

Talk Nerdy To Me

- Special points of interest:**
- > Autism month and Apps for Education
 - > Test Anxiety and Test Prep
 - > The Debate Surrounding Testing
 - > Smarter Balanced Assessment
 - > Transitioning to the Common Core
 - > Coding in the Classroom
 - > CTE Technical Modernization Grants Due April 30, 2013
 - > WVSTC 2013 Call for Proposals & Registration



"Spring is the time of plans and projects."
— Leo Tolstoy



Ashley Pietrangelo
Special Education
Teacher at Weirton
Heights



Carol Muniz
TIS at Morgantown
High School



Hugh Roberts
Carpentry Teacher/
CTE Coach. at
Tolsia High School



Jeff Tidd
7th Grade
Social Studies
Buckhannon-Upshur
Middle School

April is Autism Awareness Month

By
Ashley Pietrangelo

Facts:

- Autism now affects 1 in 88 children
- Autism is the fastest-growing serious developmental disability in the U.S.
- Boys are nearly 5 times more likely than girls to have autism
- As of now there is no medical detection or cure for autism
- Children do not "outgrow" autism, but studies show that early diagnosis and intervention lead to significantly improved outcomes.



Signs:

- Delay in spoken language
- Repetitive use of language and/or motor mannerisms
- Little or no eye contact
- No interest in peer relationships
- Very little spontaneous or make-believe play

~autismspeaks.org

Find the local
[Autism Chapter](#) near you.

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Test Anxiety Information

by Hugh Roberts

Students may experience anxiety regarding tests and may experience heightened anxiety before a testing situation. A certain degree of test anxiety is normal and may help students prepare more effectively, work more efficiently, and remain focused during testing. Too much anxiety, however, can negatively affect performance. The following strategies may assist students, parents, and teachers in reducing test anxiety.

- Discuss the test openly and in a positive way.
- Have realistic expectations of your child's performance while encouraging his/her best efforts.
- Emphasize that the test is only one measure of academic performance.
- Emphasize that test scores do not determine a person's worth.

~Dr. Kathy D'Antoni



Here are some links to combat test anxiety:

- [Teach21 sample WESTEST questions](#)
- [Reducing test anxiety.](#)
- [Standardized test taking tips and strategies.](#)
- [Does your student have test anxiety?](#)

Testing Controversy: Are we testing too much? Can assessments be used for teacher evaluation?

You can use a [QR code reader](#) or click on the code, they're linked.

By Carol Muniz

"In school we learn things then take the test, in everyday life we take the test then we learn things."

— Admon Israel



The Shift from WESTEST2 to Smarter Balanced

By Jeff Tidd



WESTEST2, West Virginia's standardized test will soon be outdated. The implementation of the Common Core Next Generation Standards in grades 3-12 in the 2014-15 academic year has created a void in assessment. This void will be filled with the Smarter Balanced assessment that was created to assess our next generation teaching standards. "The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) is a state-led consortium working to develop next-generation assessments that accurately measure student progress toward college- and career-readiness. Smarter Balanced is one of two multistate consortia awarded

funding from the U.S. Department of Education in 2010 to develop an assessment system aligned to the [Common Core State Standards \(CCSS\)](#) by the 2014-15 school year." - [Smarter-balanced.org](#)

The previous United States education system was failing to provide students with skills for college and career-readiness. The new Common Core State Standards are focused more on the skills of the future, and technology skills are on the forefront of this modern education movement.

As teachers, we need to focus our lessons on the application of skills ac-

quired in the classroom and how students will relate these skills to real-world situations and problem solving. The Next Generation Standards for the state of West Virginia align directly with the Smarter Balanced assessment and evaluate student achievement throughout each school year.

- [WVDE- Smarter Balanced for Educators](#)
- [WVDE- Smarter Balanced for Parents](#)
- [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium- Website](#)
- [Follow Smarter Balanced on Twitter](#)

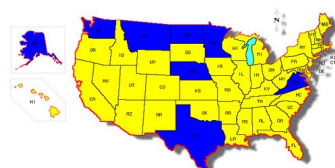


These are links to articles and sites to help you shift to the Common Core:

- [Common Core State Standards Initiative](#)
- [Brown Center Report: How well are American Student Learning?](#)
- [The Key to Unlocking Common Core Standards in Mathematics](#) by Ben Curran

- [Technology and Tools in the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics](#) by Jason Zimba
- [Dissecting Science Literacy Standards](#)
- [Jordan-Granite Consortium in Utah](#)
- [Common Core State Standards: Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects](#)
- [Achieve the Core](#)
- [Common Core State Standards for ELA and Literacy](#)
- [Learnzillion](#)

Common Core State Standards Initiative map



Coding in Schools

By Jeff Tidd

Computer programming in the K-12 education system is quickly becoming a popular concept, and a reality in some schools across the United States and the world. After visiting “code.org” and doing some additional research on the benefits of coding in the classroom, I am a firm believer for the incorporation of this content into our schools.

Learning how to code allows students to play an active part in the future of the tech industry and to create programs that

they can use on their devices, which they love and live by. Students are beginning to teach themselves how to code by finding websites like [codeacademy.com](#), which offers free online courses that completely immerse students into the world of programming.

[Codeacademy.com](#) was asked the question “Why should every child learn to program?” The answer is truly eye-opening: “Technology is radically changing every area of our society, from communication to government to how we do our jobs. Digital literacy is now

a fundamental skill like reading and writing. By learning to program, kids can have a say in how software shapes their world. Plus, programming teaches important reasoning, logic, and communication skills.”

-Codeacademy.com
We must begin incorporating this content into our curriculum in West Virginia schools for fear of falling behind.



It is our job to prepare our students for life after the academic world, and with the integration of this content into our schools our students will be leading the nation and the world.

Follow the links below to learn more.

- [Code.org- Website](#)
- [Beginner Programming website/ game](#)
- [CodeSchool.com](#)
- [CodeAcademy.com](#)

Quick Links– CHECK THIS OUT!

“Can words describe the fragrance of the very breath of spring?”
– Neltje Blanchan



Tech & Learning
Monthly paper issue and website that offers great information in the world of 21st century education. (Sign-Up is easy and free)
[Tech&Learning– Website](#)

Google Apps for Education
“Google Apps has all the tools schools need to be productive, including email, calendar,

documents, and more. It’s designed for collaboration, built for the web, and it’s free for schools.” - Google
The links below will further educate you about Google Apps for Education

- [Google Apps for Education](#)
- [The Amazing Power of Google Apps for Education– Article](#)

- [Training for Google Apps for Education](#)

Apple Education
With so many educational apps on the App Store, there’s no limit to the learning possibilities at your fingertips. Take a look at some of the educational apps for learning.

The Apple Store has free and purchased [Apps for Education](#).

CTE Modernization Grants

By Hugh Roberts

Career and Technical program modernization grant applications are due to the West Virginia Department of Education on April 30, 2013.

These grants are a great way to update your CTE lab or classroom with equipment which will provide a learning experience that mirrors the modern workplace.

Modernization grants can be used for the purchase of technology and technology related items.

CTE Program Modernization Grants



“In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt.”
— Margaret Atwood

When applying for a modernization grant, matching funds from outside the school system are required. New funding sources and partnerships with business and industry are encouraged. The idea is for partners from business and industry, including advisory council members, to invest in their future workforce. Through modernizing our training experiences in CTE, the future workforce will be better prepared to meet the needs of industry in remaining competitive.

Consideration for Modernization Grants will be based upon the following criteria:

- All performance data is submitted to the WVDE accurately and on time.
- A potential for innovative and substantial change from the status quo.
- Measurable change which is evident in one year.
- The quality of the proposal.
- The signature of the CTE Administrator and the LEA Advisory Council Chairperson.
- Development of new partners and funding sources.
- Proposals which lead to employment in high demand/high wage occupations.

The forms for the program modernization grants are not difficult to complete, but do require a time commitment. Take advantage of this opportunity to modernize the educational experience your students receive and better prepare them for the real world.

WVSTC 2013

The Waterfront Place Hotel & Morgantown Event Center
Morgantown, WV
July 30-August 1, 2013

CALL FOR PROPOSALS:

The WVSTC 2013 conference committee welcomes proposals for concurrent session presentations. Our goal is to accept proposals that will be of interest to a wide range of constituents including K-12 education, higher education, and state agencies. For a list of suggested topics see the call for proposals link.

Submit all proposals on or before April 30, 2013 using the official Presentation Proposals Submission Form available at conference.wvnet.edu/call-for-proposals.

The program committee will review all proposal entries to establish the conference program.

ATTENDEE REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

The annual West Virginia Statewide Technology Conference provides a venue for K-12, Higher Education and State agencies to share their wealth of information and experiences. 60+ vendors will also be in attendance showing off their new technologies. A few suggested conference tracks this year are:

- Distance Learning/ Blended Delivery
- Data Driven Decision Making
- Personalized Learning
- ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning)
- Document Imaging

- Data Interoperability
 - Internet2
 - Web Development
 - Mobile Computing
 - Green Technology
- Conference Presenters may attend at a discount fee. To qualify for this discount, your submitted proposal must be accepted by our Program Committee. You will receive an email notice if your proposal is accepted. Limit one discounted admission per presentation. Submit all proposals no later than April 30, 2013 using the Call for Proposals Submission Form located on the [conference website](http://conference.wvnet.edu). Check out our web site conference.wvnet.edu and **REGISTER NOW!!**