



**LAKE BLUFF SCHOOLS**  
**DISTRICT 65**

*Excellence in Education, Enthusiasm for Life, Every Student, Every Day.*

April 2, 2014

Media contact: Jill Koch 847-223-1825 [jkoch@lb65.org](mailto:jkoch@lb65.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**School Environment Matters:**

**Lake Bluff Schools administer second Illinois 5Essentials Survey to improve student learning**

The Lake Bluff schools are joining the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) in the second statewide survey of school climate and learning conditions. The survey provides a unique opportunity for teachers, students, and parents to have a voice in improving their schools. From March 17 through April 25, teachers, students, and parents will be asked to take a 20-minute research-based survey to help identify strengths and weaknesses in their school's learning environment. This second survey will also be an important chance for schools to reflect on progress since last year's inaugural statewide implementation. "We hope all our teachers, students and parents will make their voices heard, because their opinions about how our schools are doing can make a real difference in several improvement initiatives," said Dr. Jean Sophie, District 65 Superintendent of Schools.

**\*\* MORE \*\***

## **Lake Bluff to administer 5 Essentials Survey Page 2-2-2-2**

The Illinois 5Essentials Survey provides a comprehensive picture of a school's organizational culture in an individualized report measuring five "essentials" critical for school success:

- Effective Leaders
- Collaborative Teachers
- Involved Families
- Supportive Environment
- Ambitious Instruction

Twenty years of University of Chicago research in more than 400 schools has shown that schools that were strong on at least three of the 5Essentials were 10 times more likely to make substantial gains in improving student reading and math than schools that were weak on three or more of the Essentials. Those differences remained true even after controlling for student and school characteristics, including poverty, race, gender, and neighborhood characteristics. Strength on components within the Essentials also correlated with increased teacher retention, student attendance, college enrollment, and high school graduation.

Generated from a rigorous analysis of teacher and student survey responses, 5Essentials Reports demonstrate that what teachers and students say about their schools can serve as important indicators for school success. In last year's inaugural Illinois 5Essentials Survey, 87 percent of all schools in the state met the 50-percent participation threshold to receive a Report with participation from more than 70 percent of all teachers and eligible 6th through 12th graders across Illinois. "The State Board continues its commitment to helping schools provide a more complete picture of their

**\*\* MORE \*\***

### **Lake Bluff to administer 5 Essentials Survey Page 3-3-3-3**

learning conditions and guide state and local efforts for school improvement,” said State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch. “The Illinois 5Essentials Survey provides an important chance for schools to check in with their communities and gather critical feedback to validate district improvement efforts.” In 2014, all districts will have the option to participate and are strongly encouraged to do so. Districts participating in Race to the Top and those that did not participate in the survey last year will be required by ISBE to participate to satisfy state legislation. Chicago District 299 will also require its schools to administer the survey. District 65 participated in the first statewide 5Essentials Survey and is opting to administer the survey to teachers and students this year to better track and inform progress. Principals and superintendents will receive their 5Essentials Reports this summer. Survey results will also be reported publically on the 2014 State School Report Card [website](#) and the full 5Essentials Reports will also be publically released in the fall. Beginning this year, surveys will be normed using the 2013 statewide results so that all schools can demonstrate progress over time. On behalf of the Illinois State Board of Education, [UChicago Impact](#) is providing Illinois 5Essentials to schools statewide. Teachers, students, and parents may complete the Illinois 5Essentials Survey online.

###