

Maryland district sees scores increase one year after implementing math program

Everyday Mathematics 4, which provides comprehensive materials and support to teachers, parents and students, helps improve districtwide performance

When Wicomico County Public Schools implemented Common Core State Standards six years ago, complaints from parents rolled in regarding challenging homework assignments.

"Parents did not understand, so they couldn't help their children," explains Julie Dill, elementary math supervisor for the 15,000-student district on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Then came *Everyday Mathematics 4*, a comprehensive math program that enables parents to access lessons and watch videos at home to break down the Common Core language barrier.

"I've heard few complaints since we adopted *Everyday Mathematics* last year," Dill says. "That's been a big benefit. It gives parents information so they can better help their children."

Varied approach

The McGraw-Hill Education product teaches multiple methods of problem-solving to accommodate different learning styles, repeats exposures to concepts and solutions to improve mastery, and uses real-world problems to demonstrate practical applications of skills.

"Teachers like that *Everyday Mathematics* gives many examples of conceptual models they can use in the classroom," Dill says. "They like the consistency in strategies and structure among grade levels and the opportunities for problem-solving, specifically open response and re-engagement lessons."

Wicomico implemented *Everyday Mathematics 4* in all K5 classes during the 2016-17 school year. The year prior, the program was one of three piloted throughout the district's 18 elementary schools.

"Teachers like the e-presentations, which guide them through lessons step by step, as well as the many e-tools," Dill says. "For example, if they are working on fractions, they can click on the fraction e-tool and utilize the fraction circles to demonstrate the concept, without searching somewhere else as they're building their lesson."

Increased math scores

According to PARCC scores released over the summer, county students in third, fourth and fifth grades showed



higher numbers compared with 2016, the year before *Everyday Mathematics* was implemented.

Third grade went from 42.5 percent meeting or exceeding expectations in 2016 to 45.5 percent meeting or exceeding expectations in 2017. Fourth grade went from 29.5 percent to 38.2 percent, and fifth grade went from 30.3 percent to 31.7 percent. Also, third and fourth grades exceeded state averages by 2.5 percentage points and 0.7 percentage points, respectively.

Dill adds that in schools that went from contained classrooms to a departmentalized approach, scores jumped as much as 20 percent.

Common vocabulary, strategies

The new program also eliminated an old problem of students missing material after moving from one school to another. "With *Everyday Mathematics*, everybody has a consistent set of lessons and units to follow," Dill says. "And teachers like that students are familiar with the strategies, vocabulary and games."

"Having that in common all the way across the board is a huge help," Dill says, noting that the grade-to-grade thread is especially important. "Students are coming in with more foundational knowledge, which says a lot about the program."



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