

Adults-Only Math Tutoring

*School #82 Early Childhood Center
Buffalo, New York*

A student needing help with math homework will often go to his or her parent. But what if the parent does not know how to do the work either? School #82 Early Childhood Center is trying to solve that problem with Adults-Only Free Math Tutoring, an evening of math instruction for parents who want to know what their children are learning.

Several parents had approached the school's math teacher, concerned that they were unable to help their children with math homework. Many of these same parents were enrolled in GED courses, where they were having trouble with math themselves. Other parents had not finished high school and needed help with the skills necessary to assist their children. To try to meet these various needs, the building's math teacher designed a course that would cover the math from GED courses, as well as the math being taught in School #82's classes. This, she thought, would provide a chance for enrichment or for simply brushing up on basic math.

The tutoring session, offered twice to accommodate parents' schedules, covered math skills taught from pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. Parents learned about fractions, decimals, and percents; received a packet of materials; and worked with other parents using math manipulatives.

Despite parents' requests for help, the math tutoring sessions were not nearly as well attended as the school had hoped. But School #82 is not giving up. The math teacher plans to expand the number of topics and sessions and

increase the publicity. She especially hopes to target those parents enrolled in GED classes. Teachers will also recruit parents who come into the building to drop off or pick up their children.

The math teacher would like to multiply the impact of this program by including other community residents who do not have children in the school but need this service—a practice that would allow School #82 parents to bring a friend and feel more comfortable.

One parent attending a pilot session said she felt much more confident about completing her own assignments in GED class after participating. She also said she could make immediate use of the material with her own children.

"This program . . . has tremendous potential," said the chair of the school's Action Team for Partnerships (ATP). "It will not be dropped until all avenues have been explored for 'getting it out there' and 'getting them in here.'"

*Kathryn McEvoy, ATP Chair
(716) 816-4070*