



Inspiring Lightbulb Moments in Math

By Shannan Walsh

Traditionally, Oxford City Schools students scored very well on state assessments in math, but in the last few years scores declined, demographics changed, and the east Alabama district needed a math intervention system with quality professional development. Since many students in the district became proficient readers with Voyager's core and reading intervention programs—the Voyager Universal Literacy System® and Voyager Passport™—administrators chose to implement Vmath™, the company's new math intervention system, district-wide in grades 3-6 last fall.

According to Khristie Goodwin, elementary curriculum coordinator for Oxford City Schools, even though Oxford only started the program in late October, the district is already seeing great results.

"We are seeing gains across the board. I am amazed at the positive emails and phone calls I am getting from teachers and administrators," she says.

Teachers at Coldwater Elementary in Anniston, Alabama, are seeing a dramatic improvement in the performance of struggling students using the Vmath intervention program, implemented throughout Oxford City Schools in grades 3-6. Students say the new curriculum has helped increase their confidence in the classroom.

A Team Approach

Vmath has even helped prevent some special education math referrals, especially where school-wide implementation is happening, like at Coldwater Elementary.

"There is an alternative to referring students now and we see students progressing with math skills," says Goodwin. "Teachers in the past have referred because [students] were not progressing in their core curriculum. Now, teachers ensure that students are participating in intervention, which is delivered jointly by special education, regular education and Title I teachers. This team approach has had a great impact."

Oxford teachers and administrators also applaud the program's ease of use, the built in reporting system, and the extensive support from Voyager, which helped the launch of the district's new math initiative go seamlessly.

"I appreciate the fact that all the materials needed by the teacher and students are included in the Vmath kits," says Valerie Gamble, fifth and sixth grade reading and math intervention teacher at DeArmanville Elementary School.

As with Voyager reading programs, teachers and administrators implementing Vmath use VPORT™, Voyager's online reporting system, to track student progress and plan for instructional needs.

"The program is data-driven, which means data is used to guide instruction," Gamble says.

Teacher Support Ensures Success

To keep the implementation running smoothly, Oxford teachers and coaches participate in model lessons, attend meetings to review student and classroom reports, and receive guidance during on-site visits from Voyager support staff. Most importantly, they receive continued support from the Oxford administration.

Teachers aren't the only ones enjoying the new math intervention program—many students are seeing the results for themselves.

Says teacher Valerie Gamble, "My fifth-graders love, love, *love* Vmath. They are doing so well—I am seeing 'lightbulb moments' daily." ❧

