

# Memo

**To:** Michael Robey, Ed.D. Superintendent  
**From:** Barbara Dahly, Director of Teaching and Learning  
**Cc:** Board of Education  
**Date:** February 1, 2013  
**RE:** Department Update

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➤ ***A Framework for Teaching Professional Development***

The first early release Tuesday SIP work on February 5, 2013 will be focused on *A Framework for Teaching*, devoted to Domain 3 on INSTRUCTION, Component 3c *Engaging Students in Learning*. Engaging students in learning is the centerpiece of the framework for teaching, and all the other components support it by promoting high levels of student understanding. During the professional development session, selected teachers will be presenting a lesson aligned to the DISTINGUISHED level of performance in the rubric, as part of the professional development learning. The professional development learning on *A Framework for Teaching* is linked to curriculum development on the Common Core State Standards and integrated into daily professional practice. (For additional information, please refer to the Power Point provided in DROP BOX.)

➤ **Professional Development for Instructional Assistants**

District 89 Instructional Assistants will receive professional development on *Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport* aligned to an overview of PBIS. The learning session will be held on SIP Day, the first early release Tuesday, February 5, 2013 in the afternoon.

➤ **Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS)**

Dr. Wylmarie N. Sykes, CEO of Operation Safe Child attended a PBIS internal coach meeting on January 23rd discussing the goals of Operation Safe Child. Suggestions on how we can work towards a common goal aligning the work of PBIS with the work of Operation Safe Child were discussed at this meeting.

➤ **Big Brothers Big Sisters at Dominican University**

The Big Brothers Big Sisters University Mentoring Based Program, began on Wednesday, January 30, 2013, with student volunteers from Dominican University paired with students from Emerson School in a one-on-one mentoring relationship. The students met in a supervised setting at Dominican University from 3:00-4:30. Emerson School Social Worker, Sheri Dieleman supervises students on the bus to and from the university. Ellen Greer from BBBS is the site based coordinator for the program. Students engaged in educational activities on the first day working on Getting to Know You Booklets, Discussing Safety Rules, sharing healthy snacks together and viewing part of the campus.

➤ **WCMI Mathematics Assessment Resource Service (MARS)**

Our district has participated in the **West Cook Mathematics Initiative (WCMI)** since 2010. This initiative has assisted teachers in 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade at Garfield, Irving, Lincoln and Roosevelt School learning new techniques to engage students, improve mathematics teaching and learning, and prepare for the transition to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM). As part of the initiative, all students at Garfield, Irving, Lincoln and Roosevelt School in grades 6–8, have worked on rich mathematics tasks from the Mathematics Assessment Resource Service (MARS). Students have been highly engaged in working on these tasks, and lessons using these tasks have often been quite effective at moving students’ understanding forward. Examining student work on these tasks has also informed teachers’ understanding and helped them better support students’ mathematical learning.

This spring, (a selected window between March 25-April 10), all of our students at Garfield, Irving, Lincoln and Roosevelt in grades 6–8, will take a mathematics performance test composed of five MARS tasks. This MARS test is designed to go beyond mathematical skills and computation to give a more complete picture of students’ understanding. This test is designed to assess whether a student understands when to use a particular mathematical skill, which mathematical tools the student chooses to solve problems, how well the student communicates their thinking, and how the student uses the calculations to make decisions. The test will expose our students to more mathematical tasks at a high level of cognitive demand, and build our teachers’ ability to anticipate, recognize, and respond to students’ mathematical misconceptions.

This shared vision promotes collaboration, professional growth, effective instruction, and student success in mathematics.

➤ **WCMI Coach Visitation**

On Wednesday, January 30, 2013, University of Illinois Chicago Math coaches Dyanne Van Den Heuvel and Nancy Mueller visited District 89 K-2 classrooms at Lincoln, Garfield and Irving Schools. They modeled and co-taught with classroom teachers posing math problems for students, supporting struggling students, and orchestrating a whole group discussion sharing different strategies students used to solve the problem. Teachers met with the coaches after the lesson to reflect on the practice. Classroom work was aligned to the Common Core State Standards and the Mathematical Practices.

➤ **The Illinois 5Essentials Survey**

The Illinois 5Essentials Survey provides a comprehensive assessment of school organizational culture with actionable reports to help drive school improvement on five indicators or “essentials”:

- Effective Leaders
- Collaborative Teachers
- Involved Families
- Supportive Environment
- Ambitious Instruction

Illinois 5Essentials generates data that helps schools target resources and make decisions that help accelerate learning and test score gains. Illinois 5Essentials also demonstrates that teachers and students can play a crucial role in school reform: What they share about their schools reliably predicts whether those schools are likely to improve or stagnate.

The Illinois 5Essentials Survey to be implemented between February and March 2013 this school year by legislation passed in 2011, represents the first attempt by the state of Illinois to administer a statewide survey of learning conditions to teachers, students, and parents. Statewide summary results will be shared with ISBE this summer. School-level results will be sent to schools this summer and will be part of the 2013 school report cards, typically released by ISBE at the end of October.

District 89 students in 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade and certified teachers will take the survey in school. Parents will be provided opportunities to take the survey on February 19<sup>th</sup> on Parent Teacher Conference day.

Plans at this time are in final process for the survey implementation.

(For additional information, please refer to the Power Point provided in DROP BOX and go to <https://illinois.5-essentials.org>.)