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Stone Creek to implement Singapore math this fall



Stone Creek Charter School raised \$325,000 and is spending it to implement Singapore math, bring back music, and expand art and foreign language. This is Congressman Scott Tipton, who stopped by Stone Creek Charter School's Gypsum campus during a swing through the area.



To enroll

Stone Creek has openings for new students in the coming school year at both campuses. Contact Carrie Kirkutis at 970-569-3327, or visit stonecreekschool.org. Opened in 2006, Stone Creek Charter School is a K-8 independent charter school with more than 300 students. The school has campuses in Edwards and Gypsum.

Stone Creek Charter School raised \$325,000 and will spend the money on math, music, art, and foreign language.

Stone Creek landed a \$75,000 donation from the Harold W. & Mary Louise Shaw Foundation. They'll use that money to restore the school's music program and enhance the school's finances.

"We are pleased to support Stone Creek Charter School and its efforts to provide a music curriculum for students in the Vail Valley," said Sally Veitch.

The school raised over \$250,000 in donations from school families and fundraisers during the 2013-14 school year.

The school will use some of that money to implement a Singapore math program — Math in Focus — for students in kindergarten through eighth grade, beginning this fall.

About Math in Focus

Math in Focus follows the same sequence as the curriculum used in Singapore math. Students learn and master fewer mathematical concepts, but in greater detail, and in a three-step process: concrete, pictorial and abstract. In the concrete step, students engage in hands-on learning with concrete objects such as chips, dice or paper clips. They follow this by drawing pictorial representations of mathematical concepts. Students then solve mathematical problems in an abstract way by using numbers and symbols.

On three different occasions, the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study ranked Singapore math the world's best in fourth- and eighth-grade mathematics. U.S. editions of these textbooks have since been adopted by a large number of charter and private schools, and school districts.

"Stone Creek is excited to provide our students with an enhanced, rigorous and effective math experience," said John Brendza, Stone Creek headmaster. "Math in Focus is a leading curriculum used in high performing schools throughout the United States."

They've been studying math curriculums since 2009. They did a little field testing and settled on this program.

"Singapore math is one of the most recommended programs available," Brendza said. "Some other charter schools are using it and have had excellent results."

Houghton Mifflin purchased the publication rights to adapt it to the type of textbooks and materials American teachers are accustomed to working with. Stone Creek is already training teachers, and parent training will begin soon, Brendza said.

"We're committed to it and excited about it," Brendza said.

Besides math and music, Stone Creek is expanding its art program and will likely expand its foreign language program, Brenda said.

The Harold W. and Mary Louise Shaw Foundation is a major supporter of various organizations in the Vail Valley, Colorado, Maine and Georgia, including the Shaw Regional Cancer Center. The Shaws came to the valley in 1965 and were part owners of The Lodge at Vail.

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