

EverydayMathematics® Success Stories



Legacy Of Success in Greensburg Salem Schools

Greensburg is the business, cultural and political center of Westmoreland County located in suburban Pittsburgh, approximately 35 miles southeast of the city. With several local colleges and universities located in the area, Greensburg is a community with a supportive educational environment.

The Greensburg Salem School District typically posts the highest scores within Westmoreland County on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). During the 2008-2009, 2007-2008, and 2006-2007 school years Greensburg Salem was named the No. 1 over-achieving school district in Western Pennsylvania according to *The Pittsburgh Business Times*. The

August 2009 *U.S. News and World Report* recognized Greensburg Salem as one of Pennsylvania's highest achieving high schools in the top 10% of schools in the state and the nation. In 2009, Grade 3 at Greensburg Salem had 97% of the students Proficient or Advanced in math with 70% being advanced. This put students at the top of the Grade 3 scores in the region.

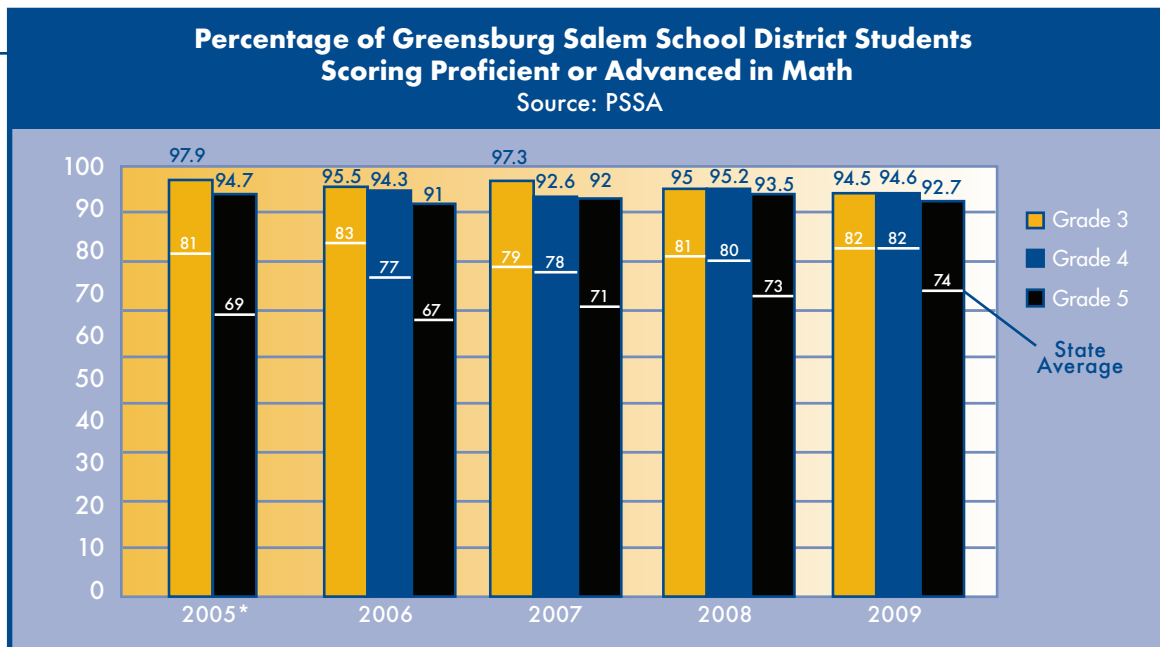
Thomas Yarabinec, Superintendent of Schools, said, "Over the years, we have seen tremendous growth in the math achievement of our students. Our graduates frequently tell us how well prepared they were for their college level math courses. They also tell us that they consistently outperform their peers in

class. In many respects, Greensburg has set the benchmark in math as evidenced by the number of schools that visit our District to examine our math program."

Early Adopter of Everyday Mathematics

In the late 1980s, teachers and administrators examined the mathematics curriculum and student performance in Greensburg Salem. There was a realization then that the students were not succeeding mathematically with the traditional curriculum, and that a very different approach to teaching mathematics was required. The district began an intensive search for a new, more innovative way

Greensburg Salem consistently has more than 90% of students at the Proficient or Advanced Levels on the PSSA.



*In 2005, Grade 4 students were not tested.

to teach mathematics that led them to the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project (UCSMP).

In 1989, the Greensburg Salem schools became one of the original field test sites for materials from the UCSMP, which would be published as *Everyday Mathematics*. The district was a field test site for every grade and adopted the commercial edition of each grade as it became available. Many of the teachers in Greensburg Salem who participated in the field tests and pilots of *Everyday Mathematics* are still teaching in the district.

A Structure for Consistent Implementation

After 20 years with *Everyday Mathematics*, Thomas Shipley, the district-level administrator who oversees K-12 mathematics, believes the continued success of the program stems from the ongoing reinforcement of philosophy and focus of the program and the sharing of effective strategies. An elementary math committee with representatives of all grades and buildings meets monthly to discuss ideas, concerns, best practices and assessments. According to Mr. Shipley “We work continually with the teachers on our Elementary Mathematics Committee. This level of collaboration allows us to provide similar math experiences for all students.”

Committee teachers interact with their peers back in each building after district meetings. They share ideas from the committee and in return, committee members bring input back to the group from their buildings. In this way, the communication lines focused on mathematics education are always open and the delivery of instruction is consistent and district-wide.

“There are elements of our program that are non-negotiable” says Dr. Eileen Amato, Director of Elementary Education. “Our experienced teachers know that delivering the conceptual lessons as

directed and not skipping over the Math Boxes, the games and the explorations get kids to the deeper understandings.”

One Curriculum for All Students

Elementary teachers at Greensburg Salem are organized to have common planning time. In addition to the grade level teachers, learning support teachers, classroom assistants and Title I teachers all work together to determine how to use all available resources within the classroom to support learning. All students at Greensburg Salem use the *Everyday Mathematics* materials and have access to the same rigorous curriculum. In addition, both the after-school and summer school programs only use *Everyday Mathematics* materials.

“Everyday Mathematics gives students a language and a host of strategies to bring math to life. Our kids here love math the way most kids love literature, music and art. Everyday Mathematics is an integral part of who we are.”
Dr. Eileen Amato, Director of Elementary Education

“Everyday Mathematics is our program of choice for each one of our students. We attribute our stellar 2009 IEP math subgroup scores of 81.8 (Grade 3), 76.2 (Grade 4), and 74.3 (Grade 5) to the approach Everyday Mathematics takes with all kids within the lessons, games and explorations” says Dr. Lisa Rullo, Coordinator of Student Services. Students also have one period a day for flexible grouping, which is frequently used for math support.

Success on the PSSA

With increasing importance placed on state assessments like the PSSA, the Greensburg Salem School District relies on content from *Everyday Mathematics*

to prepare students for the PSSA. According to Tammy Wolicki, Director of Curriculum, the continuous gains on the mathematics portion of the PSSA that have been achieved by Greensburg Salem students are the result of the deep understandings of concepts gained from the components and instructional practices of the *Everyday Mathematics* program. The implementation of the program as it is designed engages students in critical thinking, problem solving, and the exploration of multiple strategies.

“The program components combined with practices of the Greensburg Salem School District result in high levels of achievement for all students” said Mrs. Wolicki.

Community/Parental Support

Parents and school board members frequently praise the program for generating student interest and success in math. The impact of *Everyday Mathematics* and other UCSMP curricula is significant as students move up through the system. In Greensburg Salem Schools, all students complete algebra by the end of Grade 8. Approximately 20% of middle school students complete both algebra and geometry before they enter Greensburg Salem Senior High School.

“Everyday Mathematics gives students a language and a host of strategies to bring math to life. Our kids here love math the way most kids love literature, music and art,” said Dr. Amato. *“Everyday Mathematics is an integral part of who we are.”*

For additional information on the *Everyday Mathematics* program, please contact us toll-free at 1-800-648-2970 and visit our Web site at everydaymath.com.

Expect More. Achieve More.



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