



**Dr. Phyllis A. Chase**  
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April 18, 2008

**Dr. Sally Beth Lyon**

Chief Academic Officer

Dear Math Community Advisory Committee Members,

Attached you will find the minutes and your feedback from our meeting on April 2, 2008. Thank you for the beginnings of a spirited discussion and for your interest in participating in this important work.

In light of that discussion, I would like to reiterate the purpose of this committee within the context of Columbia Public Schools curriculum processes. As stated in the invitational documents that formed this committee, the purposes of this group are:

1. To provide a forum for ongoing two-way communication among Columbia Public Schools and its constituents regarding mathematics education.
2. To support reflective efforts in the continuous improvement of teaching and learning of mathematics in Columbia Public Schools.

The goals for the committee's work are:

- \* To investigate the mathematical skills and competencies necessary in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for all students
- \* To provide advice regarding the district's efforts to address these skills and competencies
- \* To act as a critical friend by bringing expertise and perspective to our work

The committee's purpose is not to conduct program evaluation, write curriculum, select materials, or design professional development – all responsibilities of committees formed for these purposes and the professional staff in this district. The committee's purpose is to provide ongoing advice to district staff as we undertake these responsibilities.

To begin to accomplish the committee's purposes and goals, we felt we needed to begin with a background of shared knowledge about mathematics education and definitions of mathematical proficiency as described in research literature. The reflective comments many of you provided after each of our first two meetings confirmed this decision, although others are understandably anxious for a review of Columbia-specific information. We will indeed now turn to sharing information about the CPS curriculum – the Measurable Learner Objectives at each grade level that guide instruction (what we teach) and instructional materials and methods (how we teach). We will begin to discuss “the what” at our May meeting, and we are beginning to share “the how” through classroom walkthroughs.

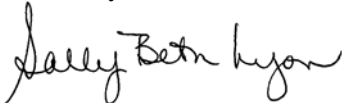
Sharing this information takes time. Our committee members bring diverse perspectives to this conversation, and without taking the time to review relevant literature as well as district information, the dialogue will not progress beyond the pre-conceptions each of us brought to the table and will not allow the committee to accomplish its purposes.

It is very likely that even as we continue to meet, learn, discuss, and advise, we will not reach agreement or consensus. The district will nevertheless benefit from the rich diversity of expertise and perspective represented by committee members. We ask that you see this as a long term process of serving as the district's critical friend, with an attitude of constructive input.

Our next meeting will be held on May 6, 2008, from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m., at Gentry Middle School. Participants are asked to read the Executive Summary of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel's final Report in preparation for that meeting.

I look forward to seeing you soon and to continuing our work together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sally Beth Lyon".

Sally Beth Lyon

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