

Leveling the playing field

A partnership to transform education

FAST FACTS

- Approximately 260 students, K–5
- 57% English Language Learners
- 70% free/reduced lunch

CHALLENGE

A large percentage of second and third graders performing below grade level.

SOLUTION

1:1 access to technology, Blended Learning, adaptive digital curriculum, teacher professional development .

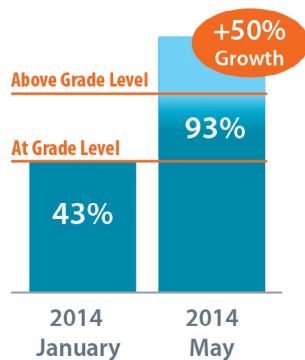
RESULTS

After 5 months:

2nd Grade Progress



3rd Grade Progress



Results confirmed by
Let's Go Learn Math Assessment
Independent Measure

→ CHALLENGE:

"Catching kids before they fall"

Over 65 percent of second graders and over 40 percent of the third grade math students at Dunbar Elementary School were not performing at grade level. The Grade Level Proficiency Project (GLPP) was designed with a vision, in the phrase Principal Melanie Blake coined to "Catch our kids before they fall"—with a unique approach to closing the achievement gap as early as possible.

Marian Rasmussen and Terry Roberts, teachers with decades of experience, are the program co-creators who knew they needed best-in-class solutions to meet their goal of reaching every student in the school before, as Rasmussen put it, "the hill becomes too steep." They began with the second and third grades, and then planned to expand GLPP if the pilot was shown to be successful.

The new GLPP model uses technology to help guide teacher instruction and engage all students. While we are focusing on math results in this case study, the program uses the best technology to close gaps in math and language arts by implementing 21st century Common Core State Standards, 1:1 blended learning strategies, and in-class modeling and training for both teachers and students.

"I taught math for 35 years, working with English Language Learners, special needs students, students not at grade level, and students disillusioned with school," stated Rasmussen. "I believe that we needed to start where the

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—Terry Roberts
GLPP Co-creator and Teacher

problem begins, which is at the K–5 schools. This chance to change attitudes and get students to perform at grade level is my passion."

Roberts weighed in, "Using DreamBox Learning Math with its adaptive capabilities is so different from the usual linear approach. When concepts move in a straight line, it's not engaging. But when it's adaptive, kids stay on task much longer. Immediate feedback is the highest impact to student learning." She went on to say, "Additionally, most of our students are not proficient in their use of technology. I'm so excited to be a part of a program that individualizes instruction using technology like DreamBox Learning Math—as well as provides one-to-one and small-group instruction."



→ SOLUTION:

Systematic approach to adoption

“We felt GLPP should be part of the classroom and not an after-school program,” Rasmussen emphasized. “It’s important for the teacher to be there and guide the students. Integration makes it more powerful. It’s not just about the computer. It’s about people!”

The selected product had to be judged to meet the differentiation needs of all students in all demographics and subgroups. Under the plan, no students were going to be pulled out of class. The programs needed to differentiate across the board.

“We had some kids that couldn’t even count,” noted Rasmussen. “We wanted to ensure in our math program that we were filling the gaps for students and equally as important, for their teachers. DreamBox Learning Math ticked all of those boxes.”

→ IMPLEMENTATION:

The best use of 1:1 resources and PD

“Giving every child access to computers,” said Melanie Blake, principal of Dunbar Elementary School, “is an equity issue

and a way to narrow the achievement gap.” Technology is a cornerstone of the GLPP. Not only is it used to differentiate direct instruction for the students, it informs the teachers’ instruction as well as the rigorous in-class professional development training they undergo throughout the school year.

All of the students in second and third grade were asked to use DreamBox Learning Math for three 25-minute sessions during the school

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week on their iPad® minis, laptops, or desktop devices.

Professional development centered on helping teachers to maximize the potential of the software, including comprehensive knowledge of the reporting capabilities. “One of our first grade teachers,” noted Rasmussen, “who was reluctant with technology—is now a believer!” Another aspect was supporting elementary teachers who may not necessarily have a strong enough math foundation themselves.

“Dunbar is the only school in our district that leveraged computer math learning and we are the only one where no one cried during SBAC testing,” commented Rasmussen. “No kids and no teacher cried! Everyday use is what made the difference.”

→ RESULTS:

Model for success

One of the most novel aspects of the GLPP approach is their refusal to isolate students of varying abilities. Everyone, from English Language Learners, special needs students to high end achievers work in the same classroom.



For GLPP, the measure is whether students could catch up or exceed grade level. Rasmussen commented, “We found that our non-English speaking students showed great success using DreamBox, that advanced students were challenged, and that our special needs students were very engaged—and the results were remarkable.”

The independent math assessment, *Let’s Go Learn*, documented incredible progress from January 2014 to May 2014 for students in the GLPP: 91 percent of second graders were at second or third grade level—up from 65 percent—and 93 percent of third graders were at third or fourth grade level—up from 43 percent.

Principal Blake summed up her assessment of the program, “In my 31 years in education, this is one of the most exciting programs in which I have been involved. Already I have teachers coming up to me asking when they can be trained, get involved, and be part of the GLPP model. Schools need

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many kinds of teaching, many kinds of technology tools, and many kinds of practices to ensure all students are at grade level in reading and math by the third grade. GLPP is the model to get us there. I am grateful beyond measure for the support and opportunity to reach this goal.”

ABOUT DREAMBOX LEARNING

DreamBox Learning® Math provides a deeply personalized, K–8 math learning experience in English and Spanish that differentiates content, pace, and sequence for the highest levels of student achievement. Powered by Intelligent Adaptive Learning™ technology, DreamBox combines rigorous math, an engaging, game-like learning environment, and real-time feedback for each student. DreamBox instructional design motivates and guides all levels of learners to persist, progress, and achieve math proficiency. This results in increased achievement, deep understanding, and life-long confidence in math.

For more information, contact Client Care at 877.451.7845, email schools@dreambox.com, or visit DreamBox.com.