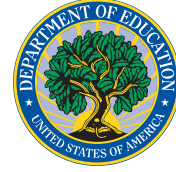




Connected Educator Month 2013: Expanding The Circle, Closing The Loop



Many teachers across the nation recognize the significance online collaborative learning plays in improving classroom instruction and learning. From Twitter to Facebook, Pinterest to Vine, educators are taking to social media to share best practices and experiences and create new, more dynamic digital learning communities. Online social learning empowers teachers of all styles and levels of classroom experience, providing real professional development created by educators for educators, and an increasing number of teachers are embracing the approach.

In recognition of the enormous impact online social learning can have on the teaching profession, the U.S. Department of Education convened the first *Connected Educator Month* in 2012. During its inaugural year, more than 170 education organizations, companies, and communities came together offering **450+ events and activities**. Connected Educator Month information reached **more than four million individuals** through the event hashtag.

Seeking to build on this success, the U.S. Department of Education announced a second Connected Educator Month. To be held in **October 2013**, Connected Educator Month will **build capacity and galvanize action to prepare educators to thrive in a connected world**. This year, Connected Educator Month will add a focus on helping school districts promote and integrate online social learning in their formal professional development. By getting more educators “connected” and deepening and sustaining learning of those already connected, we collectively can stimulate and support collaboration and innovation in professional development and collaboration.

In October, educators from across the country will participate in online communities and learning networks through Connected Educator Month. The U.S. Department of Education will host a series of Connected Educator events, while supporting related activities sponsored by others. A wide variety of organizations will provide online events and resources to support teachers. And connected educators will engage their not-yet-connected peers, expanding online learning communities while ensuring broader participation and long-term impact.

Who Should Participate

- Educators at all levels
- States and districts
- Organizations that support educators and online social learning
- Those who support educators, at every level

How to Participate

Sign up now! Visit connectededucators.org for free, easy access to all things Connected Educator Month. Once signed up, you will get regular updates about highly interactive webinars and other real-time events, showcases, open houses, launches, exhibits, collaborative projects, polls, contests, badges to earn, plus other activities and resources ranging from starter kits to book clubs and online classes and courses. States, districts, and organizations seeking to support Connected Educator Month can receive a toolkit that includes materials for organizing and highlighting specific activities, along with tools for integrating online social learning throughout the year and evaluating the results. All are also encouraged to be a part of edConnectr (edconnectr.connectededucators.org), a new online network that matches educators with others with whom they can learn and collaborate.

For more information, contact the CEM team at cem@connectededucators.org. Please check back on the Connected Educator Month website (connectededucators.org) regularly for updates.