



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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To: Members, Board of Education  
Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent

From: Dr. Carrie Kamm, Senior Director of Equity  
Emily Fenske, Director of Organizational Learning

Re: Formative Assessment for Results (FAR) Update

Date: August 11, 2017

Purpose: To provide an update on Formative Assessment for Results (FAR) 2017-2018 plans.

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In August 2016, our PreK-5 grade-level team leaders and 6-8 department chairs (Language A, Language B, Humanities, Science, Math, Design) received training on the Formative Assessment for Results (FAR) process. FAR provides a structure for teacher teams to function as professional learning communities that are committed to analyzing student learning to inform instructional decisions.

During the 2016-2017 school year, PreK-5 grade-level team leaders and 6-8 department chairs participated in four full-day training sessions and two half-day coaching sessions. Team leaders and department chairs also completed a teacher leader self-assessment (Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession) to better understand their strengths and growth areas as it relates to working with adult learners, facilitating collaborative work, communication, and knowledge of content and pedagogy.

PreK-5 grade-level team leaders and 6-8 department chairs apply for their roles annually per the District 97/OPTA contract. 36 PreK-5 team leaders are returning and 14 are new for the 2017-2018 school year. All of the 6-8 department chairs are returning for the 2017-2018 school year with the exception of a new department chair for Language A at Brooks Middle School. The continuity of PreK-5 team leaders and department chairs provides an opportunity for our teacher leaders to strengthen their leadership knowledge and skills during the 2017-2018 school year.

Initial FAR training for our new teacher leaders will take place on August 14 and 15 at Longfellow School. The training is facilitated by Renee DeWald of Research for Better Teaching. There will be additional FAR training for all team leaders in September 2017 and February 2018. Emily Fenske, Director of Organizational Learning, will oversee FAR and provide direction and support to principals and team leaders.

As District 97 establishes teacher teams whose primary function is to examine student work, monitor student progress, assess the effectiveness of instruction, and determine professional learning needs, we are interested in understanding how to evaluate the performance of our teacher teams, our district supports of their efforts, and impact on student learning outcomes. Dr. Carrie Kamm and Emily Fenske are collaborating to design an evaluation process that will be informed by the National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance and their work on measurement instruments for assessing the performance of professional learning communities. It is anticipated that the evaluation plan will be developed during Fall 2017.