

# New math program for Englewood's elementary schools

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BY MIKE CURLEY

STAFF WRITER

NORTHERN VALLEY SUBURBANITE

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**ENGLEWOOD** - The school district will be introducing a new math program, Math in Focus: The Singapore Approach, to the elementary schools for the 2011-12 school year.

Superintendent Donald Carlisle said it's a hybrid program based on teaching methods used in Singapore, one of the top countries in the world in mathematics.

The program is a problem-based approach, said Lisa Finn-Bruce, the district curriculum supervisor.

Math in Focus begins in kindergarten using hands-on tools and moves into more abstract areas in higher levels up to the fifth grade.

"It tends to be a slower paced program," she said, "But it expects mastery of concepts."

She said the program is in line with the common core standard that the state is adopting, which provides standard levels of mastery for children of a given grade level.

"The Singapore program will help the students meet those benchmarks," Finn-Bruce said. "The children should have specific skills and master those math skills. That's what this focuses on."

Materials for the program, she said, should be in the hands of the teachers by June.

In the meantime, she and other teachers have been visiting districts in the state and in New York that use the program to see how it's working.

Mercedes Gil, the bilingual program manager, added that Math in Focus intentionally covers fewer topics a year to ensure mastery of those topics and of problem solving.