

# TST Weekly Bulletin

## Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES

**TST BOCES**  
TOMPKINS • SENECA • TIOGA

### School Improvement Services

*Leading and supporting school communities in their efforts to provide the best possible learning environment for all students.*



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## FOCUS OF THE WEEK

### Questioning

Using Danielson's language, let's spend time this week asking "divergent as well as convergent questions, framed in such a way that they invite students [or colleagues] to formulate hypotheses, make connections or challenge previously held views." You can [read more](#) about this, and get some concrete ideas, by looking at pages 31 and 32 of the Danielson Rubric.

## FOR PRINCIPALS

### CHANGES IN 3-8 TESTING

Click [here](#) for information for families regarding changes to 3-8 testing. NYSED has created versions in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, French, Haitian, Karen, Nepali, Spanish, and Urdu. If you would like me to send you one of these additional versions, please let me know ([bderfel@tstboces.org](mailto:bderfel@tstboces.org)).

### UPDATED APPR TRANSITION FAQ

The APPR Transition FAQ has been revised. Click [here](#) for the March 2016 update, which is also posted on the APPR Guidance landing [page](#) on EngageNY.

### CRITICAL FRIENDS GROUP

The Critical Friends Group (CFG) for Principals will meet from 3:30-4:30 p.m. – March 15. This session is designed specifically for principals. Do you want to connect with colleagues in a way that is mutually supportive? Come to this session and work through the CFG process with other principals. We'll follow-up by scheduling an ongoing CFG series at a time that works for those who are interested in continuing this work. Sign up [here](#).

## LINKS, ARTICLES & BOOKS

- [Whole Child Initiative](#)
- [Becoming a Resonant Leader.](#)  
Boyatzis, Johnson & McKee, 2008
- [Tools to Enhance Young Children's Thinking](#), Angela K. Salmon 2010
- ASCD Online Courses
- [Cooperative Enrichment March Newsletter](#)
- [TST SIS Weekly Bulletins](#)

Contact Barry to borrow a book or article.

THERE'S MORE ↓

### Quote of the Week

"Too often, we pour the energy needed for recognizing and exploring difference into pretending those differences are insurmountable barriers, or that they do not exist at all. This results in voluntary isolation, or false and treacherous connections. Either way, we do not develop the tools necessary for using human differences as a springboard for creative change within our lives..."

-- Lorde, A. 1970

# UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

## THE PLATO LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This is a full-day training for PLATO users of all levels. The morning will be devoted mainly to basic daily user functions related to creating, customizing and managing assignments. The afternoon session will focus more on reporting and administrative functions. Sign up [here](#).

## DISCIPLINE SERIES

This series, "Discipline Is Not Something We Do To a Student, It Is Something We Help Them Acquire," is designed to help participants learn how to teach students to advocate for their needs in an appropriate time, place and manner. Educators will learn and practice concrete discipline strategies for creating a safe, healthy and pro-social classroom or school environment. This series is facilitated by Jennifer Astles-Steinmetz and Barry Derfel. As presenters, we will model what we are trying to teach and will routinely ask for input from participants to surface their expertise and to shift our work to better meet their needs. If you would like us to bring this to your school, your grade-level, or your team, please send an email to Barry ([bderfel@tstboces.org](mailto:bderfel@tstboces.org)) or Jennifer ([jastles@tstboces.org](mailto:jastles@tstboces.org))

## IEP WORKDAY

This opportunity will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 18 at TST BOCES. Writing a quality IEP can be long and draining! Come to this full day workshop to ask questions of the Regional Special Education Training Specialist and the Transition Specialist. We will review each section of the IEP for a few minutes and then give participants time to work on those sections of IEPs and ask their questions. You may want to bring your laptops and data to help write your IEPs! To register, click [here](#).

## CONTINUUM OF SERVICES FOR STUDENTS W/DISABILITIES

This opportunity will take place from 8-11 a.m. May 3 at TST BOCES. This full-day training is based upon the Continuum of Services for school-age students with disabilities. Participants will get a chance to explore the continuum in their districts and create an action plan based upon NYSED regulations To register click [here](#).

## REGIONAL SPECIAL CLASS ROUNDTABLE

Special class teachers from across all regions (TST, Oswego, Cayuga, Syracuse and OCM) will come together to discuss common practices within classroom, areas of support needed and supports around transition. Whether your class structure is 15:1, 12:1:1, 12:1:4, 8:1:1, or 6:1:1... all are welcome! Bring your best practices and questions that you have to share with the group and connect with

others who teach in the same setting. These sessions will be held four times this year in various regions to support you and the students in the classroom. To register click [here](#).

## 1298: THROUGH THE EYES OF MARCO POLO

This is an integrated workshop for educators and teacher librarians. Marco Polo traveled the Silk Road to China and returned to Venice by an alternate route 17 years later. His stories were published in manuscript form in 1298 and the book became a best seller. It, along with the Bible, was one of the first books printed on a press. Polo provided a fascinating glimpse of Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia, China and Southeast Asia. We will use his written words as a starting point and we will travel in his footsteps viewing the art he might have seen, hearing the music he would have heard, sampling the delicacies he certainly tasted, and examining treasures he described. We will immerse ourselves in the year 1298 with art, live performances, and primary source materials. The program will provide an opportunity for cross-cultural and interdisciplinary dialogue. We will spend the morning in the Johnson Museum of Art and part of the afternoon in the Kroch Library. Lunch will be provided. Sign up [here](#).

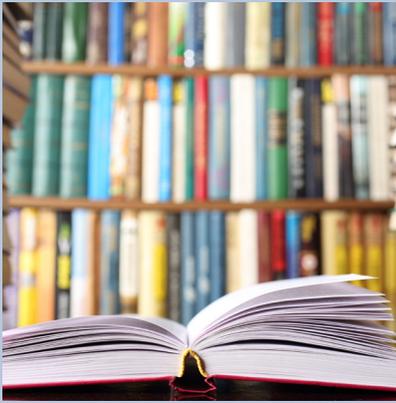
## WRITING MATTERS III CONFERENCE

This takes place from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. March 19. Learn practical and creative strategies for using writing in every classroom through professional teacher-to-teacher model from the National Writing Project. All sessions use interactive writing. For K-12 teachers in all content areas. Free parking and lunch. Hosted in the Cory Union at SUNY Cortland. Sign up [here](#).

## FACING HISTORY - CHOOSING TO PARTICIPATE

This workshop centers on the importance of taking informed action to promote meaningful civic engagement. The legacies of the 20th century include the horrors of humiliation, dehumanization, discrimination and genocide. These legacies continue to fuel confrontations among people all over the world, and signals from the early 21st century are that ethnic and religious intolerance are once again leading to violence around the globe. The challenge for educators is to create settings that can help young people develop as thoughtful, caring, compassionate and responsible citizens. These conversations need to be informed by history so young people can be better prepared to participate in practices and policies that prevent violence and promote peace. If education is truly to be a preparation for life, then these are the lessons that cannot go untaught. For more information, click [here](#). Register [here](#).

THERE'S MORE ↓



## FOR TEACHERS

### ECHOES AND REFLECTIONS

Beginning with International Women's Day on March 8 and continuing throughout March, Women's History Month, we honor the strength and leadership of women during the Holocaust. Click [here](#) for more information.

### RESOURCES

- [NNGSS March Newsletter](#)
- [Understanding by Design and other resources from the Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt University](#)



## NEWS AND NOTES

### RESPONDING TO YOUR FEEDBACK

Thank you all for taking the time to provide me with feedback about my work. I have already started integrating your feedback into my practice, by posting the TST School Improvement Services Weekly Bulletins onto our website and by spending more time in classrooms. Many of you indicated that you don't necessarily know what I do, so the following is a brief overview.

The big picture of my role is that I support principals, teachers and other educators throughout our region in your efforts to provide the best possible learning environment for all students. I serve as a liaison between our region and Albany; learning, interpreting and communicating key information in both directions. Scaled down one notch, I facilitate monthly council meetings for elementary principals, middle level principals, high school principals, and district-level Curriculum & Instruction specialists. I also facilitate the work of our School Improvement Services team, who include the following: Coordinator of Cooperative Enrichment, Coordinator of Library Services, Regional Coordinator of Curriculum and Professional Development, Youth Development Coordinator, and our team of Instructional Specialists. Scaled down even further, I provide selected professional development opportunities, such as facilitating the Inquiry Unit Planning work of the TST Regional Social Studies Network and the "Poverty is Not a Culture" series. Connected to all of the above, my TST BOCES on-campus responsibilities include facilitating the TST BOCES Professional Development Committee, Mentoring Program, student-related data verification process and other campus-specific tasks.



For more details about my work and the work of our team, visit our [website](#). If you have not provided me with feedback and would like to, click [here](#).

### LEARNING FORWARD ACADEMY SCHOLARSHIPS

There are two scholarship options. One is directly from [Learning Forward](#). Specific details can be found [here](#).

A second scholarship option is from The Frontline Research & Learning Institute, which is available to any educator employed by an organization using a Frontline Professional Growth product (any MyLearningPlan product or any Teachscape product). For details, click [here](#).

# TST

## SIS Weekly Bulletin

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School Improvement Services

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*Barry Derfel, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction*

[tstboces.org](http://tstboces.org)