

## Math Mornings

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*Elizabeth Pole School  
Taunton, Massachusetts*

If there is one constant in education, it is change. Elizabeth Pole School used change, specifically a new math program, to its advantage, strengthening home-school connections, improving math achievement and acquainting families with the new curriculum.

Teachers and paraprofessionals collaborated with the parent and teacher group for increasing family involvement to create Math Mornings, a set of interactive workshops to familiarize parents with the school's math program.

To accommodate as many parents as possible, Math Mornings were conducted by grade, with each day focusing on a different level from K to 4. In the gym, parents and their children rotated through stations that were monitored by teachers and paraprofessionals.

Each station featured a math game that the students would learn in school throughout the year and could play at home to reinforce math skills. Teachers at each station explained how the game corresponded with math lessons and with state and national math standards. At the end of the two-hour event, the participants enjoyed a breakfast snack provided by the school's family involvement group.

Math Mornings provided an opportunity for families to experience the new math curriculum in an inviting atmosphere. In this way, they supported the school's goal of relating the home-school connection to the learning standards in each academic area.

The refreshments cost about \$150. Other supplies were provided as part of the math curriculum or made by teachers, staff, or volunteers. Because the organizers were diligent about publicizing Math Mornings through fliers and the school calendar, more than 500 students and 250 parents participated.

This event lasted one week, but the benefits are ongoing. School staff members noted

that student performance improved in math and parents reported they are more comfortable with what is going on in math classes. The parent-teacher group president said it was a great event for families and that the staff was happy to assist. A teacher added that it was worth the time to provide a learning opportunity for the families. The children were equally enthusiastic and said they loved playing the games.

Repeating Math Mornings separately for each grade helped to ensure that families would be comfortable with the curriculum as their children progress through the grades. Regular newsletters throughout the year continued to explain math concepts and practices, keeping the message of Math Mornings fresh in the parents' minds all year long.

*Barbara McGuire  
Principal  
(508) 821-1260  
bmcguire@tauntonschoools.org*