



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents

FROM: Molly M. Spearman
State Superintendent of Education

DATE: September 15, 2015

RE: Professional Learning Opportunity – SREB

You are invited to attend an information meeting about a free three-year, intensive professional learning opportunity from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). The SREB has secured resources through the Gates Foundation to work in partnership with the SCDE with selected districts in a multi-year initiative to provide educators with the tools and strategies of the SREB's well-respected Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) and the Math Design Collaborative (MDC). This represents a \$28,294 value per school. There are 45 spots for schools in the cohort beginning 2015–16. Schools will be selected from those attending the information meeting, with preference given to Federal Focus schools, schools with a below-average rating, and/or middle and high schools from the same feeder pattern in a district.

Time: Thursday, September 24
10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. (Lunch will be provided by SREB)

Location: Edventure Children's Museum
211 Gervais Street
Columbia, S.C. 29201

We request that your district team include the superintendent, the associate superintendent over curriculum and instruction, and principals of high schools and middle schools that are potential participants, along with a teacher leader from the school, if possible.

Please register for the meeting [online](#). Each team member will need to register separately. Team members registering after close of business Tuesday, September 22, cannot be provided with lunch.

The Initiative

Since 2011, SREB has provided both off-site staff development and school-embedded assistance to improve literacy and mathematics in 300 districts. LDC and MDC tools and strategies have been shown to be effective in raising literacy and math scores on state assessments and national exams such as the ACT. As a participant in this initiative, participating schools in your district will receive eight days of training spread across year one, four days of training in year two, two days of training in year three, and job-embedded coaching over the next three years. For information on what teachers and principals say about LDC and MDC strategies, please go to the publication section on the SREB [website](#). More information about these two programs is included on the last page of this memorandum.

Teachers

SREB coaches will conduct initial trainings for four literacy and two math teachers per participating school, along with a separate two-day principal training. All training is followed up with onsite visits: 24 site visits in year one, 16 in year two, and eight in year three. **SREB will cover all costs of training and a portion of the cost for substitute teachers and other expenses.**

School Leaders

For this initiative, SREB will provide each participating school's administrative team with two days of training in practices that will support the school's implementation of LDC and MDC. The two main topics in the leadership training are (1) what to look for in LDC and MDC classrooms and how that aligns with the South Carolina ADEPT, and (2) how to develop and support professional learning communities around LDC and MDC. Principals are expected to attend all training and, at each training, there will be a special pull-out training for school leaders.

Selection for Participating Schools

At least 45 schools will be selected to begin year one training during the 2015–16 school year. More schools may be added in a second cohort the following school year. Schools will be selected from those attending the information meeting, with preference given to Federal Focus schools, schools with a below-average rating, and/or middle and high schools from the same feeder pattern in a district. Districts will be notified of selection by Friday, October 2.

We hope you will seriously consider accepting this invitation to attend the orientation and agree to become a pacesetter school or district in the state of South Carolina. SREB will be a quality partner and the work builds on and advances the work we have been doing in South Carolina.

Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC)

The Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) seeks to ensure that every student graduates from high school with the literacy skills necessary for success in college and career. LDC provides a common framework upon which teachers can individually or collaboratively build literacy-rich assignments in their content areas in ways that both advance literacy skills and advance knowledge and understanding in the content field. The LDC approach to planning instruction includes all content areas except math and is based on teachers engaging students in

- regular practice with complex grade-level text and its academic language;
- reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational; and
- building knowledge through reading and writing about content-rich nonfiction material.

For information on the LDC, see the Literacy Design Collaborative brochure in the publication section on the SREB [website](#).

Math Design Collaborative (MDC)

The Math Design Collaborative (MDC) provides teachers not with a math *curriculum* but with *teaching tools* called formative assessment lessons—to help them know if their students truly understand the college- and career-readiness math standards they have been taught. Teachers learn to select and launch the appropriate formative assessment assignments about three-quarters of the way through a unit to determine if the student can understand the math concepts that they are to apply to solve multiple-step problems. The MDC model of instruction is based on teachers engaging students in:

- regular opportunities to perform the Standards for Mathematical Practice;
- frequent opportunities for a productive struggle with mathematics; and
- assignments that elicit evidence of conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and application of mathematics.

As a consequence, teachers witness growth in students' ability to solve problems and see significant improvement in math achievement.

For information on the MDC, see the Mathematics Design Collaborative brochure in the publication section on the SREB [website](#).

Technical Assistance

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