

# Everyday Mathematics® Success Stories



## North Penn School District Trusts Standards-Based Mathematics

The North Penn School District is a large suburban district located approximately 20 miles north of Philadelphia. Seven municipalities are served by the district, which creates an economically and socially diverse population of 13,500 students in Grades K–12. The district operates 13 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 1 alternative school, and 1 senior high school.

### Training in NCTM Standards

The North Penn School District has a process of regular review for all curriculum materials, and in the 1999–2000 school year, mathematics was

up for review. In the time since the district had last adopted a mathematics textbook in the early 1990s, the standards promoted by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) had been widely disseminated, and were of great interest to mathematics educators.

The curriculum review committee began its work by researching the NCTM standards that emphasize problem solving, hands-on activities, and real-world applications in a student-driven curriculum. In addition, the NCTM standards call for more mathematical content in the elementary grades, such as geometry, algebra, and probability.

The North Penn School District was already using a standards-based science program through the partnership of the Merck Institute for Science Education. In preparation for moving to a standards-based mathematics program, the educational institute supported district professional development training on the principles of teaching mathematics following an NCTM standards-based curriculum.

“Having a good understanding of the goals of the NCTM standards was very helpful when we later adopted *Everyday Mathematics*,” states Caroline Gibson Crew, the district’s elementary math and science coordinator. “In addition, our experience with a standards-based science program made it easier for us to transition to math instruction using a similar pedagogy.”

### Developing Teacher Leaders

During the 2000–2001 school year, the district piloted *Everyday Mathematics* in a total of 82 classrooms. In Crew’s opinion, it was important that every elementary building participate in the pilot because pilot teachers would be called upon later, during the full implementation of the program, to serve as guides and trainers for their fellow teachers.

“We reaped many benefits from the *Everyday Mathematics* pilot,” recalls Crew. “The first was an indication of what teachers could expect during the full

Percentage of Grades 3-6 Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Math

Source: PSSA



Prior to 2005-2006, the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment was only given in Grade 5. Since the new test was released, the combined percentage of North Penn’s elementary students has been consistently high, reaching an all-time high this year of 91.6%.

implementation. Switching from a basal series to a standards-based program represents a big change for the teacher. Teachers who were not involved with the pilot watched their colleagues work through this change during the pilot year, but they also heard about the good things coming from it. ***Everyday Mathematics*** was working for the children.”

After the one-year pilot of standards-based commitment to ***Everyday Mathematics***, a comprehensive evaluation of the programs piloted was conducted along with a parent survey. The analysis of this data led to a unanimous recommendation from the district math committee. Thus, the decision was made to fully implement ***Everyday Mathematics*** in Grades K–6 in all 13 elementary buildings, involving 330 regular and special education classrooms. In 2007, the district renewed its commitment to ***Everyday Mathematics*** and implemented the third edition.

### Staff Development

The summer before the full implementation of ***Everyday Mathematics***, all teachers in the district received three full days of professional development training. The teachers who had piloted the program led two of these all-day training sessions, proving to be sources of support and confidence to their colleagues.

Once school started, the pilot teachers helped to facilitate communication about ***Everyday Mathematics*** in their buildings by being available to answer teachers’ questions and to offer their own experiences as examples. The pilot teachers/trainers were also able to enhance communications with parents, as they had more experience working with the program.

Throughout the year, additional grade-level staff development meetings, led by the teacher trainers, were scheduled after school to continue training with ***Everyday Mathematics***. Using this model, most of the 48 Grade 3 teachers in the district, for example, came together in a 1 1/2-hour meeting to discuss their experiences in teaching the program. Additional meetings were scheduled to address special education needs. The work of these district trainers was instrumental in the success of the implementation. They helped support the work of classroom teachers through the sharing of ideas, clarifying specific points of the program, and providing informal coaching.

District math coaches and other math teacher leaders continue to provide professional development and support through ongoing lesson planning and workshops throughout the year.

Crew states, “All of our staff deserve a big hand for working so hard to implement ***Everyday Mathematics*** in the North Penn School District! Students and teachers are working through the program enthusiastically as a result of the efforts of teachers, principals, and math support staff.”

### Results

The use of ***Everyday Mathematics*** has had a positive impact on the district’s scores on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). When ***Everyday Mathematics*** was first fully implemented in 2001-2002, only Grade 5 was tested. The mean score quickly rose from 1400 to 1550 in just three years.

In 2008-2009, 91.6% of Grades 3-6 students scored Proficient or Above with 65.8% scoring Advanced, a major accomplishment according to Crew.

### Supporting the Home-School Connection

When piloting and implementing ***Everyday Mathematics***, the North Penn School District employed several approaches to keep parents informed about the developments concerning mathematics instruction.

Beginning with the pilot, a full schedule of parent nights presented an overview of standards-based mathematics and the ***Everyday Mathematics*** program. During the pilot year and first year of implementation, the district presented 24 parent nights among the 13 elementary buildings in the district.

The parent night presentation was videotaped, and the local public access cable channel played the standards-based mathematics video several times over the course of the school year. This proved to be a convenient source of information for many parents.

In order to introduce more of the ***Everyday Mathematics*** curriculum and pedagogy to the parents, the district began sponsoring Algorithm Nights. These much-appreciated sessions taught the algorithms presented in Grades 2–6 with an intensive, course-like approach. Parents found themselves talking about mathematics in ways that they had not done in years. Parents reported that they really enjoyed these mathematics discussions.

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](http://everydaymath.com).

Expect More. Achieve More.