

TO: ALL JCPS EMPLOYEES

FROM: JCPS, JCTA, AND GE FOUNDATION

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE GE FOUNDATION COLLEGE BOUND DISTRICT PROGRAM GRANT

A great deal of progress has occurred since the GE Foundation grant was announced last September. JCPS, JCTA, and the GE Foundation are very proud of our collaborative effort and would like to take a moment to share the progress of our work.

A common Science curriculum for Grades K through 8 now exists. The GE Foundation has contributed more than seven million dollars for the Science modules and the accompanying professional development. The extensive professional development workshops delivered during the summer received rave reviews. Hats off to the Science department!

As for math, we first want to remind everyone that when the grant was initiated we never intended to create new instructional materials. Initially, our intent was to improve math instruction through professional development and an improved curriculum for which we fully anticipated materials being available on the market. The original goals and timeline for the math rollout were all determined based on the premise that math materials existed for us to purchase.

The decision to implement World Class standards and the realization that appropriate materials did not exist for us to purchase has drastically changed our timeline. We have embarked upon a visionary project-one with huge implications for our district, our state, and our nation--, and we are not going to compromise the quality by rushing the rollout. We have a chance to do this right and we want to make sure we do so.

JCPS and JCTA have jointly chosen one of the world's foremost curriculum design and textbook producers to work with us, Pearson Publishing. Pearson is the leading integrated education company, linking curriculum, assessment, data management, and professional development; all standards-based and scientifically researched, working in over 70 countries. They are creating world-class instructional materials in mathematics that will meet or exceed those of the highest performing nations.

The 2006-2007 school year will be a time of careful design with Pearson. Work has already begun with a group of nationally recognized math experts to assist in the validation of the standards for this math curriculum. These standards must be strong enough to support all of our future work in lesson plans, sequences, curriculum and professional development. This summer we took the first steps in the process to build our first lesson outlines based on these standards with our released teachers, resource teachers and the math department. This will be an ongoing process that will take the better part of the 2006-2007 school year.

As the materials are developed, based on these lesson outlines, we will work with groups of teachers at every grade level-K through 8-to obtain early reactions and feedback to integrate into subsequent revisions. We will field test the new curriculum during the 2007- 2008 school year with a limited number of schools. The field test will allow teachers an opportunity to test each lesson plan and the materials in sequential order with students, and provide Pearson with the feedback it needs to make final revisions before the complete rollout to the entire district at the start of the 2008-2009 school year.

Pearson and other experts in the rollout process have recommended a field test. This will ensure that a high quality job is accomplished with regard to acquiring and understanding feedback, and incorporating it into the revision. It will also allow Pearson to engage in deep thoughtful discussions with the teachers, redesign the materials based on student and teacher reactions, and produce a product that they can stand behind and market elsewhere. Schools that participate in the field test will be required to intensely scrutinize the material and provide regular, ongoing and in-depth quality feedback to Pearson.

During the field test, all teachers will receive professional development around instructional practices and content knowledge in math. JCPS and JCTA collaborated not only on this planning, but also on finding the time for the professional development efforts.

By the spring of 2008, Pearson will have the full data from the field test, will have been redesigning as they received the data throughout the year and be ready with a set of finished materials, validated, and ready for full implementation in the Fall of 2008.

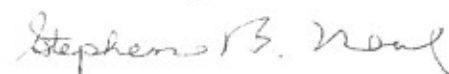
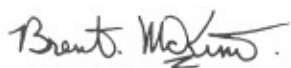
JCPS, JCTA, and the GE Foundation have been collaboratively working on this initiative. A joint Steering Committee is in place to make certain that this work is world class. We are looking at a very fast and quite complex overlap of efforts as described above.

JCPS, JCTA, and the GE Foundation are incredibly proud of the team members who have worked so hard to evaluate standards and assess curriculum needs. They never took the path of least resistance. The implications of their work are huge. Each of our organizations understands how important this is to our children's future and we are fully committed to working together to make that future world class. We greatly appreciate your ongoing support.

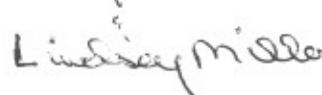
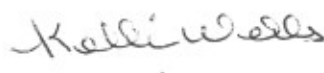
Sincerely,



JCPS



JCTA



GE FOUNDATION