



Case Study:

Northside ISD

San Antonio, Texas

Overview

PROFILE

Jamie McBee is a 4th grade teacher at Braun Station Elementary School. The elementary school is a part of the Northside Independent School District in San Antonio, Texas. Braun Station Elementary School is a public Pre K-5th grade and has a total student population of 503 students.

CHALLENGE

While Exemplars is not new for McBee, it is a newly adopted curriculum for Northside ISD. McBee helped implement the program and train other staff members on how to use Exemplars in their own classrooms. Exemplars is an additional element to Northside's math curriculum due to its rigor, scaffolding, and conceptual understanding. Northside ISD has a diverse learning population where math needs vary from remediation to enrichment.

SOLUTION

McBee witnessed growth in all students in just 6 weeks of using Exemplars with her 4th grade students. Exemplars provide the necessary support for all students to find success. With Exemplars portfolios, students can concretely see their growth in Mathematical Processes, which strengthens their metacognition and fosters their growth mindsets.

Exemplars Helps Students With Different Needs Improve Their Math Skills



Jamie McBee
4th Grade Teacher



School Profile

- Population Density: Sparse Suburban
- Size: 504 Enrollment*
- Math Proficiency: 58%*
- Free & Reduced Lunch: 34%*

*Source: Niche.com

Read the full study



The Challenge

During Braun Station Elementary's rollout of Exemplars, McBee trained staff members on successful implementation. Having used Exemplars in her former district, McBee cited the program's positive impact on student growth as mathematical thinkers. Braun Station wanted a program to instill positive growth mindsets while supporting students' in the various stages of math concepts: concretely, pictorially, and abstractly. The student population is diverse with a spectrum of learning needs. The school wanted a rigorous, research-based curriculum that thoroughly supports the TEKS math standards.

Choosing Exemplars

In 2018, McBee's former school district sent staff to a 2-day Exemplars training where trainers introduced and broke down the program. Ever since, McBee used Exemplars in her classroom with fidelity, and then every year after that. McBee was excited Braun Station adopted Exemplars because she knows how much students grow in their confidence and abilities with math. McBee believes it's because students can see their own thinking improving with each task. Students are proud of their work, especially when they know they struggled with the task initially.

McBee gives the following advice for school districts considering Exemplars: allow students to struggle. These tasks instill perseverance in students. They learn to stretch beyond their comfort levels and accept that they won't get something right away.

The Outcome

McBee teaches a collab classroom (co-taught, inclusive classroom) made up of various needs. McBee's collab students are demonstrating proficiency in the tasks. As a result, fellow teachers are willing to try the program because they can see the evidence of learning. In six weeks of using Exemplars, McBee noticed astronomical growth in her students' math scores. She attributed this to the problem solving and rigor in the Exemplars program. She also found students felt more comfortable with the process of not knowing the answers right away. When they struggled with a problem, they felt proud when they solved it. It fostered a strong desire to grow their mathematical skills, and they were eager to see themselves improve. In previous years some of McBee's current students failed STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness), but through Exemplars tasks, they are now some of her highest math performers. Even her high-performing students went above and beyond because of Exemplars enrichment. Students surpassed their own work based on their portfolio and how they were rated by discussing ways to strengthen their connection. Students of all backgrounds love to complete Exemplars tasks and challenge themselves.

“ I think everybody should try [Exemplars]. It's not just for bigger kids, the littles can use it too. ”

Jamie McBee
4th Grade Teacher