



Marsha DeGennaro <mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org>

[External Email] 5th/6th grade Math requesting Steam Teacher priority

1 message

Hillary Drumm <hiljor@gmail.com>

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To: Marsha Degennaro <mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org>, lpiascyk@woodbridgeps.org, sdelprete@woodbridgeps.org, bhokins@woodbridgeps.org, jdahya@woodbridgeps.org, ewilliamson@woodbridgeps.org, jhughes@woodbridgeps.org, slawrence@woodbridgeps.org, mstrambler@woodbridgeps.org, lfrancese@woodbridgeps.org
Cc: Analisa Sherman <asherman@woodbridgeps.org>, Vonda Tencza <vtencza@woodbridgeps.org>

Dear members of the Woodbridge Board of Education,

I am writing to provide an update of the Advanced Math options at Beecher Road School from prior discussions and to ask for support in making advanced 6th grade math a priority for the incoming STEAM teacher.

In early May, the 5th grade children were identified who had scored >97% on at least 2/3 of their STARS testing and were invited to take the end of 6th grade test. The assessment was given with 1 day notice via email, children were instructed not to prepare and given no information as to content/themes that would be covered. As discussed at prior requests at WBOE meetings, our children were neither taught the material for this test nor given an outline of the content so that they could explore the content on their own.

Out of 20+ children who were identified to take the assessment (according to our children who counted who else was in the room with them) we have been told by administration that 3 scored over 80% (pass) on the test to qualify for pre algebra. This leaves at least 17 kids who have the capacity to do high level math work, but who were not exposed to enough of the specific material to do well enough on this assessment.

As a result of only a small amount (3) children passing, it is my understanding that plans for next year are unclear and I am concerned they will be a repeat of last year, with no Pre Algebra class for 6th graders and only enrichment and extension for other identified high achieving kids-- which we have seen from this assessment-- does not prepare them for much.

I have already reached out to our administration with respect and optimism but I also understand we need full support to allow our children to succeed.

I implore the WBOE to work with the administration and the incoming STEAM teacher to prioritize developing a comprehensive curriculum for these 6th graders. Expose them to new material and foster their curiosity and learning. They have demonstrated capacity with their STARS, SBAC scores, TAG placement and overall math performance over the years.

If many of these learners can achieve over 50% on an assessment when they have had no exposure to the content and have not prepared, imagine what they could do if they were actually exposed to the material and taught the concepts. Please give them access to the content that they need to succeed and continue to work hard.

Please please please work with the administration, 6th grade teachers and new STEAM staff to teach these children and make advanced 6th grade math a priority.

Allow them to learn what they do not know and learn how to learn new and hard things.

Allow them to be challenged and fail and become resilient.

Allow them to learn study skills, struggle, get frustrated and to hate math for a bit because it has become difficult.

Allow them to love math because they have conquered something that is challenging.

Allow them to learn these lessons at Beecher Road School so they can soar in their next pursuits.

Just please do not hold them back and willingly keep them in the dark.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Hillary Drumm