

COUNCIL ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATION & BUSINESS OFFICES

30 N CHANCELLOR STREET

NEWTOWN, PA 18940

September 3, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardians,

I am excited to announce that this year your child's classroom will use Bridges in Mathematics, Second Edition, a comprehensive curriculum for grades K–5. Bridges is a rigorous program designed to address the Pennsylvania Core Math standards in a way that is enjoyable and accessible to all learners.

The curriculum focuses on developing a deep understanding of math concepts, proficiency with key skills, and the ability to solve new and complex problems. Learning activities tap into the intelligence and strengths all students have by presenting mathematically powerful material alive with language, pictures, and movement.

Students in a Bridges classroom talk about math, describe observations, explain methods, and ask questions. They are encouraged to find multiple ways to solve problems and show different ways of thinking. This is a vital way to help students build more flexible and efficient ways to solve increasingly complex problems. Hands-on activities engage them in exploring, developing, testing, discussing, and applying mathematical concepts.

Bridges features a combination of whole group, small group, and independent activities that are problem centered. These activities will include:

- Problems & Investigations which often begin with a problem posed to the whole class. Students think and work independently or talk in pairs before sharing and comparing strategies and solutions as a whole class. The teacher monitors and guides the class discussion to make sure that students understand important mathematical concepts.
- Work Places which are engaging math exploration activities that reinforce key skills. The teacher observes and interacts to address students' need for support and enrichment.
- Number Corner which is a skill-building program that revolves around the classroom calendar and gives students an active role. They receive daily practice as well as steady encounters with broader mathematical concepts.

Some instructional methods you will see in your student's pilot math materials may be unfamiliar to you. These newer methods help students make connections to concepts they have already learned and strengthen their understanding before we move on to something new. Research has shown that making these connections is an important step in developing strong mathematics foundations.

When your child works on math problems at school or home, it is important for him/her to spend time thinking about problems and to try different things to arrive at a solution, even if he or she is struggling. If your child is struggling, praise their efforts and encourage them to try to figure it out. Mistakes are okay because we learn from them. Research has shown that children better retain what they have learned after continuing to think about a problem, even when they wanted to give up.

When completing homework with your child, rather than trying to show your student how to solve a problem, encourage him or her to try each one. Ask guiding questions that get them to take time to think about the problem and make connections to what they already know. Below are some possible questions you might ask.

- What is the problem about?
- What is the problem asking you to find? What information is important?
- What have you tried?
- Did you do a problem like this at school? How did you think about it?
- What could you try next?

If your child continues to struggle with homework, please write the teacher a short email. This will let the teacher know that she/he needs to spend a few minutes the next day with your child.

Since some of the math strategies your child may show you are not techniques you may have learned in school, it may be useful to learn more about how math education is delivered in elementary schools. If you are interested, mathematics educator Graham Fletcher has developed some short videos that provide easy to understand explanations about the different strategies and models used in K–5 mathematics. These short, engaging videos show how learning progresses from one grade to the next and explain less-familiar strategies.

The series includes these videos (each video is less than 5 minutes in length):

- [Addition and Subtraction](#)
- [Multiplication](#)
- [Division](#)
- [Fractions](#)

Should you have questions or concerns about Bridges, please contact me via email me at jeastburn@crsd.org.

Sincerely,



Julie Eastburn Ed.D
District Coordinator of Mathematics
Council Rock School District