

# Teachers review Common Core math program

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Windermere Elementary School Principal Steve Scarpitti responds to questions at the conclusion of a Parent University held at the school on Thursday, Sept. 6, to show parents the new Math Focus program their children will be studying this year.

Laurie Stevenson/ThisWeekNEWS

By PAMELA WILLIS, ThisWeek Community News

Posted Sep 11, 2012 at 12:01 AM Updated Sep 12, 2012 at 2:20 AM

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Windermere Elementary Principal Steve Scarpitti said his school’s Parent University was held on Thursday, Sept. 6.

“We gave parents an overview of our new course of study in Common Core math, Math in Focus, so that parents could learn how they could support youngsters at home,” Scarpitti said.

He said teachers gave a PowerPoint presentation of some of the aspects of the program and warned parents that homework problems “might look a little different.”

“Teachers will be teaching for mastery of the concepts and math topics will be studied more in depth for this program,” he said.

Assistant Superintendent Debora Binkley said the district had used a program called Everyday Math for the past 20 or so years.

“Everyday Math had a spiral curriculum, so if students didn’t get something once, it would come back again, so they wouldn’t really have to master it,” she said. “With the new Common Core math, they are required to learn fewer concepts, but they have to master those concepts before they can go on in the program.”

She said the new Common Core state standards in math necessitated the change.

“We looked for materials that had the philosophy of the Common Core math and thought Math in Focus matched what we were looking for,” she said. “We needed to explain the mastery piece to parents and some of the other concepts of the program through our Parent University nights.”

She said teachers will have to be the main resource for parents if students do not understand a concept.

“I think the philosophy of this program is when a student has homework, it is to practice the concepts, not learn them for the first time,” she said. “Parents should ask children to explain the concept to them, because if they teach a concept to someone else, they have a better chance of retaining it.”

She said two teacher leaders, Kate Drugan and Neil Bluel, are working to help teachers and parents with the program.

According to information from the state on Common Core standards in math, students will learn to make sense of problems and “persevere” in solving them; “reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others” and “model with mathematics,” or apply math concepts to everyday problems in life.

More information is available on the Ohio Department of Education website, at [ode.state.oh.us](http://ode.state.oh.us).

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