

New York Catholic Schools Find Alignment and Success with *Eureka Math*

Partnership Schools, a network of six catholic schools in New York City, implemented Eureka Math in the 2015–16 school year in grades 7 and 8 and saw significant gains. Now, the network is rolling out Eureka more broadly. The network expanded the use of the curriculum to 5th and 6th grades as well as in kindergarten this school year (2016–17).

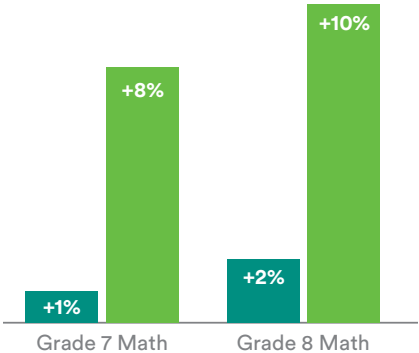
We talked with Kathleen Porter-Magee, the network’s superintendent and chief academic officer, and Lauren DeFavero, director of math achievement, about their experience with Eureka Math.

PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS SHOW GREATER GROWTH THAN STATE IN GRADES USING EUREKA

A closer look at the grades using Eureka shows that in 2014–2015, 28% of 7th grade students scored proficient or above on the end-of-year New York state math test, and in 2015–2016 this number jumped to 36%. In 8th grade, the percentage of students scoring proficient and above went from 27% to 37%. In each case, the network schools showed far more significant growth than the statewide average. Partnership Schools’ math scores rose across the board in 2015–2016, but administrators said they had to work much harder to close gaps and provide extra resources for teachers in the grades not using Eureka.

PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE OF STUDENTS SCORING PROFICIENT AND ABOVE FROM 2014–2015 TO 2015–2016

■ Statewide ■ Partnership Schools



WHAT DID YOU LIKE ABOUT EUREKA WHEN CHOOSING A CURRICULUM?

KATHLEEN: We are a standards-based network with curriculum-driven classrooms. We are unequivocal supporters of the Common Core and are glad the standards set the rigor where it needs to be. It's not the teachers' job to take those standards and build their own curriculum. We want to make sure that all teachers of core content areas have access to the programs and resources they need to effectively teach the content and standards. That was our frame when choosing a curriculum. Eureka effectively gets those resources to teachers. It requires so much less supplementing and triaging and borrowing from other places than what we had before.

LAUREN: We didn't want to do a lot of jumping around. We wanted a cohesive, standards-aligned curriculum. Since we implemented Eureka, we've seen a lot of benefits. It breaks things down to build up student skills over time. The lessons are aligned to the standards and are really linear, so it's easy for teachers to follow.

YOU STARTED EUREKA WITH 7TH AND 8TH GRADE, WHY?

LAUREN: In middle school, a lot of thinking is required of students. It's not just doing things, it's the understanding of the doing. So we needed something that would help build that.

HOW IS IT GOING THIS YEAR FOR YOUR YOUNGEST STUDENTS?

LAUREN: In Kindergarten, the way the curriculum works, students of all levels can access and understand what's going on. The way everything builds up over time is helpful. Nothing ever goes away. So, if you don't master a concept or skill today, that same thing will appear in future lessons.

HOW DID TEACHERS RESPOND TO THE CURRICULUM?

KATHLEEN: Teachers found Eureka difficult at first. Fortunately, though, Lauren had built up strong relationships with the teachers beforehand, so they trusted her. They may not have liked it at first, but they became champions afterwards.

HOW DO YOU SUPPORT TEACHERS AND ACCESS THE CURRICULUM?

KATHLEEN: We're helping teachers understand that we're now teaching the why and how of math, rather than just teaching the what. Lauren understands the why and how so well, and she pulls the teaching teams together to go over the content that's coming up and models the strategies to use in the classroom.

LAUREN: We purchased the pre-bound books, we didn't want to worry about the teachers copying the downloaded PDFs. We have the digital suite, and teachers can watch the [Teach Eureka video series](#). The feedback we've received from the 7th- and 8th-grade teachers is that the videos help them "see the math." From there, collaborating with their peers is the most effective way to prepare.