year? You still have a week to help make that happen for Massachusetts! The winning state will receive special recognition during the #DLDay live event. Looking for inspiration? #DLDay has partnered with [Participate Learning](#) to offer new resources and classroom activity ideas. Participate Learning is a free collection and collaboration platform that lets teachers quickly find, collect, and share digital resources.

#DLDay: Home Access and Digital Equity - Announcing the *Digital Equity Summit: Strategic Planning to Close the Digital Divide at Home for Low-income Children and Families* – Friday, March 18, 2016

If you're a leader at the building or district level, education technology director, library/media specialist, or family engagement coordinator, you know that in today's digital age economy students and families cannot find out about jobs, apply for them, and qualify for them without digital access and skills. The Summit is the kickoff to a sustained regional initiative undertaken to assist school/community teams to design and carry out successful digital equity programs that contribute significantly to educational and economic opportunity.

Why should K-12 educators attend?

- ★ Meet national leaders who provide essential resources in key dimensions of digital equity – from affordable broadband and hardware, to low-interest financing for families with weak credit, librarians skilled in tapping open educational resources, and multilingual tech support at home provided by linguistically diverse youths.
- ★ Meet digital equity investors – leaders from banking, grant making, the tech industry, and community revitalization – who seek to better understand how best to design investments that greatly narrow the digital divide in ways that truly enhance educational and economic opportunity for low-income learners of all ages and their families.
- ★ Learn about ways in which the “collective impact” approach to mobilizing a community's key stakeholders to work together to develop and carry out such systemic efforts holds the greatest promise to ensure digital equity investments lead to substantial results.

The Digital Equity Summit is on Friday, March 18 2016 from 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM in the Ryan Lounge Foyer at UMASS-Boston, 100 Morrissey Blvd., Boston, MA, 02125. Attendance is free and includes breakfast, lunch, materials and sustained follow-up planning assistance. [Visit the registration page to sign up](#). For more information, contact [Dr. Robert McLaughlin](#), Co-Chair, National Collaborative for Digital Equity, EDC, Waltham MA at (617) 618-2725.

Co-convening organizations include EDC's National Collaborative for Digital Equity, Comcast, FSG, the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, ESE, and UMASS-Boston's College of Education and Human Development.

Special Note: While this event is open to all Massachusetts school districts, leaders from rural or remote communities are encouraged to attend, as are districts in communities whose rates of residential broadband access are below the state average such as Lawrence, Springfield, New Bedford, Fall River, Worcester, Lowell, Brockton, Lynn, Quincy, Boston, and Somerville

#DLDay: Teacher Preparation – Spotlight on Mixed-Reality Simulations

In many cases, teachers enrolled in educator preparation programs are unable to gain the requisite authentic early experiences (or repetitions of that experience) necessary to transform practice and build a solid set of discrete skills prior to their practicum. The Educator Preparation (Ed Prep) team at ESE is working with a subset of programs to embed **mixed-reality simulations** in coursework so that candidates have more opportunities to practice high-value skills in a low-risk environment and receive immediate and targeted feedback. With the recent launch of the [Epic grant](#), ESE will expand this support. By building Massachusetts-specific simulations, faculty members, teachers who supervise student teachers, and evaluators will be able to focus feedback on the micro-skills derived directly from the Professional Standards for Teachers and the Candidate Assessment of Performance.

#DLDay: Personalized Professional Learning – Spotlight on Massachusetts Focus Academy Courses

The [Massachusetts FOCUS Academy \(MFA\)](#) offers graduate level courses that provide educators with the skills, knowledge, and instructional strategies to improve the outcomes for all students, including those with disabilities, in safe and supportive inclusive learning environments. The MFA offers online courses, free of charge, during the fall and spring semesters of each school year to educators working in schools in Massachusetts. All courses are delivered on Blackboard and include an online discussion forum.

Also: [EveryoneOn](#) is a nonprofit working to eliminate the digital divide by making high-speed, low-cost Internet service and computers, and free digital literacy courses accessible to all unconnected Americans. They offer a free online tool to help residents of all income levels find low-cost Internet access and they provide online resources to help families use the Internet, including connecting with friends and family, saving money, discovering ways to stay healthy, and finding a job. EveryOn's **Massachusetts partners** include [The Literacy Project](#) (based in Amherst, Greenfield, North Quabbin, Northampton, and Ware); the [Valley Opportunity Council](#) (Chicopee and Holyoke); [Quinsigamond Community College](#) (Worcester); the [Boston Share Network](#); the [Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts at the Pollard Memorial Library](#) (Lowell); [Operation Bootstrap \(Lynn\)](#); [Seafarer's Friend \(Chelsea\)](#); the [City of Somerville](#); [Prospect Hill Academy](#) (Cambridge); the [Brookline Housing Authority](#) (Brookline); [Technology for Autism Now, Inc.](#) (Boston); [College Bound Dorchester](#); [World Education, Inc.](#) (Boston); [Preservation of Affordable Housing, Inc.](#) (Boston); and [Year Up, Inc.](#) (Boston)

In addition, **Teachers' Top Three** is a direct communication between ESE and teachers (though it is open to anyone to sign up). Every other week, the Educator Effectiveness team emails the top three things they think are most relevant to teachers—including new resources, engagement opportunities, teacher-written reflections, FAQs, and news articles. The goal is to inform and support teachers around important and interesting topics that impact their day-to-day work. You can read a recent issue [here](#) and see past issues [online](#).

To subscribe, complete this short form: <http://dese.top3fromese.sgizmo.com/s3/>.

Please share this with teachers in your building and other educators in your networks!

Interested educators can work with the course instructor to purchase low cost graduate credits. Course topics include Universal Design for Learning: Addressing Learner Variability in Mathematics Instruction, Collaborative Co-teaching Meeting the Needs of All Students, and Partnering with Families of Preschool and Elementary School Students with Disabilities. Space is limited, so ESE enrolls educators using a set of criteria established at the beginning of each semester.

#DLDay: Career Pathways to STEM Fields

[Marlborough's STEM Early College High School](#) focuses on strengthening the STEM pipeline by exposing students to a rigorous 21st century learning experience and providing them with the skills essential for college and careers. With startup costs provided by a [Race to the Top grant](#) from ESE, the program is now a part of the [Pathways to Prosperity Network](#) created by Jobs for the Future and the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and is using its \$1.8 million share of the [Youth CareerConnect](#) federal funds to grow and sustain services.

The program's annual STEM Expo showcases freshmen and sophomore STEM students' exhibits and prototypes. Ninth graders focus on "going green" projects in the areas of renewable energy, alternative energy sources, and real-world energy-efficient solutions. Tenth grade students are tasked with colonizing Mars, and projects fall in the areas of energy solutions, biospheres, and transporters. Each project is judged by guest judges from the STEM business community and awards are presented to students in various categories.

Other Program Components:

- ★ A STEM-focused middle school program that prepares students in grades 6-8 for advanced work in high school.
- ★ An integrated college-prep and career-focused curriculum in grades 9-10.

E-rate Filing Deadline: April 29, 2016

The window for filing E-rate applications for Funding Year (FY) 2016 will open at noon February 3, 2016 and close April 29, 2016. The [Universal Services Administrative Company \(USAC\)](#), which hosts the E-rate application portal, has informed the Federal Communications Commission that a projected \$1.9 billion in unused funds from previous years will be available in 2016. Combined with the annual \$3.9 billion cap (plus inflation) set by the FCC last year, up to \$5.8 billion in E-rate funding will be available for 2016.

The best way to support a district's successful filing of an E-rate application is to start now with the district's account and user

Digital Learning Advisory Council to Help Lead State's Transition to Next-Generation Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

On November 17, 2015, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Board voted to begin development of a next generation state assessment program, to be implemented as our state-wide assessment beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, with a goal of 100 percent of students participating in computer-based testing by Spring 2019. The new assessment program is unofficially referred to as "MCAS 2.0", to differentiate it from the

- ★ Dual enrollment in college courses towards postsecondary and industry-recognized credentials in grades 11-12. Courses are available in five STEM pathways: engineering, computer science, computer information systems/information technology (IT), manufacturing technology, and health care.
- ★ Interdisciplinary projects to engage students in solving real-world problems.
- ★ A continuum of work-based learning through mentoring, job shadowing, and internships in STEM related industries.
- ★ Comprehensive college and career guidance, including a detailed and frequently updated individualized learning plan.
- ★ Wraparound support services, such as counseling, after school tutoring, and transportation to and from worksites.
- ★ Integrated technology, including one-to-one computers, 3D printing, and utilizing Apple applications in the classroom.

The Marlborough STEM Early College High School is led by [Dan Riley](#) and serves over 500 students.

information. Districts can set up their account in the USAC Portal, assign user rights, and establish or update their profile. For more information on how to complete the tasks mentioned above, visit the USAC website or call USAC at (888) 203-8100. For state-specific tools and resources, visit [ESE's E-rate website](#).

The Universal Services Administrative Company is in the process of migrating to a new computer system and asks that early filers provide them with feedback on their experience by contacting USAC at (888) 203-8100 or EPCfeedback@usac.org.

Commonwealth's existing Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System.

As part of the [development effort](#), the **Digital Learning Advisory Council (DLAC)** is charged with monitoring districts' progress toward technological readiness for computer-based testing, and to identify ways in which the state can assist in those efforts. The

DLAC is an existing Board advisory council established by statute (St. 2012, c.379, s.7). DLAC meetings are open to the public and

are posted on the [DLAC's webpage](#).

Free Online Course in African-American History in Celebration of African-American History Month



In celebration of African-American History month in February and Digital Learning Day on February 17, the [Office of Digital Learning](#) wishes to highlight EverFi's free, online [African-American history course](#) for high school students.

Click the links to view a [video demo](#) and [course overview](#). **306 - African-American History™**, designed for students in grades 9-12, takes students on an interactive adventure exploring the lives, stories, and lessons of African-Americans throughout history. 306 brings history to life for students through immersive and engaging content that goes beyond just the facts of history. Interactive activities highlight the themes, narratives, and geographic concepts that provide important context and frameworks for students to analyze historical events.

Other free courses include:

[Future Goals - Hockey Scholar™](#) Offered through [EverFi](#) in partnership with the National Hockey League, NHL Players Association, and the Boston Bruins, the 3-5 hour course brings science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) concepts to life for grades 5-7 students using the exciting, fast-paced game of hockey. Through immersive real-life simulations, students build their understanding of fundamental STEM concepts, such as geometric constructions, energy, and forces. Each of the 12 modules are designed to build students scientific thinking and problem solving skills. As students progress through a module, they parallel the steps of a science investigation.

[Ignition - Digital Literacy and Responsibility™](#) is a 3-4 hour course for middle and high school students (grades 6-9) that

educates students on the nuts and bolts of how technology works while placing them in virtual environments to tackle issues surrounding digital citizenship. Ignition is comprised of seven modules that cover key concepts around making safe and responsible decisions online. At the end of the course, students apply their learning through a virtual simulation, giving them the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of learned digital skills in real-life scenarios.

[Vault - Understanding Money™](#) empowers grade 4-6 students to be smart financial decision makers while they are early in their cognitive development. By leveraging performance-based games, Vault immerses students in real-life financial scenarios that focus on skill building and responsible decision making. Covering everything from goal setting to making a budget, Vault delivers critical financial concepts in an engaging and fun way. Vault can be integrated into unit plans and used during class time, as a capstone project, or in a flipped classroom.

[EverFi – Financial Literacy™](#) is a high school course that uses the latest in new media technologies – video, animations, 3-D gaming, and avatars – to bring complex financial concepts to life for today's digital generation. EverFi tracks individual student progress and knowledge gain and provides students who successfully complete the course with certification in financial literacy, which can be a powerful tool for job applications, college search, and internships.

All EverFi courses may be used as stand-alone courses or as supplements to face-to-face courses.

[These courses are free to Massachusetts schools and districts](#) and face-to-face professional development through EverFi is free. To request access to the program please contact [Maddy Murphy](#), EverFi Program Manager, at (202) 713-5163.

Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities from MassCUE

[MassCUE Winter Camp: Featuring Google Apps for Education](#) will be hosted **February 18** at Manchester-Essex Regional Middle School. Taught by experienced Google certified trainers and educators, this full day of hands-on workshops is designed to promote better learning in the classroom will be. Participants will have a choice between presentations at varied ability levels - all covering a wide variety of Google Apps, devices

(Chromebooks, iPads, Android Tablets), teaching strategies, and implementation.

[Leading Future Learning 2016 Conference, Leadership in Social Media: Using Social Media to Your School's or District's Advantage](#), will be held on **March 11** at the College of the Holy Cross.

SketchUp Pro Licensing Update

Hello, **SketchUp Pro** Statewide License Grant Recipients! You may have heard that [SketchUp Pro version 2016](#) is being released. In fact, SketchUp Pro releases new versions on a yearly cycle. However, as a grantee under the [SketchUp Pro K-12 Statewide License Grant Program](#), you should continue to use version 2015 until your current codes expire (for most, that will be in 2017). Every time a teacher/administrator tries to update a license, the school contact whose email the license is registered under may receive auto-generated emails indicating that your 2016 codes are available. Please ignore these and continue to use the 2015 codes. We encourage you to disable the auto-check

for updates in SketchUp so the message to update stops showing. You can do so by following the instructions in this [Help Center Article](#). Version 2015 can still be downloaded from [this link](#), and tech supports issues can be found through their [online Help Center](#).

SketchUp Pro continues to assess as they release new versions if the improvements warrant generating new codes for the K-12 audience. If you're interested in a free SketchUp Pro license, Please complete this [form](#) via the ODL site to view system requirements and obtain a license. All licenses are valid through June 30, 2017.

Acquire SketchUp Pro for Your District and Showcase Your Work!

Professionals and amateurs alike can design the neighborhood of their dreams with **SketchUp**, a 3D Modeling software from Trimble Navigation that lets users build nearly any structure imaginable. Downloadable models offer the chance to build onto anything from a simple stool to a [New York City landmark](#), while starting from scratch offers unlimited possibilities. Unlike many computer-aided design (CAD) tools, SketchUp's interface is simple enough that new users can be building their own models within a day, making it easy to visualize ideas in three dimensions.

ESE has partnered with Trimble to offer school districts a [free SketchUp Pro license](#), giving classrooms the chance to use the

same design tools as professionals. With this license, educators across the state are already working with students on projects that combine rigorous engineering with creative inspiration. From creating a State Forest Resource Center to designing and constructing a tiny house, Massachusetts teachers are leading cross-curricular projects with real world applications. To learn more about how SketchUp Pro can turn a creative idea into an educational project, keep an eye out for resources, examples, and case studies coming soon on the [ESE website](#).

Do you use SketchUp in your classroom? Are you interested in sharing your work? Contact [Joshua D'Ambrosio](#) or [Megan Rafferty](#) to share your classroom's story.

Office of Digital Learning Listserv

The Office of Digital Learning listserv disseminates information and notices including, but not limited to, newsletters, policy/regulation updates, public comment announcements, professional development opportunities, and public awareness messages. If you are listed in ESE Directory Administration as an "Educational Technology Director" or "Library/Media Services Director," you have already been subscribed to this list. If you know others who would benefit from the information from the Office of Digital Learning listserv, please forward the subscriber information:

How to subscribe:

Place the following subscribe command in the first line of the body of the message: subscribe MADigitalLearning FIRST LAST (**Substitute your first name for FIRST and your last name for LAST**) If you were subscribed to this distribution list in error and would like to be removed, email imailsrv@list1.doe.mass.edu with the following information in the body of the email: unsubscribe MADigitalLearningemail Your Name. (Example: unsubscribe MADigitalLearningemail John Smith).

Digital Learning Annual Survey to be Integrated into Statewide VISTA Survey

ESE is launching a new annual survey titled "**Views of Instruction, State Standards, Teaching and Assessment**" (**VISTA**). The survey will help us learn more about educators' experiences with five statewide initiatives: The Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, educator growth and development, the role of educator evaluation in educator growth and development, and **personalized learning tools and digital learning tools**.

Instead of completing five ESE program office annual surveys (including the ODL survey), in just one survey, VISTA gives you a voice directly with the state on critical issues. All superintendents and principals in the state will be asked to complete their respective surveys. All teachers in *districts who agree to participate* in the VISTA survey project will also be invited to complete surveys designed for their role. Your feedback will be used to help ESE improve statewide

implementation of these five initiatives; to inform its current and future policies, and to better target state resources and supports for districts, schools and teachers.

The VISTA survey window opens on **February 22**. Please mark your calendars and consider providing your response on that day. The survey window will remain open until **March 18**. Participation is voluntary but with your feedback, ESE can better serve Massachusetts educators and their students.

To learn more about VISTA and how educator confidentiality will be guaranteed, please visit the Office of Planning and Research's [website](#) where you will find a [FAQ](#) that answers many questions that you may have about the VISTA survey project and a link you can use to [preview the surveys](#). If you have any specific questions, please email the [Office of Planning and Research](#) using the subject heading VISTA.

2016 Science and Technology/Engineering Standards to be Posted in Early Spring

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted on January 26, 2016 to adopt the 2016 Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Standards. To view the 2016 Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Standards and Frequently Asked Questions regarding these revised standards (updated February 2016), see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/review.html>.

ESE will copyedit the full *2016 Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework*. The *Framework* includes the standards and a variety of additional guidance and supporting materials. ESE expects to publish and post the completed *2016 STE Curriculum Framework* in **early spring 2016**.

Draft Digital Literacy and Computer Science Standards Open for Public Comment

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted on January 26, 2016 to solicit public comment on the draft **Digital Literacy and Computer Science (DLCS) standards**. Public input is an important part of developing state learning standards. Your input will help to refine the standards before the Board of

Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) votes on adoption of the DLCS standards. The public comment period is open through **April 8, 2016**. [The draft standards and a survey to submit comment](#) are available online.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual Schools and the School Attending Children Report

The two Commonwealth Virtual Schools (CMVS), [Massachusetts Virtual Academy at Greenfield](#) and [TEC Connections Academy](#), are public school districts, directly accountable to the Board and ESE. Like a charter school, a virtual school is an autonomous, single-school district that operates independently of any existing school district. A CMVS must notify each sending district in writing of the number and grade levels of students who shall be attending the CMVS from the sending districts within 10 days of the student registering for enrollment in the CMVS.

ESE provides sending districts with preliminary reports in January showing the name, grade, program, and estimated annual tuition

for each pupil reported in the previous CMVS October data collection ("[School Attending Children Report](#)"). Next year the virtual schools will report the data to ESE and ESE will then distribute them to districts via Drop Box central. The reports will contain all of the information needed for cities and towns to meet the obligation to report these data and will preclude students' resident districts from having to contact the CMVS directly for this information.

If you have questions or wish to speak with someone from our office about [Commonwealth Virtual Schools](#), please [email Jennifer Gwatin](#).

Recent Postings to the Office of Digital Learning Website

- February 10, 2016** [Procurement Update: Apple Equipment and Related Services added to ITC47](#)
- February 2, 2016** [Save the Date: MassCUE-M.A.S.S. Conference - October 20-21, 2016](#)
- January 26, 2016** [E-rate Funding Year 2016 Application Filing Window Announced: 2/3/16 - 4/29/16](#)
- December 23, 2015** [EdTechTeacher/MassCUE Leadership Conference at Holy Cross - March 11, 2016](#)
- December 10, 2015** [U.S. Department of Education Releases 2016 National Education Technology Plan](#)
- November 4, 2015** [U.S. Department of Education Launches Campaign to Encourage Schools to #GoOpen with Educational Resources](#)
- October 28, 2015** [New publication from National Center on Time & Learning: Time for Teachers: Leveraging Time to Strengthen Instruction & Empower Teachers](#)
- General Notice** [District obligation to provide instructional supplies, including tablets and computers](#)
-