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Robyn Silbey Professional Development Raising Teacher Quality and Student Achievement in Mathematics



Happy mid-year! This time of year finds students in their most productive learning moods. How can we take the best advantage of their readiness to learn?

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The PARCC Assessment

The [Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career \(PARCC\)](#) discloses the critical elements of the CCSS and shares how content will be assessed in a technology-based assessment. Most, if not all items involve multi-step calculations and



Shout Out! Maury Elementary



An ongoing, multi-visit partnership with [Maury Elementary](#) in Washington, DC allows administration, staff, and students to grow together. This year, our data-driven professional development began with focused walkthroughs. Data collected from observations

depth of understanding. A few examples are:
(A) In grade 4, [Deer in the Park](#) requires students to move flexibly between area and perimeter while computing population density.
(B) [TV Sales](#), designed for seventh grade, challenges students to explore and justify alternate solution pathways after solving a real-life problem involving percentages.
(C) One high school assessment, [Golf Balls in Water](#), integrates several math strands within a science experiment context.

For both PARCC and SBAC, two things are certain:
(1) Students will be asked to explore, prove, define, justify, reason, generalize, and *THINK*.
(2) Students will need basic computer skills in order to successfully complete the assessment.
It's time to move our students to the front of the world in mathematics. These assessments, along with the CCSS, will surely propel us in that direction.

Motivation Matters Most



In the December [Healthland-Time Magazine](#), [Laura Blue](#) declares that motivation, not IQ, matters most in learning new math skills. A study by [Kou Murayama](#) of 3,500 public school districts in the German state of Bavaria reveals that students who are interested in mathematics and try to forge connections between mathematical ideas improve at a greater rate than those who learn by rote and just study to get a good grade. Previous research by [Daniel Pink \(DRIVE\)](#) and [Carol Dweck \(Mindset\)](#) suggests that motivation is learned rather than innate, and Murayama is interested in examining instructional styles that parents and teachers may use to inspire children to learn.

and teacher feedback inspired our goals to include three broad areas: (a) how the Standards for Mathematical Practice look in the classroom, (b) how content can be deeply understood, and (c) how differentiated instruction can accommodate highly able students as well as those who benefit from additional exposure.

Robyn worked with the coach and administration to design a program including demonstration lessons with debriefs, co-teaching, sequential observations, team planning sessions, small-group workshops, and an evening PTA meeting. Emails and phone calls between visits ensure that Robyn is part of the team throughout the year.

Maury's data-driven professional development ensures that the staff's needs are heard and addressed, and growth is moving in the direction outlined by the initial goals.

How might [Robyn](#) provide your school with data driven professional development?

Seeking Advice from YOU!



What questions would YOU like addressed in the Coaches' Corner for [Teaching Children Mathematics](#)? Please email

Robyn at rsilbey@hotmail.com with ideas or requests. All are greatly appreciated!

See Robyn at TASM

Robyn is the featured speaker at the spring [TASM \(Texas Association of Supervisors of Mathematics\)](#) meeting on Monday, February 4, 2013 in Austin, Texas. Join Robyn in a lively discussion around the topic: *Motivate Teachers to Provide Students with a New Level of Math Instruction*. [Register online today!](#)



Customize Visits to Suit Your Needs



Reach out to [Robyn!](#) Call 301-802-5285 or email rsilbey@hotmail.com to arrange a visit to your district or school.

Time Crunch!



Educators have the unique desire to *stop* the clock as they move through their workday. There simply isn't enough time to do everything!



Coming up in the February Coaches' Corner of [Teaching Children Mathematics](#), [Robyn](#) offers ideas for optimizing teachers' time and efficiency in planning and executing lessons. Among other ideas, Robyn recommends utilizing NCTM's [Illuminations](#) and [Investigations](#).

All of Robyn's suggestions capitalize on the support a coach can provide her staff while empowering them to design and execute cohesive, student-centered, interactive instruction.

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