

# Dunlap Community Unit School District #323

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## 5th Grade Students at Ridgeview Feel More “Focused” in Math!

*Self-motivated learners and critical thinkers:* Students in 5th grade at Ridgeview Elementary School have been a part of *Math in Focus* now for almost a year. As we move in to the last quarter of the year, we spent some time reflecting on what we have accomplished in Math this year. During a class meeting students had the opportunity to share their thoughts, feelings, and advice to students, parents, and teachers who may be starting new with *Math in Focus*- Singapore Math.

The following is what they wanted to share:

- The different ways that the book breaks things in to steps and uses pictures is new but helpful.
- “Models”- remember when we all failed the 1st pretest because no one knew how to do models, but now we are experts.
- It’s more challenging, and we are learning in a different way.
- No short cuts anymore.
- I like how the story problems are real, and they are not just made up things but things we can understand.
- There are many different methods, and we get to talk about all the ways to solve problems.
- We are critical thinkers and don’t give up anymore.
- All the topics are related so we can’t forget from the last chapter.
- The book always uses examples, and the things the kids in the book say (the bubbles) really do help.
- On the homework, one or two problems are always harder. I think it is meant to make us think more.
- It has really helped to write down in my notes each “Learn” section so when I look back I know what the examples mean.

As a teacher I could not agree more with their responses. They have blossomed into learners who do not give up and use a variety of strategies to prove that answers are correct or incorrect. I have learned the power of teaching skills and strategies as opposed to short cuts and procedures. The 5th graders are excited for next year and what a new year of *Math in Focus* may bring, but this time they are now equipped with a tool belt full of new knowledge, techniques, and methods.

Submitted by: Nicole Loser

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Dr. Jay Marino, Superintendent

*Continuous Improvement through teamwork, collaboration, and shared leadership!*

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