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Schools

New Math Teaching Method Coming to Madison Schools

'Singapore math' instruction starts for grades K-2 next year, then grades 3-5 the following year.

By [Jake Remaly](#) | [Email the author](#) | April 18, 2013

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A math teaching method based on the curriculum widely used in Singapore is coming to Madison elementary schools starting next year.

The Board of Education approved the use of the textbook "[Math in Focus: Singapore Math](#)" at its meeting on Tuesday.

Grades K-2 will start using the textbook next year, and grades 3-5 will start using it the following year, school officials said. A "parent night" to introduce parents to "Math in Focus" is expected to be held in the fall.

Superintendent Dr. Michael Rossi said the cost of the new textbooks and teacher training over the two years is expected to be around \$104,000.

A letter from the district's mathematics and business supervisor, Kathryn Lemerich, [posted on the district website](#) says a committee of teachers, supervisors and administrators reviewed possible programs to replace the existing instructional materials, and narrowed the choices to "Math in Focus" and "Everyday Math" before deciding on "Math in Focus."

Administrators and board members visited other districts that use those textbooks to evaluate them, and gathered feedback from Madison parents in February, the letter says. The committee also took into consideration Common Core State Standards and new standardized tests.

"We are confident this is the best decision for our elementary school students because of the stellar track record of the program, the abundance of resources to support the instruction both within the classroom and at home, and the approach the program takes to meeting the needs of all learners," Lemerich wrote. "Math in Focus is an enriched mathematics program that not only maps to the Common Core State Standards, but also provides many important and valuable teaching strategies and learning experiences. We are confident your children will benefit from this excellent program, and we are fully committed to its successful implementation."

Lemerich said the committee is "thrilled to have the support of the administrative team, teachers, parents, and community in this decision."

Promotional materials for the book says the Singapore math "features visual representations and modeling strategies to solve complex problems" and helps students understand how and why math works.

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East Coast Math Specialist

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9:15 am on Saturday, April 20, 2013

We adopted this year with the same implementation plan by grades and I have never heard trs sound so positive about a math program in my over 30 yrs. Thr trs repeatedly say across our 14 schools involved that the students have never thought and sounded so mathematical. Smart and responsive choice to the Common Core. Know that in year one it is a learning year for your teachers. So as much PD as you can afford past "Intro to Math in Focus" proved extremely beneficial for our trs.

Reply

Joe Beeson

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1:32 am on Tuesday, April 23, 2013

I am really interested to see how this translates into a western culture mindset. I know during the years I spent in Singapore, the restaurants and coffee shops were full of students studying. That commitment to doing well goes a long way - I hope our parents and students are equally committed. If so, students will do well.

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