





SAMPLER FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN MATH

Math Partnerships _ Student Success

Math instruction has changed—so much is new. Partnerships help students show what they can do.

Helping children at home with math assignments can be a real challenge for parents. Teachers must take action to help families understand the math curriculum for their child's grade level, and how math is taught to their children. With clear information, more families will be confident about how to discuss math at home, monitor the completion of homework, and help their child develop positive attitudes about math. Parents and community partners also may bring valuable resources to the math class by volunteering, tutoring, and discussing real world applications of math at home, at work, and in life.

The Promising Partnership Practices in this Sampler come from members of NNPS who, over the years, shared family and community involvement in math. The examples include family math nights, workshops for parents, math volunteers, celebrations of math skills, and other creative partnerships. The practices, organized alphabetically, activate all six types of involvement in the NNPS framework: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. These and similar activities will help families better understand teachers' approaches, talk with their children about math, and support students' math learning. Some also show how community partners can enrich and support math instruction, family involvement, and student learning.

Improve Classroom Teaching and Students' Math Skills. The sample activities were conducted by school-based Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) to engage teachers, students, and parents across grade levels. Individual math teachers and grade-level teams may adapt the activities to strengthen partnerships with their own students' families in order to improve students' math skills and attitudes.

For example, math teachers at any grade level may organize a graphing activity such as *Get Your Graph On* with students and parents in their own classrooms. Similarly, any math teacher may invite students' parents to *Make a Math Date with Your Child* to help parents understand math standards for the grade level, have students demonstrate math skills, and enable students and parents enjoy hands-on math activities in class.

The ten examples in this *Sampler* were effectively implemented in schools working to improve goallinked partnership programs. They should help any school team or individual teacher feel confident about engaging parents and community partners with students in math. In this way parents gain an understanding of the work that teachers and students do in math class every day. When students demonstrate math mastery and have fun doing so, they are more likely to improve their attitudes about math, complete their math homework, and take more math courses.

The *Sampler* includes just a few of many excellent math involvement activities in our annual collections. See more at <u>www.partnershipschools.org</u>. Follow the paths to Success Stories and to a particular year's book. Then click on Math.

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Review of Research: Family and Community Involvement in Math

Steven B. Sheldon, NNPS Director of Research

Math is a core subject at all grade levels. Just about every school is working to improve students' math achievement. There are fewer studies of family and community involvement in math than in reading. Indeed, one review of the effects of different math interventions noted that few programs communicated with students' families about math, and when they did, the practices were "add ons." The lack of serious attention to family and community involvement in math runs counter to other research that suggests that systematic interventions for family and community involvement are needed to motivate and support students' learning math.

Parents Influence Students' Attitudes. School-family partnerships are important because parents socialize their children in ways that affect their children's self-perceptions of ability and achievement in math. Surprisingly, children's self-concept of math ability has been shown to be more closely related to their parents' perceptions of their ability than to the students' own report card grades in math. This *indirect* influence is important because other studies suggest that early self-perceptions of ability in particular subjects shape students' course choices in high school and career decisions.

Parental Involvement Contributes to Students' Achievement. Some studies reported that parental involvement *directly* influenced children's math achievement. Across racial and ethnic groups and school levels, students performed better and took more math courses if they discussed school with their parents and if parents were active school volunteers or members of the PTA/PTO. Also, higher parental expectations for their children and positive neighborhood characteristics predicted higher math achievement through high school.

Parents Need Help to Assist Students in Math. There is ample evidence indicating that many, if not most, families need help in interacting with their children about math. One study found that although parents believed in the value of progressive instructional strategies in math (e.g., having children talk about their work and learn from mistakes), they actually gave their children directives with few opportunities for students to discover their own solutions to math problems. Other studies indicated that parents' abilities to help their children with math homework varied greatly. Overall, researchers concluded that effective partnership practices are needed to help all families understand *how* to support and encourage their children to learn math skills and maintain positive attitudes about math across the grades.

One effective strategy for subject-specific school and family partnerships is teachers' use of *interactive homework* that requires children to show and discuss their math work and ideas with a family partner. One longitudinal study at the elementary level compared students in TIPS math and non-TIPs control classes. Students assigned TIPS-Math interactive homework reported greater family involvement in math, had more positive attitudes about math homework, and higher levels of math achievement compared to students in control classes (Van Voorhis, 2011). The study suggested that teachers can help all families support student learning in math without making parents think that they have to "teach" math skills. Learn about TIPS Interactive Homework in the elementary and middle grades at <u>www.partnershipschools.org</u>. Click on TIPS.

Other studies suggest that schools can help students improve math achievement by developing a school climate that welcomes parents, other family members, and the community. Schools that are welcoming places and that focus everyone's attention on student learning are more likely to encourage students to work hard in mastering math skills, leading to higher math achievement on standardized tests.

Math presents some unique challenges for family involvement. The progressively difficult nature of mathematics curricula and many parents' "math phobias" make it especially important for district leaders, school principals, and math teachers to design and implement thoughtful partnership programs and practices that help families feel confident about interacting with their children in math from preschool on.

For details on these and other studies and complete references, see:

Sheldon, S. B. (2009). Improving student outcomes with school, family, and community partnerships: A research review. Pp. 40-56 in Epstein, J. L. et al. *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action, third edition.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Van Voorhis, F. L. (2011). Adding families to the homework equation: A longitudinal study of family involvement and mathematics achievement. *Education and Urban Society*, *43*, 313-338.

AFTER SCHOOL TUTORING FOR NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS James Ford Rhodes High School Cleveland, Ohio

James Ford Rhodes High School wanted to increase the number of ninth-grade students passing the Ohio proficiency test. The school recruited community and teacher volunteers to tutor students after school to assist in improving students' math skills.

The school sent flyers to education departments of local colleges inviting students to an open house in October. There, college students learned about the tutoring program and agreed to tutor students as part of their community service. Retired educators, grandparents, and parent alumni also offered their tutoring services.

The tutoring sessions ran three times per week from 2:30-4:30 pm, September until May. Each participating ninth grader had his/her own tutor. The tutors used proficiency materials and workbooks focused on fractions, division, and word problems.

Attendance varied, particularly dropping off after spring break. The program communicated to parents to encourage their children to attend the tutoring. Students also had a difficult time remaining focused on the importance of the tutoring helping them pass all areas of the ninth-grade proficiency test. Committed guidance counselors, teachers, college students, and interested parents took struggling students under their wings.

One hundred out of 500 ninth graders received tutoring. Student test scores on the proficiency test did increase from October to March. In particular, reading scores increased 7%, writing scores increased from 72% to 90%, and math scores rose 18%.

Increasing test scores on the ninth grade proficiency test will continue to be a goal. Thanks to the volunteer efforts of college students, retired teachers, grandparents, and parent alumni, Rhodes High School is on the road to success.

DAIRY QUEEN FAMILY MATH NIGHT

HIGHLANDS MIDDLE SCHOOL KENNEWICK, WASHINGTON

Sometimes it takes more than games to get kids excited about math. Math is a challenging subject that demands attention to details. However, the impressive cognition-enhancing powers of ice cream should not be ignored. Highlands Middle School organized a Dairy Queen Family Math Night to create a memorable evening of math, food, and fun.

Highlands wanted to encourage family involvement in boosting students' math skills at home. Previous Math Nights had been wellplanned, but under-attended. The school's Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) figured that parents and students did not want to head back to the school for educational activities in the evening. The members of the ATP sought a more inviting and exciting environment in which to present math material. The team decided that the local Dairy Queen could be a place that students and families would be motivated to attend. They did some careful planning, sent out flyers, and raised funds to pay for a new way to combine math and ice cream.

Parents and students came to a big math party at the local Dairy Queen. Teachers wanted to familiarize students and their parents with its new online curriculum. They also played a variety of grade-appropriate challenging—but fun—math games. At the same time, students, parents, and community members were offered a school-sponsored buy one, get one free deal that applied to the whole menu at Dairy Queen.

Highland's ATP transformed the Dairy Queen into a functioning math center, complete with computer stations. Students participated in estimation challenges and board games as well as other physical math games. Students also explored the Holt Online Curriculum resources. These resources featured video lessons, interactive practice sessions, and quick quizzes to test students proficiency and progress on specific skills.

In addition, the Holt curriculum also had a section for students to enter a raffle for more than 30 prizes. Parents were not left out of the computer activities. Computer stations helped parents learn how to check their children's progress and grades online.

The excitement of the night at Dairy Queen was also enhanced by raffle prizes and gift cards donated by local businesses. In addition, the school's mascot, a Scotty dog named Angus, showed up for math and ice cream.

The Dairy Queen location helped Highlands Middle School increase attendance at this Math Night. Over two hundred parents and students attended. The Dairy Queen also benefited, boasting its largest Tuesday revenue since its opening five years prior. As a thank-you, the store donated ten percent of the night's profit to Highlands Middle School, providing another math-related example to share with students. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, many parents saw, first hand, that teachers wanted them to be engaged in math with their middle grades students.

Family Math Day

Spooner Elementary School Spooner, Wisconsin

ames and activities focusing on mathematics filled the hallways, classrooms, gymnasium, and cafeteria at Spooner Elementary for its 4th Annual Family Math Day last February. Even though the school has sponsored the event for several years, it remains popular—more than 70 percent of parents and other caregivers attended the fun-filled morning of activities.

The school's Action Team for Partnership (ATP) started the event to help with a district-wide initiative to boost math skills. Putting their heads together, team members decided that a morning full of practical and entertaining math games would show students that math is more than isolated problems and encourage their parents to do more math with their children at home.

"The event illustrates all the different resources and activities that have minimal to no cost to play at home. It gives the parents ideas and makes learning fun for all," said one of the organizers of this year's math day.

On a Friday morning in late winter, approximately 300 parents and other family members participated in Family Math Day. Registration began at 8:30. Parents received a folder with a list and location of the games as well as a lunch ticket. Dozens of volunteers from the community helped staff registration tables and run the games. High school students provided childcare for parents who needed it.

For the rest of the morning, parents moved from one activity to the next with their children, stopping to play a math game or do origami. Parents and children selected from about 30 games, all of which included recommendations for grade and skill levels.

Community members, including the mayor, police officers, and business owners participated in the activities and accompanied students whose parents were not able to attend. School lunch was included in the day's events. The biggest challenge, organizers said, is keeping the math day activities new and interesting so families will return and students will want them to. This year the school used grant money to buy new games, and redesigned the layout of some repeat activities. These innovations obviously worked, as the attendance increased again this year. Another challenge is one the ATP doesn't mind—families wanting to stay past lunch and continue playing the games!

In addition to their own students in kindergarten through fourth grade, the staff at Spooner partnered with a nearby family resource center to encourage preschool students and their families to participate. They scheduled the event on an early dismissal day so that these young guests would not get too worn out by all the activities.

School administrators plan to continue Family Math Day. They will fine-tune the activities to keep the math new and challenging, and find more efficient ways to organize the volunteers who make this truly a community event.

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Family Math Night: "Get a Clue"

Prairie Elementary School Naperville, Illinois

ho stole Mrs. Gorman's Jolly Ranchers? That was the mystery facing 50 teams of sleuths at Family Math Night: Get A Clue. It took keen eyes and math skills to crack the arithmetic and geometry clues to find the culprit.

It was late in January when 51 students and 43 parents arrived at the school. The principal and a local police officer directed them to an area where staff members doled out pencils, gloves, badges, and problem sets. As soon as everyone had gathered in the lobby, the honors math teacher led them to the crime scene—Mrs. Gorman's classroom.

Yellow crime scene tape cordoned off six empty Jolly Rancher bags. Student-parent detective teams worked through eight word problems to solve the mystery. The teams solved the first two problems in Mrs. Gorman's classroom. Then they moved to the school's library where they examined evidence set up on projector screens.

Students and parents ruled out suspects by completing sets of problems. Teachers, as the likely suspects, circled the room pleading with students not to finger them. The night ended well, with the apprehension of the candy thief (one teacher volunteered to be the bad guy), and the recovery of the candy.

All of the junior detectives enjoyed the Jolly Ranchers, and a few lucky students won prizes—various math and problem-solving board games, including Clue.

The School Family Community Partnership (SFCP) team at Prairie had not hosted a math event for some time. The idea for the mystery motif came from a book, *Solve a Mystery Using Real Life Math Skills*, which one of the team members recommended because she and her own third-grader had thoroughly enjoyed it. The group spied a novel approach to reinforcing math skills for students in Grades 3 to 5, and the event was underway.

The SFCP team recruited school staff

to participate, even asking a Naperville police officer, who works with the drug education program, if she would be willing to donate her time and some crime scene tape. Team members collected data, such as height, weight, and shoe sizes, from seven staff members who would become the likely suspects. Then the team set to work writing the mystery.

The staff promoted the event by setting the scene of the fictitious crime, giving a few details, and telling students and parents that the investigation would continue at the math night event.

The math mystery night was a great success, SFCP team members said. "Parents and children absolutely loved the evening. Many families personally complimented and thanked us for this program," said one member. "Teachers really loved role-playing during this event, and thought that it was a very creative way to enhance math skills."

With that kind of response, a math mystery night is sure to be repeated. Organizers would like to develop a three-year cycle of mystery scenarios so that students would solve different mysteries as they proceeded from grade 3 to grade 5. The SFCP team would also like to create a similar program for students in kindergarten through second grade.



FAMILY MATH NIGHT: RAISING MONEY-SMART KIDS

GRASONVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GRASONVILLE, MARYLAND

oney talks. At Grasonville Elementary, the Family Math Night focusing on money skills—spending, saving, earning, reaching financial goals—said a lot about student and family interest and about the Parent Involvement Committee's (PIC) ability to put together a successful academic night.

The PIC followed the recommendations of the school's mathematics specialist on what topics would best supplement the students' classroom work and help parents increase their children's learning at home. This year's recommendation was: Money. A recent addition to the parent library at school of Kiplinger's *Raising Money-Smart Kids* added to the money theme. The school is always looking for new ways to acquaint parents with the material available in the Parent Resource Center.

Family Math Night took the form of a game and a challenge, with the students setting financial goals and the adults serving as financial advisors. Each student received a wallet with \$20 in play money and a form to keep track of their earnings and expenditures. Each student set a money goal—less than \$50, \$51–\$100, and \$101 and up—and enlisted the help of their financial advisor.

Around the cafeteria were activity stations for earning and spending money. Students moved through the stations. There were money bingo tables, dice rolls with opportunities to earn money for extra chores or as birthday gifts, and a windfall spin. The spending stations included a super-shopper stop and a pick-a-trip option.

Community partner PNC Bank provided the last stop—the bank where volunteers counted the money and determined whether students were above or below their goals or right on the money. PNC gave each child a piggy bank and pencil that looked like it was wrapped in a dollar bill. The bank also provided information on children's savings accounts and financial services for adults. The math specialist prepared packets for parents filled with tips and web sites to use to build money skills at home.

Nearly 80 parents and 100 students participated in the family night. "Everyone was involved. Everyone had fun. Everyone learned," said one of the organizers. "The teachers were given a glimpse of the power that parents working together with their child can offer."

The PIC also showed that working together paid off. School staff members provided materials and worked at the event; parent volunteers worked behind the scenes to organize the night and spread the word to other parents; the community partner donated banks and offered helpful information; and the Parent Teacher Association board members assisted with event planning and funding. For all, it was a worthwhile investment.

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FLASHCARD FRIDAY

FAIRMOUNT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ST. Peters, Missouri

t Fairmount Elementary School, Flashcard Friday had a clear and simple goal—to help students who needed extra time practice and master basic math skills.

The Fairmount Parent Involvement Team wanted to find simple, but long-lasting, ways to bolster students' math achievement. One idea was for parent volunteers to use math flashcards with students who needed to practice math skills. This was not a one-time event, but a weekly activity starting in the second quarter of the school year. Volunteers would help as many students as possible master skills and meet math standards.

Every Thursday, teachers received in their school mailboxes a list of the volunteers scheduled for their classrooms the next day. When the volunteers arrived on Friday, they were greeted in the office and received a packet of information, which included their scheduled classrooms and time periods, a special Flashcard Friday name tag; a set of flashcards for their assigned grade levels; and a Thank You note for volunteering their time. The volunteers, then, go to their assigned classrooms, check in with the teacher, and begin working with pre-selected students in small groups in a quite space.

The key to this event was parent involvement. Parent members of the Parent Involvement Team contacted their peers to volunteer for Flashcard Friday. Some members of the community heard about the effort and pitched in their time, as well. Grandparents and substitute teachers from a different school district also volunteered to help students practice their math skills.

The results of the volunteers' energy and commitment were clear. One parent stated, "I've been a parent at Fairmount for many years and I can't tell you how nice it is to see the hallway full of volunteers working with students. I've never seen anything like this at our school." Students benefitted from Flashcard Friday, of course, but so did teachers, who did not have to spend as much time working on math fundamentals with students in need of extra practice. One teacher commented, "This program has given me instructional time back into my day. Because parents are working with these students on basic facts, I can spend more time [teaching other skills in] the curriculum." Plus, parents and other volunteers get to interact with students in simple but meaningful ways. Flashcards aren't rocket science, but they give students solid math ground to stand on so they are ready to learn more complex math skills.

The benefits of Flashcard Fridays are, indeed, far-reaching and will be continued. The school's principal had this to share: "It's been inspiring to witness the evolution of this program. From its beginnings as an idea at a parent meeting to its fruition..: I couldn't be prouder." Flashcards seem almost too simple—but there isn't a house in the world that stands without a foundation.

FAMILY MATH NIGHT: GET YOUR GRAPH ON!

STEVENS MIDDLE SCHOOL Pasco, Washington

t's a fact that some students love to throw paper airplanes and put Barbies in peril. At the Get Your Graph On Family Math Night at Stevens Middle School, students were able to do both to build graphing concepts and skills.

Faculty at Stevens Middle School noted that some students had trouble working with graphs. They figured a Family Math Night might help, but they wanted to go beyond earlier evenings that featured math games or puzzles. For their new version of a math night, teachers created activities that would build age-appropriate math talents. Sixth-graders would work on problem solving and reasoning; seventh-graders could explore probabilities and test their datareporting skills; and eighth-graders would brush up on data collection and analysis. All students needed graphs to complete the activities, which were tantalizingly titled Paper Airplane Extravaganza and Barbie Bungee Jumping.

For the Paper Airplane Extravaganza, students and their parents folded paper airplanes using templates provided by the school. Then, they went to the gym to fly three airplanes at the same time, recording the flight distances on a school-provided graph. "This is so much fun. It does not matter that I do not speak English," remarked one parent in Spanish. "The hands-on activity allows me to show students how to follow directions."

A student who tossed several airplanes and graphed the distances they flew said, "I didn't know that airplane-making was such a big deal, and that if I did not follow directions I wouldn't get the best result." In Barbie Bungee Jumping, students attempted to estimate how many rubber bands had to be attached to Barbie for her to successfully bungee jump from 16 feet. Students conducted investigations and recorded data, adding or subtracting rubber bands from Barbie's "bungee cord" until she successfully made the jump. The activity was so exciting that even parents and siblings joined the fun.

Everyone enjoyed cookies and juice and all the participants received prizes for their work. About 90 parents and 150 students attended. The students benefited from their opportunities to improve their math skills in a low-pressure, high-entertainment environment where concepts such as graphing, probability, and reporting data were grounded in concrete actions—such as Barbie hurtling toward the floor.

Most importantly, though, family math night got teachers, parents, and students together, completing activities that were fun and important. "I was able to interact with students that I normally don't get to see daily. It was fun!" commented one teacher. So, while Barbie might not have had such a good time, Stevens Middle students, their parents, and their teachers certainly did.

MAKE A MATH DATE WITH YOUR CHILD

Birdneck Elementary School Virginia Beach, Virginia

arents and students "did lunch," as well as math during a series of date days at Birdneck Elementary. Everyone seemed to enjoy the special occasions that brought parents right into math classes to problem solve along side their children.

Make A Math Date with Your Child invited parents into mathematics classes to see the skills that teachers taught at various grade levels, to learn the math objectives for each grade, and to observe their children's strengths and weaknesses. Parents were also invited to have lunch with their children either before or after class.

More than 100 parents and other caregivers accepted the invitation and made a date to see their child in class. Teachers prepared hands-on math activities that adults and children could do together. Each grade level had its own day so that parents with more than one child at Birdneck could participate with each student. The school accommodated parents' busy schedules by hosting the events in both the morning and the afternoon.

In addition to class and lunch, parents were treated to a math presentation by resource teachers and administrators. They also received a packet of math games and activities and an Everyday Math deck of cards that they could play at home with their children to increase math skills.

"The event proved to be a fun, as well as eye-opening, opportunity for parents while they learned which math skills their child needed to practice," said the parent involvement coordinator. The impetus for the date days was the school's goal to improve math scores on standardized tests.

Despite invitations, flyers and other publicity, some parents were initially reluctant to attend. Tying the event to lunch increased participation, and those who came were happy to have had the opportunity to spend time in school with their child. These parents said that they would be better able to help their children at home with math assignments and questions. Children, of course, were happy to have their parents in school and at lunch.

Birdneck plans to have more Math Date days, and will work hard to encourage more parents to pencil them in.

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PARENT UNIVERSITY: FOCUS ON MATH

MABLETON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MABLETON, GEORGIA

oming to grips with ever-changing math curricula and performance standards can seem like an overwhelming task. This is especially true for parents, who may have little or no knowledge of what happens in a math class from day to day. This puts parents at a real disadvantage in supporting their students' math learning at home. Responding to parent surveys expressing this frustration, the School Improvement Team (SIT) at Mableton Elementary implemented a Parent University where students and teachers worked together to show parents what goes on in math lessons and how to help their children master difficult math material at home.

Held immediately before PTA meetings and organized by grade level to encourage attendance, the SIT designed Parent University sessions to be brief (about one half hour), yet provide a wealth of useful material to parents. The teaching team from each grade level developed a concise picture of math classwork, focusing on the most challenging content taught during that particular nine week period. Along with a PowerPoint presentation and printed handouts, teachers prepared hands-on activities for students and parents to work on together.

The 3rd grade teachers, for example, decided to focus on multiplication. Their PowerPoint illustrated examples of all the ways they teach multiplication to their students. They also furnished manipulatives such as unifix cubes, base ten blocks and mats, and white boards and markers for students and parents to work together on some problems. After about 30 minutes, parents received a packet of learning tools to bring home, including a complete set of multiplication flash cards and a multiplication-themed game.

After "graduating" from Parent University, parents had a more complete understanding of the math curriculum for their child's grade level, how teachers presented the material, and what their children were expected to demonstrate. Students enjoyed the opportunity to take on the role of "teacher" for the hands-on activities and were proud of their new-found abilities to teach their parents about math, all while reinforcing their own math skills.

Overall, the Parent University cost about \$200 over the course of the year —most of the supplies and resources were already available in the teachers' classrooms. A difficult challenge explain math clearly and enjoyably—was well organized by teachers and students, and well received by all who participated.

Show Me the Math

Tacoma School District #10 Tacoma, Washington

ore than 150 businesses in Tacoma opened their doors to middle school students to prove that math is important. Show Me the Math encouraged students to visit many different businesses in their community to see how mathematics is used outside the classroom.

More than 300 students from three middle schools took up the challenge, with impressive results.

A principal got the program going by posing this question, "Wouldn't it be great to do a project around math with our local businesses?" That query led to the formation of a community action team, with business owners, parents, students, school and district staff members coming together.

The group set to work asking local businesses to participate by creating and demonstrating a math problem from their everyday business for students who visited. Businesses were also asked to display a Show Me The Math poster to identify theirs as a math-friendly place.

The district involved three middle schools in the pilot project. Each school kicked off the project in its own way. All students received a Show Me The Math game book that lists 15 different businesses they needed to visit, completing a math problem at each. Businesses included gas stations, restaurants, dentists, auto repair shops and more. Each week students would turn a completed page from their workbook in to their teacher.

For the next few months, students diligently completed the problems in the game book. Students went with their parents, in groups, or by themselves to participating businesses.

Math teachers saw a marked increase in enthusiasm from many students. One student came back from one visit and asked to do a presentation on how gas price increases would affect how much he would have to raise his prices to mow lawns this summer. A teacher shared a story about another student who had never turned in any homework, but completed every page in his Show Me The Math book.

Parents were equally impressed. "It was amazing watching my quiet, soft-spoken son getting outside his comfort zone and having to approach people he didn't know. We spent an average of 30 minutes at each business, because they were so excited to have us there," one said.

A particularly heart-warming story featured a student who went into an auto shop to complete his math problems and connected with the owner. The student asked if he could visit periodically and the owner agreed. A long time later, the student's mother visited the business to tell the owner that her son had not been doing well in school and was not attending regularly until he started visiting the shop. Now, he's on track.

These and other stories will be the stuff of a documentary that the district would like to produce on this project. The district is planning to repeat the initiative next year, and is looking for ways to attract even more students.

