



Technology & Professional Development Update

January 19, 2015

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Curriculum Alignment Meetings Rescheduled

- February 10: ELA Team
- February 17: Math Team

When: 8AM-3PM

Where: Board Room

What Else: See [District 205 Curriculum Wiki](#) for maps & other info

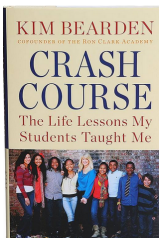
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Dream Big Book Club: Jan. 21

The **Dream Big Book Club** is beginning Wednesday, January 21 from 4-5:00 at the Board Office. We will be discussing Kim Bearden's book, *Crash Course - The Life Lessons My Students Taught Me*.

A schedule of meetings is found at <http://205newteachers.blogspot.com/>. For the first session, we'd like you to have read the preface, the introduction, and chapters 1 & 2, Chemistry and Magic. If you'd like to do the "homework" at the end of each chapter, feel free, but it will NOT be a requirement for the book club members. We want this to be fun & stress free for all of us!

BIG NEWS! Thanks in part to a NEA Learning and Leadership grant secured by Jenny Bredemeier, attendance at these hour-long meetings will be paid at committee stipend rate!



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PARCC Testing Dates

As published on the [District #205 Calendar](#), PARCC Performance Based Assessment (PBA) testing will take place from **March 9 through April 2**.

Students in grades 3-8, plus high school students completing English 11 and/or Algebra 2 courses this semester will participate in these assessments. In most cases:

- ELA testing will consist of 3 sessions
- Math testing will consist of 2 sessions

School buildings will determine testing schedules, within parameters set by ISBE and PARCC. Testing & make-up schedules will be established by your building principal.

District #205 School Calendar 2014 2015
Community Unit School District #205 - Galesburg, IL

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PARCC Prep Resources

Many are planning to work more intensively on honing students' skills in preparation for PARCC testing now that the new year has begun & a new semester will soon begin. We will be using Chromebooks for PARCC Testing, grades 3 & up, beginning in March.

- See the [Official State Assessment Dates from ISBE](#), on [ISBE's Assessment Division website](#).

If you haven't already started, it is VITAL that students become familiar with what the testing site will look like and how to use the various tools associated with testing.

PARCC Sample Items & Practice Tests

Help your students prepare for our first ever Official PARCC Performance Based Assessments.

[PARCC Tutorials](#) - This will help students get used to the testing portal and show them how to use the online tools (highlighters, calculators, etc.) that will be available.

PARCC Task Prototypes: [Math](#) and [ELA & Literacy](#)

Remember: Even if you don't teach English or Math, you can still help support students & colleagues with the [Literacy Standards](#) and the Literacy portions of these assessments!

[PARCC Sample Items](#) - simulates the actual testing environment

[PARCC Practice Tests](#) - simulates the actual testing environment

NOTES:

While there are PDF (paper-and-pencil) versions of the PARCC Sample Items available, it is important that students become comfortable with the online testing environment used with the Practice Tests, too.

Answer Keys and Rubrics are available for the ELA and Math Sample Items and Practice Tests.

The Math Practice Tests will soon have an auto-grading feature available at some point in January, but I have not received an exact release date at this time.

Make sure students fully understand the Equation Editor and have opportunities to practice so that they are completely comfortable with this tool before testing begins in March.



Image from <http://parcconline.org/>

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Classroom Spotlight: Julie Jordan

Recently I learned of 2 new apps that are being used in innovative ways by Julie Jordan at Silas Willard School:

- **EdPuzzle** - EdPuzzle allows teachers to cut clips out of existing videos (from the desktop, YouTube, Kahn Academy, etc.) and add voice commentary, text notes, and both forced choice and free response quiz questions at any point in a video. Julie says it is “ridiculously cool” and very easy to use, plus students don’t need email addresses to use the service. EdPuzzle will allow you to distribute your annotated videos through their own portal, share it as an link or embed it into a web site or blog, or distribute it via Google Classroom, Edmodo, Moodle, or other learning management solutions.

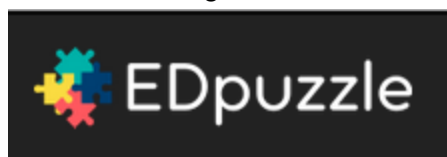


Image from <https://edpuzzle.com/home>

- **BoomWriter** - Julie says, “Published authors write the first chapter of the story. The kids read it and then write chapter 2. They are anonymously voted on and one students chapter becomes Chapter 2. Then they all read Chapter 2 and write Chapter 3. It is voted on and then edited. The company then publishes the book and sends us a copy. Kids are writing like crazy! I can also modify for those students that need to work on specific vocabulary or write shorter passages.”



Image from <http://boomwriter.com/>

Many thanks for the tips, Julie! Both apps are free and have been added to the Chrome Web Store For Galesburg205.org to help aid student access. However, these are web-based services that can be accessed without the apps at any time.

How are you using technology tools in your classroom? Send me an email & I'll work your story into an upcoming issue!

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License Renewal Changes

Beginning January 1, 2015, new rules were enacted governing what school districts can/cannot offer as professional development contact hours (the credits formerly known as CPDUs). District #205 will be learning more about these changes soon and how they will be interpreted by Regional Superintendents. This new information will be shared publicly as soon as we learn more.

Remember that hours earned for any professional development offered after July 1, 2014, expire 60 days after the event. That means that if you forget to enter the hours into ELIS, you lose them. It would be a good idea to set time aside to keep your Professional Development hours updated in ELIS on a monthly basis.

Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS)

[Resources](#) [ELIS Resources](#) [Instruction Guides](#) [Highly Qualified](#) [Educator Licensure Home Page](#)

Image from www.isbe.net/ELIS

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Self-Grading Quizzes & Tests

There are two very simple ways to create assessments that will grade themselves. One is a tool called **Flubaroo** that works with Google Forms & Google Spreadsheets. Another is **Skyward's Online Assignments**, which will even populate the students' grades into the appropriate column in Skyward Secondary Gradebook for you! Both take a little bit of work on the front-end while developing the quiz, test, or assignment, but will allow you to breathe a little easier when it comes time to grade those assignments.



Image from <http://www.skyward.com/>

- [Skyward Online Assignments Tutorial](#)
 - **NOTE:** If you would like to create a test, quiz, or assignment that you can re-use at a later time, start by opening a Gradebook in Skyward, clicking “**Other Access**,” and choosing “**Online Assignment Templates**.”



Image from <http://www.flubaroo.com/>

- [Enable Automatic Grading of Quizzes With Flubaroo for Google Sheets](#), from Richard Byrne of Free Tech for Teachers
 - The latest update to Flubaroo will automatically grade students' responses to forced-choice questions and automatically email grades back to students for you!



Free Technology for Teachers

written by Richard Byrne

Image from www.freetech4teachers.com

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Getting Started with Google Classroom

[Google Classroom](#) is one of the simplest ways to get started using technology (including Chromebooks) as part of instruction. Classroom is a very simple & easy to use tool.

- [Learn how to use Google Classroom](#)



Image from <https://classroom.google.com>

Getting Started

- **Install Classroom:** Both the teacher AND each of the students in the class should start by downloading and installing Google Classroom from the Chrome Store.
 - Open the Web Store app from a student Chromebook, or visit [the Chrome Store](#) on a teacher's desktop PC.
 - Click For Galesburg205.org in the left-hand column
 - Find the Classroom app and click the blue **+ FREE** button and follow the prompts to install the app.
- **Set up your first class.**
 - **TIP:** If you're just getting started, start with just 1 subject or section to get used to the workflow - you can add the rest after you become an expert in just a couple weeks!
 - Sign into Classroom, if needed
 - Click the + button in the top right corner of your screen.
 - Type in your Class Name and a short description, then click **CREATE**.
- **Set up the About page** to store a class syllabus and any frequently-used documents or website links. Classroom will walk you through all the steps you'll need to fill the page.
- **Add Students to this Classroom** - You can do this in 2 ways:
 - Click **Students**
 - Click **Invite**
 - Enter students' email addresses
 - OR -
 - Open the Classroom and look at the column on the left
 - Display the **Class Code** on the class whiteboard or SMART Board, or print it out and distribute it to students
 - Have students **open the Classroom app**, sign in, and type in the Class Code when prompted.

...more to come...!

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