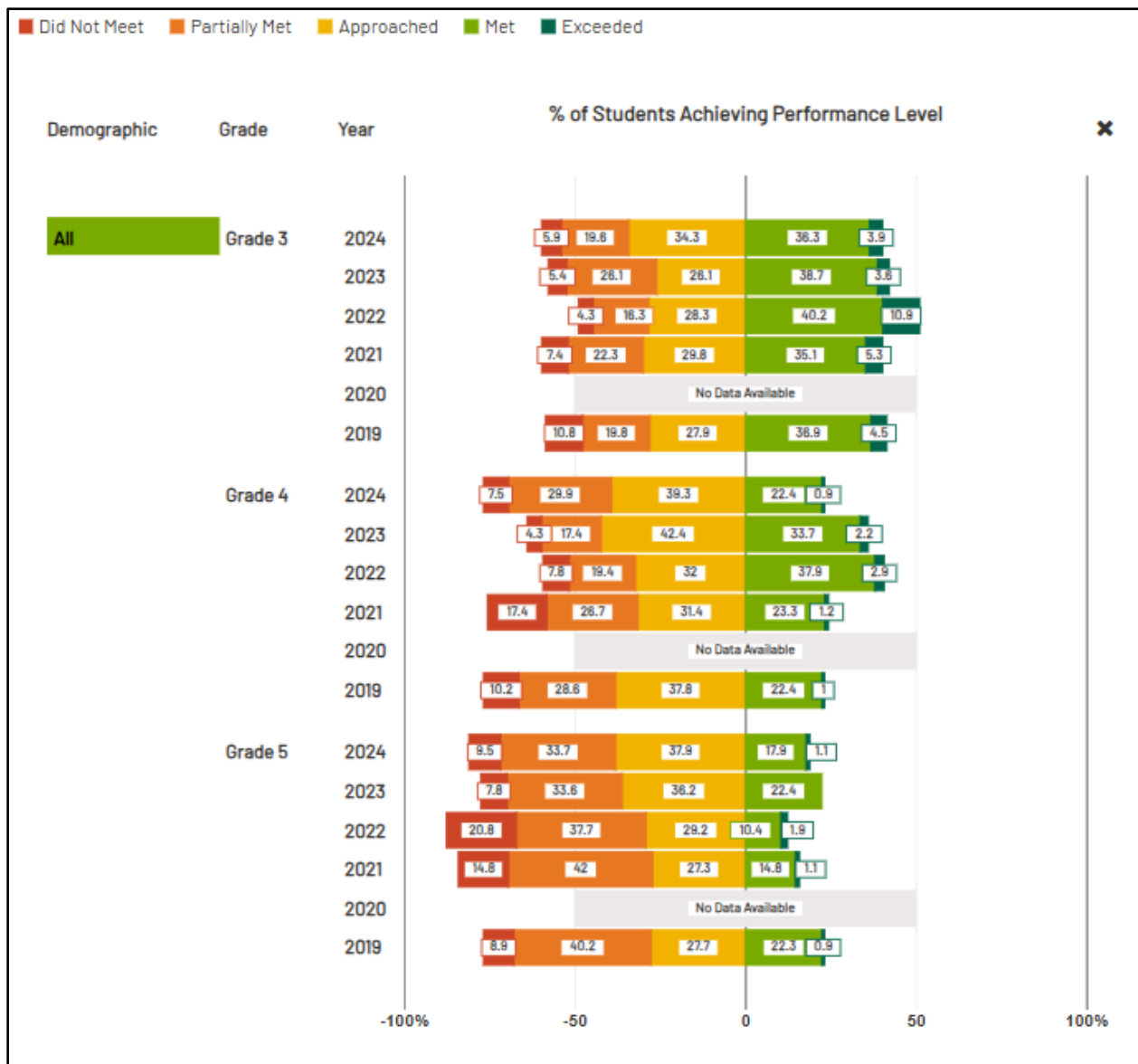


Monroe Center Math Resource Proposal

Meridian Board of Education

Introduction

One of my initial goals as superintendent is to increase elementary math achievement. Over the last 6 years, we have seen a consistent overall decrease in IAR mathematics scores from 3rd through 5th grade. Scores generally improve at the middle school level.



In the last two years, our overall math proficiency lagged slightly below the state average.



Our team believes it is time for change.

Background

For several years, we have used different math curriculum resources at Highland Elementary and Monroe Center. Earlier this spring, a team from Monroe Center observed students and teachers at another school using the Bridges in Mathematics program in the upper elementary grades. Bridges in Mathematics is the main math curriculum resource at Highland Elementary. After significant discussion, I am proposing the district adopt Bridges in Mathematics at Monroe Center beginning in the 2025-2026 school year to better align the curriculum with kindergarten through second grade.

Rationale

The recommendation to transition to the Bridges in Mathematics curriculum is based on the following key factors:

- **Enhanced Consistency and Cohesion Across Grade Levels (K-5):** Bridges offers a consistent framework of vocabulary, models, and instructional strategies from kindergarten through fifth grade. This continuity, in contrast to our current use of two separate programs, will foster a more seamless learning progression for students as they advance through the grades. This shared language and approach will build stronger mathematical efficacy by allowing students to connect new learning to prior knowledge more effectively.

- **Deepening Conceptual Understanding Through Visual Models:** Bridges places a significant emphasis on the integration of visual models to develop strong number sense and promote flexible thinking. These models provide concrete representations of abstract mathematical concepts, enabling students to build a deeper understanding of mathematical relationships and strategies.
- **Emphasis on Mathematical Practices and Problem-Solving:** The Bridges curriculum is intentionally designed to cultivate the Mathematical Practice Standards outlined in the Illinois Learning Standards. It provides numerous opportunities for students to engage in authentic problem-solving tasks, develop their reasoning skills, and communicate their mathematical thinking effectively, similar to the foundation we are building with Amplify in other subject areas.
- **Varied and Engaging Practice Opportunities:** Bridges incorporates a balanced approach to practice, including daily math routines, interactive "workplaces" (games), and purposeful written practice (worksheets). This variety caters to different learning preferences and keeps students actively involved in the learning process, fostering deeper engagement and retention.
- **Gradual Concept Development with Spiraled Review and Assessment:** The curriculum employs a gradual development of mathematical concepts, ensuring that students have sufficient time to build understanding. Concepts are revisited and reinforced throughout the year through spiraled practice and varied assessment methods, including clear proficiency expectations at appropriate intervals.
- **Comprehensive Resources for Intervention and Enrichment:** Bridges provides robust and readily available resources to support both students who are struggling and those who are ready for enrichment. These differentiated options are integrated throughout the curriculum, allowing teachers to effectively meet the diverse learning needs within their classrooms.
- **Seamless Integration with Forefront:** Bridges is fully compatible and designed to integrate with Forefront, our current standards-tracking program. This seamless integration will streamline our data collection and analysis processes, allowing us to monitor student progress and adjust instruction effectively.
- **Elimination of Supplemental Programs and Enhanced Workspace Connections:** Adopting Bridges will allow us to eliminate the need for numerous supplemental programs currently used in grades 3-5. This consolidation will enable teachers to create more cohesive and effective learning environments with strong connections embedded within the core curriculum.
- **Potential for Improved Math Fact Fluency and Grade-Level Proficiency:** With its emphasis on conceptual understanding and varied practice, we anticipate that Bridges will contribute to improved math fact fluency across all grade levels. Our overarching goal is to have all students performing at grade level in mathematics by the end of 5th grade, and we believe Bridges provides a strong foundation to achieve this.

- **Opportunities for Collaborative Professional Development:** The adoption of a unified K-5 mathematics curriculum with Bridges will also create opportunities for more cohesive and efficient professional development for our teachers and instructional coaches. A shared platform and vocabulary will foster greater collaboration and unity in training efforts.

Recommendation

I recommend approval of the adoption of the Bridges in Mathematics curriculum for grades 3-5 at Monroe Center Elementary School with a total cost of \$46,040.40. Mrs. Simpson and Mrs. Kleinschmidt are confident that the adoption of the Bridges in Mathematics curriculum will significantly enhance the mathematics education of our students at Monroe Center Elementary School, providing a consistent, engaging, and effective learning experience from kindergarten through fifth grade. They are prepared to answer any questions the Board may have regarding this recommendation.

Enclosure

Bridges Curriculum Resource Proposal

Dr. Michael Plourde