

Educational Dynamix and Cobb PLC Form Service Project to Raise CRCT Scores at Labelle Elementary School

Every Monday morning Beatrice Washington, the Mathematics Facilitator for the Cobb Performance Learning Center, takes 12 math students to Labelle Elementary School. There, they help a classroom of third graders extend their mathematics learning through musical skip counting, not only working on multiplication but also exploring more advanced topics such as algebra, geometry and even data analysis.

The program is the brainchild of Dr. Clemmie Whatley, President of Educational Dynamix and developer of the Musical Mathematics system on which the program is based. Musical Mathematics is a system of workbooks and audio recordings with lyrics that teach counting and multiplication.

At the beginning of each class, the student teachers play a Musical Mathematics recording. They then introduce the daily lesson to the elementary school students and encourage the student to sing the corresponding song to help them complete their work.

Instituted at Cobb PLC in the fall of 2008 to improve the math skills of high school students while helping them fulfill the service component of their academic program, the program has turned low-scoring math students into engaged, excited mentors.

In fact, results of the effort have far exceeded initial expectations across the board, raising math scores substantially for both the student teachers and their students. Beyond an improvement in their math skills, the student teachers exhibit a new-found confidence and budding leadership abilities.

“The students really look forward to their weekly meeting,” explains LeShon Graham, Math Coach at LaBelle Elementary School. “With the help of Musical Mathematics, students’ knowledge of their basic multiplication facts has improved.”

To gain acceptance to the program, high school students with low test scores sign a math contract committing to after-school tutoring and participation in the Musical

Mathematics program. Inviting these students to teach has not only helped them overcome academic struggles but has resulted in a noticeable attitude and self-esteem improvements.



“Students wanted to go to the program because they saw that they were making a difference, which really helped them feel better about themselves and encouraged them to try harder in their own classes,” explains Washington.

The program was such a success that Labelle and Cobb PLC elected to renew the program for 2009-2010 and selected thirty-five Labelle students to participate.

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“When we announced the renewal of the program, the students that participated in the program last year asked if they would be able to participate again this year,” continues Graham. “This was a real testament to the positive experience they received during their time in the program.”

The high school students were excited, too. Several Cobb PLC students elected to return to the program for their second year. “Our returning students promoted the success to their classmates,” explains Washington. “It was a lot easier to recruit once when they shared their enthusiasm.”

“We had a few students graduating from our program last year that have decided they would like to become teachers,” boasts Washington.