



## FAQ's - Teachers and Schools Addressing Parents Regarding Math

### 1. Why is there a change in math?

When looking at the old standards (many years back) the % of students who embrace and understand math has always been very low. For years many students have been struggling in math and few have chosen to take the path of higher math classes and careers that involve math. This is a problem. Many of the struggles are due to the lack of deeper understanding of math concepts and therefore students are not able to make connections to new concepts or real life applications. This generation of students, more than ever, needs to have the opportunity to understand math, have confidence in their ability and be strong mathematicians. So a change is definitely necessary.

### 2. Are our teachers prepared?

The state adopted the CCSS, now the AZCCRS, in 2010. DVUSD has spent the last 4 years training teachers. Teachers have had 4 years to attend District trainings, state trainings, as well as learn on-the job in the classroom. However, most teachers were focused on the old standards and are now faced with the task of learning the AZCCRS standards as they teach them. At the District level, we support our teachers with trainings each year, a solid resource, assessments aligned to the resource, Print Shop ordering, Smart Board lessons aligned to the lessons, manipulatives, email and phone call help, and individual or level meetings at schools. With all of these in place, the hope is that this would alleviate some of the time consuming tasks to allow teachers to just focus on learning their grade standards.

### 3. Why is the new math resource so plain?

We have had textbooks for years, with much color and pretty pictures, but these features have done little to enhance the learning of the students. The beauty of a resource is not in how it looks on the outside, but the content on the inside. Engage NY is a beautifully written resource completely aligned to the AZCCRS for math. For K-5, the essence of learning involves manipulatives and visual representations that cannot be found in a textbook. We encourage our parents to understand the level of hands-on learning that is involved in student learning that they don't see at home, which replaces the colorful worksheets students did in the past. The strategies students are working on for simple addition and subtraction are strategies that will transfer for many years into higher level math content and classrooms. Math instruction is not about one school year. Students are building strategies that will help them make connections in mathematics for years to come. These connections have been lacking in the past.

### 4. What does a mathematics lesson look like? & How can I help my student?

A parent night at the classroom level or school level (done in grade bands) allowing parents to SEE the shift and understand the need is essential. All parent night resources are posted in Blackboard for administrators and teachers to access. We are really encouraging teachers not to send homework home with the expectation that parents have to help their child. The 2010 standards can sometimes create high anxiety for parents, which then creates tension with child/parent, then transferring that anxiety back to the teacher or school. To alleviate this, we recommend teachers send work home that is from previous lessons that a student is confident completing independently at home. Because these standards and strategies are new to parents, we encourage parents to become "listeners and learners," rather than teachers. In other words, send the students home with one or 2 problems that they can confidently explain to their parents, having the student take on the "teacher" role.

This promotes a more positive learning environment at home and puts the learning in the student's long term memory. Therefore, we highly recommend that if a parent expresses the need to help their child, the teacher should let them know to not worry and instead put it back in the teacher's hands. This will alleviate a lot of stress all around.

### **5. Where can I go as a parent for help online?**

We recommend giving parents the link to Engage NY for the specific grade level lessons for parents to review if they would like. We also recommend teachers posting videos from Learnzillion that support daily lessons. In addition, Eureka Math, the creators of Engage NY, has 2 page handouts for parents for each K-5 module explaining some of the strategies that will be used for a specific module.

#### **Engage NY Site (provide parents access to the lessons to review): K-8 Grades**

\*\*Links directly to each grade level's Engage NY lessons. (Scroll down to see individual lessons)

K: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/kindergarten-mathematics>

1st: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-1-mathematics>

2nd: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-2-mathematics>

3rd: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-3-mathematics>

4th: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-4-mathematics>

5th: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-5-mathematics>

6th: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-6-mathematics>

7th: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-7-mathematics>

8th: <https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-8-mathematics>

#### **LEARNZILLION (Video Library) K-8 Grades**

[https://learnzillion.com/common\\_core/math/k-8](https://learnzillion.com/common_core/math/k-8) (click on the desired grade level to find videos aligned to the standards; choose a video that supports the students daily learning and use the Quick Code provided on the video or the URL for that video to post on websites or send to parents)

#### **EUREKA MATH PARENT TIP HANDOUTS (author of Engage NY) K-5 Grade ONLY!**

<http://commoncore.org/parents> (Tips for Parents: scroll down to find 2 page handouts that support most K-5 modules.)

\*\*If you are having a curriculum or math night, it's helpful to show parents how to access these sites and what each contains.