

Math Regrouping Re-Cap

All 4/5 teachers like having the flexibility of staying in the same group all day, instead of the rigid schedule we had to stick to when we switched back and forth for math and science. It makes planning much easier, especially when we have special events. It's also allowed more time for science, which has been great. For literacy teachers, it's been much easier to team plan when we only have one other person's schedule to check in with, instead of three. It's also been a success in terms of building community as a class, since students are together all day long. Last year, there were many students in math homerooms who only saw their homeroom teacher for 45 minutes a day.

As far as academic outcomes, we've noticed that it's good for all students to hear a variety of strategies during accountable talk – 'high' students benefit from seeing different approaches that more methodical students take. There has also been good informal peer-to-peer conversation between students at different levels, allowing everyone a chance to show their strengths and learn from each other. There has been a big growth in the ability of strong students to explain their thinking over the course of the year. Open response tasks have shown growth for all students in the area of multi-step problem solving, and allow strong math students a format to really show what they know. Interims also showed growth.

Overall, there are more students actively involved in extension activities than last year. There has also been less stigma for kids who move slower -- the class feels more like a learning community than a competitive arena. Advanced math students have stopped 'racing' through their work and are approaching math more thoughtfully. We believe this will serve them well as they go into middle school, because they are understanding concepts much more deeply.

Of course, it wasn't perfect. We struggled to find extensions at times this year because the district's curriculum was mis-aligned with EDM (all districts are looking to find out how to make old curriculum fit CCSS). Next year, we will likely use EngageNY full-time, and supplement with other materials, which will allow us to plan much more thoughtfully (and in advance). It was also a challenge when para support was sporadic – sometimes extensions that had been planned weren't

able to happen. We are considering a more formal extension structure next year that will address these concerns.

Overall, we have been very happy with this year. We do encourage parents to begin an individual dialogue with their children's teachers as the starting point for any concerns, and welcome parents to set up times to volunteer in the classroom.