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Friday, September 30, 2016**

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Today (September 30) – Presidential Scholars [CTE](#) due

Monday (October 3) – [Prayer](#) certification due

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October 28: [October 1 Enrollment Census Submission & Snapshot Reports - Due](#)

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

1. Three R.I. schools win Blue Ribbon Awards from USED

We received the good news this week from the U.S. Department of Education that three Rhode Island schools have been selected as 2016 Blue Ribbon Schools. The Blue Ribbon is the highest award that the U.S. Department of Education bestows on schools. The Rhode Island schools honored with the Blue Ribbon are:

Barrington High School, and
Peace Dale Elementary School, in South Kingstown, honored for
“overall academic excellence”; and

Kent Heights Elementary School, in East Providence, honored for
“closing achievement gaps among academic subgroups.”

Congratulations to the students, teachers and school leaders, and family members of our Blue Ribbon communities on achieving this important recognition!

2. RIDE releases SAT, AP, NECAP Science assessment results

On Tuesday we released the results of several assessments that students participated in during the previous (2015-16) school year: the College Board assessments (PSAT, SAT, and AP exams) and the 2016 NECAP Science assessments.

The good news is that Rhode Island students took College Board tests in record numbers last year, with 6,303 members of the Class of 2016 taking SAT tests (up 1 percentage point from the Class of 2015) and 5,040 seniors taking AP tests (up 7.8 points).

SAT scores for seniors in public high schools in Rhode Island declined slightly; nationally, scores declined as well. Among the AP tests, 4,754 earned a score of 3 or better, up by 8 percentage points from the previous year.

Results from the NECAP Science assessments administered in May to all students in grades 4, 8, and 11 show that fewer than 3 of 10 Rhode Island students (29 percent, down 3 percentage points from 2015) attained proficiency in science.

The results this year continue a 4-year downward trend in the percentage students attaining proficiency in science.

We are disappointed in these science results, especially as we begin to focus on the important role science will play in growing areas of the Rhode Island economy such as health-care industries and information technology. In light of these results, we plan to meet with district and school leadership and the science educators' leadership team to discuss the current state of science instruction, our shared vision for science instruction in Rhode Island, and the tools and resources our educators need to make this vision a reality.

We are also moving forward with the process of adopting a new science assessment. The NECAP science assessment is not aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards, which Rhode Island schools began implementing three years ago. We believe a new assessment aligned with our current standards will give a more accurate picture of student achievement in science."

It's important that we continue to hold high expectations for all students and provide all students with opportunities for challenging coursework such as AP courses. Students who participate in college-readiness assessments such as the SAT and AP tests are more likely to

see a college education as a part of their future. That's good for students and good for Rhode Island, as we need more college graduates who will be ready to enter the challenging careers of the 21st-century economy.

Our news release on the assessment results is posted [here](#).

A report on the NECAP science results is posted [here](#).

A report on the PSAT, SAT, and AP results is posted [here](#).

3. RIDE encourages celebration of National Principals Month

We at RIDE join the National Association of School Principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the American Federation of School Administrators, and the Rhode Island Association of School Principals in celebrating October 2016 as National Principals Month. Educators have designated October as a month to celebrate and spotlight the crucial role that principals play in supporting school and student success. We encourage you to join us in celebrating and spreading the word to your school community and in recognizing the principals in your community for their commitment to excellence.

4. RIDE provides updates on transition to ESSA, work of Committee of Practitioners

As you may know, the team at RIDE has been closely engaged with the transition to the new federal education law, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This act provides states with greater flexibility in various areas, including academic standards, accountability, support for school improvement, student and educator support, and use of federal education funds. Our primary goal is to complete the Rhode Island plan

for transition to ESSA and to submit the plan by July to the U.S. Department of Education for review and approval.

To help guide this work, RIDE is receiving input from the ESSA Committee of Practitioners, which has met three times and will meet monthly at least through the current school year.

Over the course of this school year, RIDE will provide the public at large with opportunities for input on the Rhode Island plan, through such venues as community forums and meetings with stakeholder groups. The community forums will begin next month (October). We also have a [page](#) on our website dedicated to updated news on our transition to ESSA and on the work of the Committee of Practitioners. We will keep you up to date on major development through notifications in our weekly memos to the field and to those on our news mailing list.

5. Superintendents, heads of LEAs reminded of requests regarding Presidential Scholars, school prayer

This note is to encourage you to work directly with your high-school principals to ensure that your LEA nominates students, including [CTE](#) students, for the prestigious [Presidential Scholars](#) awards. The deadlines for these awards are approaching.

CTE nominations: **Today!**

Scholars nominations: You must submit all materials, including students' resumes, letters of recommendation, and essays, by **October 14**.

Additionally, if you have not done so already, please provide us with a statement that you are in compliance with laws regarding [school prayer](#). All RIDE needs from you is an email (to elliot.krieger@ride.ri.gov) ascertaining that

no policy in your LEA prevents or otherwise denies participation in constitutionally protected prayer in your schools.

From RIDE

Educators:

6. In keeping with ESSA, RIDE eliminates “highly qualified teacher” designations, requirements

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama in December 2015. As the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), this law prioritizes excellence and equity for all students and educators. The law eliminates the requirements for “highly qualified teacher” and focuses instead on appropriately certified teachers.

Beginning next month (October), RIDE will no longer determine a teacher’s highly qualified status and will eliminate the highly qualified designation on all certificates and public portals. Educators will be able to view historical information in their eCert accounts. All Rhode Island teachers must continue to meet Rhode Island state qualifications and certification criteria.

Please view the attached [link](#) for individual certification requirements.

7. RIDE posts third blog on equitable access to excellent educators

We are excited to bring you our third blog post on Equitable Access. This entry, a collaboration between RIDE Education Specialists Carrie Appel and Lauren Matlach, explores the impact of working conditions

on educators' professional lives. You can read their blog post as well as past ones on the Equitable Access page of our website:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/TeachersAdministrators/EquitableAccess.aspx>

8. RIDE posts materials on leadership-development grants; deadline for letters of intent, October 14

The Letter of Intent and PowerPoint presentation from the September 26 Leadership Network Meeting are now available at this [link](#) on the RIDE website. The deadline for submission of letters of intent, the initial step in the application process, is Friday, **October 14**. Alexis Meyer, Leadership Fellow at RIDE, can be reached at (alexis.meyer@ride.ri.gov) should you need further information about this leadership-development opportunity.

Instruction:

9. RIDE accepting grant applications for coaching on science instruction in elementary grades

RIDE is pleased to announce that we will be accepting applications for the Mathematics Science Partnership grant, "Enhancing Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Skills of K-5 Educators in the Next Generation Science Standards." The terms of the grant require the establishment of a partnership between an LEA or a group of LEAs and an institute of postsecondary education, with the intent of designing a professional-development experience for science educators in grades K through 5. The application period closes on **November 4**, at 4 p.m. Click on this link to the RIDE website for more information:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/Science.aspx>

10. **Computer-science course for teachers to be offered at RIC**

Rhode Island College has partnered with General Assembly (GA), a global educational company, to launch an intensive computer-science course for teachers **October 14**. This hybrid course – Introduction to Computer Programming and Web Design for Teachers – will be taught by GA faculty, marking the first time that GA has partnered with an institution of postsecondary education to transform teacher professional learning. In-person classes held on the RIC campus will run from Friday through Sunday, October 14 through 16, and will continue online through Friday, October 28. For additional information and registration, visit www.ric.edu/RIC-CS4RI or email Dante DelGiudice, at ddelgiudice@ric.edu, for additional information about the course.

11. **Computer-science summit for students scheduled for December 14 at URI**

The CS4RI (Computer Science for Rhode Island) Summit will take place on Wednesday, **December 14**, at the Ryan Center at the University of Rhode Island. The summit will bring together middle- and high-school computer science (CS) students from across Rhode Island to participate in activities, engage in demonstrations, and hear presentations aimed at providing students with information about the varied and exciting career paths in computer science. Exhibitors will include representatives from business and industry as well as from colleges and universities. Middle-school and high-school students, along with college students, will showcase their CS work.

A new feature this year will be the 4-minute lightning presentations during the breakout sessions. The topics for these presentations will be virtual and augmented reality, robotics and physical computing, big data visualization, and security and networking. Visit <http://cs4ri.org/summit>

today to register to exhibit, attend, and volunteer. Email Octavia Abell (Octavia.Abell@innovate.ri.gov) for further information about the summit.

Schools and School Climate:

12. RIDE to survey students, staff, families during current school year

We are pleased to announce that SurveyWorks will be administered to students, staff, and families across Rhode Island during the current school year. This year, RIDE has formed a partnership with Panorama Education to plan, administer, and collect feedback data. Panorama Education is a Boston-based education-technology company that works with 45 states, more than 7,000 schools, and 300 districts across the country. The Panorama platform and services enable state and LEA partners to administer research-backed surveys and to collect valuable feedback data, offering opportunities for interacting with online reporting, tracking change over time, and using feedback to inform school improvement. You can [experience Panorama's feedback and reporting tools](#). Stay tuned for additional information about SurveyWorks in the weeks to come.

13. RIDE announces 2016-17 Green Ribbon Schools award program; applications due January 17

RIDE is pleased to announce that Rhode Island will once again participate in the Green Ribbon Schools program. RIDE is looking to identify schools that have the least impact on the environment, the most positive impact on the health of students and staff, and the most effective preparation of students for careers and citizenship in the 21st century. From the pool of applicants, we will submit up to four nominations to the U.S. Department of Education for national award consideration.

Modeled after the Blue Ribbon Schools Program, the Green Ribbon Schools award recognizes exemplary achievement in environmental impact, health, and environmental education. Rhode Island is the only New England state to participate in all five years of the program, which produced eight national Green Ribbon Schools award recipients in our state, including: Classical High School (Providence), the Nathan Bishop Middle School (Providence), the Providence Career & Technical Academy, The Greene School (charter), the Claiborne Pell Elementary School (Newport), The Compass School (charter), the Paul Crowley East Bay Met Center (state-operated), and Ponaganset High School (Foster-Glocester).

All K-12 public and nonpublic Rhode Island schools are eligible to apply. Schools that would like to be nominated for this award must complete and email the application to Joseph.daSilva@ride.ri.gov by **January 17**. If you have questions about the Green Ribbon Schools program, you may call Joseph da Silva, our School Construction Coordinator, at 222-4294, or e-mail him at Joseph.daSilva@ride.ri.gov.

For more information and to obtain the 2016-17 Rhode Island Green Ribbon Schools application, please visit:
<http://www.ride.ri.gov/FundingFinance/SchoolBuildingAuthority/SchoolFacilities.aspx>

Scholarships:

14. *Reminder: LEAs asked to nominate high-school seniors for Presidential Scholar award by October 14 – Action Item*

We are seeking from all Rhode Island high schools nominations of students to be named as 2017 Presidential Scholars. We encourage you to work with your high-school principals and to select one male student and one female student from each high school as your nominees for

this award. Here are the criteria, as set forth by the U.S. Department of Education:

We encourage you to nominate students who demonstrate outstanding scholarship but who *might not otherwise be nominated through the current SAT/ACT, Arts, or CTE recognition processes*. All high-school seniors graduating between January and June of 2017 who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents and who attend public, parochial, or independent schools, as well as those who are home-schooled, are eligible. The candidates will go through the application process, and, as in the past, the 2016 U.S. Presidential Scholars will be selected by the Commission on Presidential Scholars and receive the Presidential Scholars Medallion at a ceremony in their honor in Washington, D.C.

It may be helpful to consider the following questions as you contemplate the selection of your nominees:

- What about the student makes him or her stand out as having outstanding scholarship?
- *Were there special challenges or hurdles this student has overcome while still achieving high academic success?*

In addition, it may be useful for you to know that the reviewers will be considering the following categories when evaluating the nominees at the semifinalist and Scholar evaluation levels:

- involvement and Service (in school and community);
- leadership and character;
- writing samples;
- academic achievements; and

- *discretionary points for extraordinary achievement, heavy workload, family responsibilities, or obstacles overcome.*

Each student you nominate should prepare an application that includes:

- his or her resume, including home mailing address;
- a letter of reference from you or a school official that explains how the student stands out as having outstanding scholarship; and
- a brief (approximately 500 to 750 words) essay that responds to this question: “What special challenges or hurdles have you overcome while still achieving high academic success?”

Please also submit this information for each student you nominate:

- Student’s name
- Student’s home mailing address
- Student’s gender
- Student’s personal email address
- High-school name and mailing address
- High-school CEEB code

We remind you that this last point is particularly important to this nomination process, as these nominations will recognize students who would not be considered for this award based solely on their academic achievement.

Either you or your high-school principal(s) will be our contact in this process. We ask either you or your principals (not the nominated students) to submit your nominations to Lauren McCarthy (lauren.mccarthy@ride.ri.gov) by **October 14** .

From nominations we receive, we will select up to 20 nominees from Rhode Island (up to 10 male students, 10 female students). We will notify you when we have submitted nominations to the Presidential Scholars Commission, but you will not hear further from us on the nominations.

The Commission will select finalists early next year, and Scholars will be announced in the spring. Scholars will receive an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. For more information about the program, see:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/psp/index.html>

15. *Reminder: RIDE invites high schools, CTE programs to nominate students for Presidential Scholars awards; deadline, Today (September 30) – Action Item*

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program annually recognizes outstanding students who demonstrate excellence in career and technical education.

RIDE invites you to participate in the nomination process and to recommend for selection as a Presidential Scholar one outstanding CTE student from your center or high school. A committee of knowledgeable educators will review all recommendations and forward the names of five students to Commissioner Wagner, who will nominate up to five Rhode Island CTE students to the U. S. Commission on Presidential Scholars for consideration for national recognition. The Commission on Presidential Scholars will notify all nominees of their selection and invite them to complete the full application.

It may be helpful to consider the following questions as you contemplate the selection of your recommendation:

- What about the student makes him or her stand out as having outstanding scholarship?
- Were there special challenges or hurdles this student has overcome while still achieving high academic success?

In addition, it may be useful for you to know that the national-level reviewers will be considering the following categories when evaluating the nominees at the semifinalist and Scholar evaluation levels:

- Involvement and Service (in school and community);
- Leadership and Character;
- Writing samples;
- Academic achievements; and
- Discretionary points for extraordinary achievement, heavy workload, family responsibilities, or obstacles overcome.

All high-school seniors who are concentrators in a career and technical education (CTE) program of study graduating between *January and June of 2017*, who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents, and who attend public, parochial, or independent schools, as well as those who are home-schooled, are eligible. The CTE selection process will evolve over time, but for the 2016-17 class of scholars, candidates who are nominated and choose to apply, and whose applications are complete, will automatically become semifinalists. All 2017 U.S. Presidential Scholars will be selected by the Commission on Presidential Scholars and will receive the Presidential Scholars Medallion at a ceremony in their honor in Washington, D.C.

RIDE will send the required recommendation forms to all high-school principals and CTE directors; the forms must be submitted to Sonya Barbosa, at Sonya.Barbosa@ride.ri.gov, by COB **Today**, (September 30). Address all questions about the CTE Presidential Scholars to Vanessa Cooley, at 222-8438.

Legal:

16. ***Reminder: LEAs asked to submit certification regarding Constitutionally Protected Prayer by Monday (October 3) – Action Item***

Note:

Each year, we must submit to the U.S. Department of Education a list of any LEAs that have not certified to us their compliance with the Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, which you can find here:

http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/religionandschools/prayer_guidance.html

This guidance provides information on current law concerning constitutionally protected prayer in public schools.

As you know, no policy or practice in this state in any way interferes with the constitutionally protected rights of schoolchildren.

Please submit your certification by **Monday** (October 3).

Please feel free to contact Elliot if you have any questions on this matter.

Data Collection:

17. **PARCC 2016 fall block-testing data loaded to Pearson Access Next; LEAs asked to check for discrepancies**

The 2016 fall-block PARCC data has been loaded to Pearson Access Next. Those schools that are on block scheduling will need to verify the data and notify RIDE with any discrepancies.

If you have any questions about PARCC data, please send an email to PARCC@ride.ri.gov.

18. *Reminder: LEAs reminded to update, submit enrollment, teacher-course-student data files*

The October snapshot is quickly approaching, and 78 percent of districts have duplicate records that need to be cleaned up prior to this snapshot. The resolution of duplicate student-enrollment records requires cross-district collaboration, which requires adequate time prior to the submission deadline, especially for those 3 districts that have more than 30 duplicate records.

The Enrollment Census has been open since the beginning of the school year, and we currently have 86 percent of districts that have submitted enrollment data. Enrollment data should be submitted nightly and should be an accurate reflection of your student population. If there are errors or omissions on the enrollment file, you can perform an update during the day or during the nightly data-transfer process.

The Teacher, Course, Student (TCS) data collection is currently open, and we have less than stellar submission numbers for these four files. The Course file has a 73-percent submission rate, the Section file is at 71 percent, the Staff file at 56 percent, and the Student file is at 54 percent. Similar to the enrollment file, this is a nightly upload and, as the assignments change, a new file will update those records. It is crucial that all four of these files be imported nightly. You do not need to wait until the student's schedule is finalized to submit files.

If you have any questions about any of the mentioned data collections, please submit a help-desk ticket, at <https://support.ride.ri.gov>.

19. **Data-collection calendar updated**

The [Data Collection Calendar](#) contains all of the open and due dates for data collections and report submissions. These dates may change as the school year progresses, in response to updates by external entities. Please review the calendar on a regular basis in order to remain compliant with data submissions.

If you have any questions about the Data Collections Calendar, please submit a help-desk ticket, at <https://support.ride.ri.gov>

20. ***Reminder: LEAs asked to keep School Profile data up to date***

The School Profile module within eRIDE is used to collect detailed information on districts and schools. It is important that this information is kept up to date throughout the year, as the Assessment, Communications, the Master Directory and other systems rely on these data. If you have any questions about the school profile or master directory, please submit a help-desk ticket, at <https://support.ride.ri.gov>.

21. ***Reminder: LEAs asked to review eRIDE and RIDEmap application roles***

The beginning of the school year is a good time to review and adjust the roles that administrators and teachers have within the RIDEmap and eRIDE applications. The LEA Single Sign-On (SSO) administrator is the point of contact for assigning and modifying RIDE application roles.

If you have any questions about RIDE applications and roles, please submit a help-desk ticket, at <https://support.ride.ri.gov>

22. *Reminder: Several data collections are open, due in the next few months*

The following are upcoming data-collection deadlines:

- Today (September 30): [Personnel Data Collection \(PDC\) - Due](#)
- Monday (October 3): [At-Home Instructed Students - Due](#)
- Monday (October 3): [June Graduating Class Fall Membership - Due](#)
- Monday (October 3): [Non-Certified Staff Report - Due](#)
- October 25: [October 1 Data Snapshot, Demographics and duplicates NEED to be zero - Due](#)
- October 28: [October 1 Enrollment Census Submission & Snapshot Reports - Due](#)

Information about upcoming data collections can be found on the [data collection calendar](#). Weekly collection [webinars](#) provide details regarding upcoming collections, along with a question-and-answer feature.

23. *Reminder: Rhode Island Alternate Assessment dependent upon Student Enrollment Data*

The Alternate Assessment window is quickly approaching, which means that data on eligible students will need to be loaded into that assessment platform. Please submit your most current enrollment data as soon as possible. Remember, enrollment is a nightly collection and you have the ability to continually update these data throughout the year.

24. *Reminder: Leas asked to verify SCED codes used for PARCC math testing*

The following SCED codes will be used to assign algebra and geometry PARCC tests to students:

02052 = Algebra 1

02054 = Algebra 1 – Part 2

02056 = Algebra 2

02072 = Geometry

Please verify that the SCED codes listed above are assigned to your associated math courses. If these codes are not assigned to the courses above, then enrolled students will be incorrectly assigned a PARCC mathematics test that is associated with the wrong SCED code. You can look for course-specific SCED codes on the [ED.gov website](#) to replace the codes above on non-PARCC math courses.

From the U.S. Department of Education (USED)

25. USED issues guidance on new ESSA opportunities for using federal funds to innovate, support educators

The USED has released non-regulatory guidance to help support educators and elevate the teaching profession. The guidance encourages states and districts to prepare, train, and recruit high-quality teachers and principals to increase student academic achievement. With the enactment of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states and districts have the opportunity to reimagine the way Title II, Part A funds can be used through driving innovation and building on evidence to better support educators.

ESSA provides multiple opportunities to better innovate and build on evidence with Title II, Part A dollars. This guidance highlights some of the key areas local leaders can invest these critical dollars to support the workforce through better preparation, mentorship and induction;

increase diversity; and bolster teacher leadership. The guidance focuses on the importance of aligning state strategies that support effective instruction with Title II, Part A investments to not only improve student outcomes but also sustain those improvements.

The full guidance and examples of best practices can be found [here](#).

26. USED issues guidance on use of federal funds for schoolwide programs under ESSA

The USED yesterday released updated guidance: “Supporting School Reform by Leveraging Federal Funds in a Schoolwide Program.” This is one in a series of updates to the USED guidance documents as we transition to the *Every Student Succeeds Act*. The updated guidance, which details the use of Title I funds for serving all students in a schoolwide program school, can be found [here](#).

Also, the guidance that the USED released on this topic in July 2015 remains applicable through the current school year and is available [here](#).

From other organizations

27. Most Likely to Succeed film website offers video, resources on re-imagining education

Many of you have had the opportunity to see the documentary film *Most Likely to Succeed* at one of the screenings in Rhode Island. Many of these screenings included a follow-up discussion on re-imagining schooling and for the 21st century along the lines of problem-based, hands-on learning that we saw in action in the film.

The website of the *Most Likely to Succeed* (MLTSfilm.org) now offers professional-development resources to help educators elevate learning

with a student, a class, a school, or a district. For those interested in using the film to prompt thoughtful discussion about educational practices, the website now offers thirteen short [videos](#), along with discussion questions. The MLTS team suggests you start with the video on “[essential skills](#).”

28. Inventing Heron seeks online mentors to help students learn about career opportunities

Inventing Heron is an online career resource developed locally in Rhode Island. It takes a long-standing idea – learning about different fields from people in those fields – and makes it new again by harnessing the power of the Internet. Inventing Heron has piloted a student-led career fair to be held at North Smithfield High School. More than 500 people have shared their stories about what they call work on the Inventing Heron [website](#). Sign up as a mentor on the website to share your story!

29. Coalition of Essential Schools Fall Forum scheduled for December; registration discount through October 7

On December 1, 2, and 3, the [Coalition of Essential Schools](#) will host [Fall Forum 2016](#) in Providence. Teams of educators and advocates creating and sustaining student-focused, teacher-led, equitable, and challenging learning will gather to learn, network, and support deeper learning for all young people in all of our communities.

The full Fall Forum schedule, with workshop descriptions and other details, is online at [cesfallforum2016.sched.org](#), with more than 50 workshops created by educators for educators and a range of discussions that will feature speakers including Commissioner Wagner, Linda Darling-Hammond, Deborah Meier, José Luis Vilson, Dennis Littky, and other policy, education, and thought leaders. We’re also offering opportunities for in-depth networking to help you identify new clients

and connections.

Please register soon to secure your place at this historic conversation and to take advantage of the early registration discount. You will save \$100 per registration if you register on or before Friday, October 7.

To learn more and to register, please visit:

<http://essentialschools.org/fall-forum-2016>

30. **R.I. Geography Education Alliance announces workshops for teacher, availability of R.I. map for schools**

The Rhode Island Geography Education Alliance Giant Map of Rhode Island is officially in schools now! A huge thanks goes out to Artena Fairbairn, of Robertson Elementary School (Warwick), for leading the alliance initiative to bring this 16x24-foot map to Rhode Island schools. If you are interested in getting the map, please email sdixon@ric.edu with the subject line "Giant RI map" to request the map to come to your school (with 3 weeks that could work for your school). More information is available at:

<https://rigea.org/resources/giant-map-of-ri/>

The Rhode Island Geography Education Alliance (<https://rigea.org/events/2016-connected-workshops/>) also announces that it will be hosting a pair of 2-day workshops designed to teach educators how to bring **online mapping skills into the classroom**. Last year, Lyn Malone and Seth Dixon ran this as a week-long summer institute. In lieu of a weeklong institute, the training will be condensed to two separate 2-day workshops this fall. Session 1 will be held on **October 22 and 29**. Session 2 will be held on **November 12 and 19**. Participants who complete either of the two 2-day workshops will receive a \$100 stipend as well as educational

materials that will help bring GIS into the classroom. Lunch and some light breakfast refreshments will be provided. If you want to receive more information about these workshops or register, click the following link to fill out your application and reserve your spot:

<http://eepurl.com/cawr7D>

Where: [101 Alger \(ALG\) Hall](#), Rhode Island College

When: 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

31. **Harvard offers computer-science resources to teachers**

The Harvard Introduction to Computer Science (CS50) team has recently completed its first year piloting its curriculum at the high-school level with AP Computer Science Principles and has since been looking for ways to expand this program by recruiting more teachers to bring our curriculum to their students.

The course is language agnostic, and we have developed many resources and tools for teachers willing to teach the course, such as automatic grading, coding on the internet without having to download any software, and numerous videos and written resources. You can see what we've created over the summer [here](#). We also have the content available on ap.cs50.net and, as a teacher, one can request full access by registering for an account. On a teacher account one would be able to view our suggested workflow for grading, guidelines and notes for grading, and sample solutions.

We offer online classes through Harvard's Extension School (CSCI E-50) so that teachers can take the class to prepare themselves for teaching it. We have also partnered with Microsoft to offer scholarships for such classes.

We, here at Harvard, have the largest class size for our introduction to computer science class, where 75 percent of our students have 0 background in CS. We have been trying to reach out and spread our curriculum to a wider audience, and it seemed that this course was the best fit. All resources and curriculum are free and fall under the creative commons license, which means anyone can adopt or adapt our curriculum for their students as they see fit.

As part of our program, we do hold workshops (a PD course of sorts) to help teachers familiarize themselves with the tools and resources we offer. We have two workshops that we are looking to host this summer in Cambridge, one of them being in early June and the other in early July. The workshops will be led by David Malan, Gordon McKay Professor of the Practice of Computer Science in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at Harvard. Teachers can RSVP [here](#).

Check out our promo [video](#) for our curriculum. We hope you consider using our curriculum and please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

32. Student workshops scheduled on short-story writing

Students in grades 8 to 12 can submit one story that incorporates Rhode Island to enter the Write Rhode Island writing competition. Winners will receive a cash prize, get their work published or exhibited, and participate in a statewide reading. Write Rhode Island also holds writing workshops for students to learn how to write a short story, provide writing prompts, and spur inspiration for the competition. Workshops are free but registration is advised.

Cranston Public Library is hosting creative writing workshops for students on October 5, 12, 19 at 6 p.m. Contact the teen librarian to sign up at teens@cranstonlibrary.org or 943-9080.

Providence Public Library will be presenting “On The Rhode,” a three-part workshop that offers an introduction to short fiction for teens in grades 8 to 12 on Saturdays, October 15, 22, and 29, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Contact Shannon, at the Providence Public Library or register at www.provlib.org/teenRegistration.

Westerly Public Library is hosting a writing workshop for teens as part of its YA events next month; a short-story workshop will be hold on Thursday, October 13, at 6 p.m. Contact Kelsey, at 596-2877 or kmatthews@westerlylibrary.org

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/FieldMemos.aspx>