

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We have recently begun to use a supplemental math resource from *Exemplars* entitled *Problem Solving for the 21st Century* to support our school's base math curriculum. This resource provides teachers with a collection of standards-aligned math tasks that they can use to help deepen and extend students' understanding of mathematical concepts.

Rather than simply asking students to find mathematically correct answers, the Exemplars program guides students to craft solutions that attend to the Mathematical Processes as outlined by the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics. These standards are *Problem Solving, Reasoning and Proof, Communication, Connections* and *Representation*. In doing this, we are able to strengthen literacy skills such as reading comprehension and written communication, as well as mathematical understanding. Research has shown that schools that use Exemplars consistently show a greater improvement in math proficiency scores than those that do not.

Because our understanding of the way in which math learning happens continues to evolve, the expectations of the program and what "meeting the standard" looks like according to the Exemplars rubric may be new to you. Below, you will find some helpful resources that can support your and your student's understanding of these new expectations, as well as a copy of the Exemplars student rubric. For more information, feel free to ask your student's teacher for recommended resources or examples of student work that meets the standard.

Sincerely,

[signature]

Videos:

[Getting Started with Exemplars Tasks](#)

[Getting Started with Exemplars Tasks \(Kindergarten\)](#)

[What Does a Strong Solution Look Like?](#)

[What Does a Strong Solution Look Like? \(Kindergarten\)](#)

Guiding Questions for Home (try these while working with your student instead of showing them the answer):

- *What is the problem asking you to find out?*
- *Can you draw a picture to show your thinking?*
- *Could you solve this another way to check your answer or convince me you're correct?*
- *I can't follow this part. Can you make this more clear?*
- *I see an error in reasoning. Can you find and correct it?*
- *Your reasoning is excellent. Double-check your calculations.*
- *You omitted a part of the problem. Can you find it?*