

PROFILES IN SUCCESS

Robeson Elementary School ILLINOIS

Finding a Personalized Math Solution to Fit a Growth Mindset Culture

Robeson Elementary School, part of Champaign Unit 4 School District in Illinois, opens its doors to an increasingly diverse group of students each year. Educators at Robeson strive to meet each student at their skill level, foster student engagement and emphasize a growth mindset culture. In a subject like math, where educators were finding numerous knowledge gaps in a single classroom, this was no easy feat.

Robeson's educators looked for a math supplement that could help teachers differentiate instruction and engage students of all levels. Luckily, Principal Nick Gaines was already familiar with a solution that could meet the needs of Robeson's diverse learners.

Growing Student Enthusiasm For Math Through Rigorous Instruction

Before Gaines was principal at Robeson Elementary, he worked at Elgin School District and Chicago Public Schools (CPS), both of which used ST Math®, a visual learning program. Gaines first saw the program's impact on individual students as a technology and intervention teacher at Elgin, and then on a larger scale as a principal at CPS. He knew ST Math could make a big difference for students at Robeson.

"I brought ST Math to Robeson because it could bring the same benefits here as in any school," says Gaines, "Differentiated, engaging math instruction for all kids."

Gaines and his teachers especially valued the rigor and productive struggle that ST Math brought to the classroom. "I'm a big believer in growth mindset and that's part of our culture," he explains. "The aspect of



In a Program Evaluation of ST Math at Robeson Elementary:

The most resounding finding was that ST Math produces desirable social emotional outcomes for students in the areas of perseverance, cooperative learning, and growth mindset.

- Nick Gaines, Principal, Robeson Elementary School

ST Math where you put in the effort, try hard, make mistakes, learn from your mistakes--that really resonated with our teachers, families and leadership."

Laura Coffman, a 5th grade teacher at Robeson, values the way ST Math makes her students think, regardless of their skill level. "The rigor and conceptual learning in ST Math push students to think about more than just the answer," she explains. "When they're on ST Math it's one of the only times I know they're genuinely thinking for themselves."

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ILLINOIS



School Facts

School Grade Levels: K-6

School Enrollment: 426

District Type: Public

Number of Schools in District: 19



Demographic Breakdown

Caucasian: 46.5%

African American: 29.1%

Hispanic: 6.8%

Asian: 6.1% | Other: 11.5%

FRL: 47.2% | EL: 4.2%



ST Math Implementation

Grades using ST Math: K-6

Type of ST Math instruction:

Classroom

In a study of Robeson's students in grades 1-5, **students with greater ST Math Progress had significantly higher NWEA Math End RIT Scores.**

Of students with higher ST Math Progress:

71% scored in the top 20th percentile

ST Math at Robeson Increases Student Perseverance, Cooperative Learning, and Growth Mindset

With ST Math in the mix, Robeson's students are working harder than ever to problem solve, and they're loving it. "There are a few high achieving students who are already on grade 6 content," says Coffman. "They're asking to log into ST Math at home and on weekends. One student's progress has sparked motivation in the rest of the class to work harder."

Coffman also notes that ST Math allows her to challenge students of all skill levels in the same way: "It's a great equalizer in that all students can reach a point where they have to struggle to get the right answer. They are building up stamina and working extra hard to progress through the program."

To formally assess the impact of ST Math, Gaines performed a program evaluation, analyzing NWEA scores, ST Math data and even interviewing teachers. In his report, he states that the "most resounding finding was that ST Math produces desirable social emotional outcomes for

students in the areas perseverance, cooperative learning, and growth mindset." The report reflects what he and his teachers had been seeing since the beginning. Gaines also notes that the highest scores and biggest marks of improvement belong to those students who had the most progress in ST Math, leading him to recommend that he and his staff "monitor and actively promote ST Math student progress completion."

While he works with Robeson's teachers on implementing ST Math with fidelity, Gaines shares one more story describing the impact he's seen so far: "Sure, parents see their kids' math scores and grades, but what they talk about is that their kid won't put the iPad down at home because they're playing a math game. They're competing with their friends and they're working on challenge modules for a week straight." Parents and teachers don't have to rely on numbers to see their kids curious, excited and rising to meet even the toughest challenges.

