

# HASTINGS HIGHLIGHTS

*The monthly newsletter of highlights in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment*



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## MIDDLE SCHOOL MATHEMATICS: BIG IDEAS

We are delighted to announce the launch of the mathematics resource *Big Ideas* in grades 6-8. Teachers and administrators liked *Big Ideas* for many reasons, including its alignment to the aspirational vision indicators created by the K-12 Mathematics Committee last year. This resource has been developed from research based strategies and includes conceptual, procedural, and application elements in every lesson. It supports students with visualization and reflection. There are print resources as well as an online component. The resource is available in 14 languages and incorporates a “read to” component in English and Spanish to support students with IEPs and English Language Learners. All students have access to a live tutor during the week, and there are data-rich reports for teachers to work with in customizing instruction for learners. There is an authentic performance task associated with each unit of study, which supports real world relevance. Our mathematics team will be engaging in monthly professional learning together around the *Big Ideas* implementation to support a strong, student-centered, collaborative approach to instruction.

## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL): DIAGNOSTIC SCREENER

We have identified a widely respected survey instrument, the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Panorama Survey, for grades K-12. We plan to administer the survey three times this year to establish a baseline for longitudinal findings, starting the end of October. The screener is confidential but not anonymous, with results valuable for individual and district-wide purposes. For individual students, the screener will be one of several measures of social and emotional wellness teachers use to determine which students require differentiated attention through the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). MTSS is a three-tiered instructional framework designed to support students with intervention and enrichment opportunities. Click [here](#) to learn more about the SEL diagnostic screeners, including links to the questions that will be asked of students.

## ACADEMIC LEARNING: DIAGNOSTIC SCREENER

We require a systematic way to gauge patterns in student learning in reading and mathematics across grade levels and buildings, strengthen monitoring of student performance, and identify individual student strengths and needs. Last year, after investigating multiple diagnostic screeners and engaging in a pilot, a committee of teachers and administrators selected STAR Renaissance as our diagnostic screener for grades K-8.

Diagnostic screening with STAR will occur three times per year; teachers will select dates and times for their particular class within predetermined screening windows. STAR results will be one of several measures of academic performance and growth, helping teachers better address student needs and building teams to determine which students require differentiated attention through the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). We are currently in the process of completing our autumn screening window.

## CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE RESOURCES

Over the summer, a team of teachers worked together to identify resources celebrating Hispanic heritage. These resources were recently shared with the broader faculty. While the resource share was timed with the start of Hispanic Heritage Month, faculty were encouraged to use the resources throughout the year in service to culturally responsive practice.

**OUR TALL 7 SPOTLIGHT: #1  
US – NOT ME, OR YOU, IT IS US.**  
DR. MCKERSIE

## CHAIR COUNCIL

Discussion at our recent Chair Council meeting centered around identifying an area of focus for our March 9-11 Tri-State Consortium visit. Presently, the team is interested in having this regional group of critical friends support our district inquiry around collaboration within the system in service to organizational success. We are currently working to identify and refine questions that will anchor the Hastings visit. Our hope is to gain critical insight from our visit that will inform our ability to strengthen collaboration across stakeholders to promote a shared vision and systemic coherence.