



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

School Board: Thames Valley District School Board

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Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy: Focus Mathematics Project

Hyperlinks to Documents or Website(s) Describing this Program/Initiative/Strategy

Description of Program/Initiative/Strategy

The focus is on exemplary mathematics practices that excite, engage and increase student confidence and achievement. In the brief description please provide answers to the following questions: Where the program/initiative/strategy is delivered (school/board locations)? Who is responsible for delivering and monitoring the program/initiative/strategy? Who is the target audience? Are there any community partnerships involved? Are there any staffing or budget implications? Are there any special resources required? What are your indicators of success, etc.?

Focus Mathematics Project (K-8 and Gr.9)

The Focus Mathematics Project is a partnership of the Mathematics system support staff and schools with a strong focus on mathematics in their building. The project in elementary invites about 10 school teams to put forward teachers from each grade band to engage in sustained and iterative work to grow their understanding of the mathematics they teach and how students come to learn it. In secondary, 4 school teams were selected to engage in sustained and iterative work with respect to the grade 9 applied mathematics course. The program is delivered in large group sessions held centrally and small group lesson study (CIL-M) sessions at participant schools. System support staff are responsible for planning and facilitating sessions while teachers, administrators, and system support staff share responsibilities for monitoring progress and impact. Elementary teachers are released for three full days by system funds and up to three more full days through school network funding. Secondary teachers are released for at least nine days using Pathways for Student Success funding. Professional reading resources are provided and incorporated into the work. We monitor student engagement,

teacher and student self-efficacy, and student achievement. Teachers return a sampling of student evidence on target students.

What has been the impact on Student Learning?

We are witnessing a dramatic increase in math talk and student use of manipulatives in the classroom. Related to that math talk is an increase in the use of math tasks that require critical thinking and creativity. Improved student productive disposition is evident in the way students talk about math and their contribution to the learning. As a result of teachers' work growing their own understanding of mathematics for teaching, teachers are feeling greater confidence in highlighting and connecting important mathematical ideas and seeing it reflected in their students' work. We are keen to connect more qualitative evidence with end-of-term reports, Dreambox research pilot data, and provincial assessment data.