



The Anchorage School District has heard many concerns about Everyday Math. We know that many parents, community members and some teachers are frustrated with the program. This is why the district asked for an independent math curriculum review last fall.

We've heard people say that the district should scrap Everyday Math and adopt a different program. However, the review found that the lack of improvement wasn't due to the district's adoption of Everyday Math, but rather in the implementation. The review committee noted that there is no perfect program; every math program will have its supporters and detractors. Any program will work well for some students, but prove difficult for others. For every example of an ASD student who struggles with Everyday Math, there are several examples of students who excel. This is evidenced by the district's 73.5 percent proficiency rate in mathematics—a rate on par with the national average. In fact, the report shows that students who stay in the district for at least three consecutive years have shown substantial gains in math. Though we take pride in that fact, we also know it means we must do a better job supporting our more transient students and those who are not successful using our current math programs.

Some of the concerns we've heard stem from misinformation or misunderstanding of the program. One common misconception is that district schools do not teach math facts. Everyday Math does include rote computation, but goes beyond that to help students learn and understand the truer, deeper meaning of math. One of the benefits of Everyday Math is that, if a student is not good at rote memorization, they can learn different methods to understand and remember those facts.

It is this flexibility that helps students become divergent thinkers who can adapt and synthesize concepts in different ways, which better prepares them for success in life. Everyday Math helps students see the connections between math and science, social studies and language arts. Through the Everyday Math program, students learn to understand systems, which are in everything we do.

Parents have a legitimate concern when they say that they have difficulty helping their child with their homework. The district needs to do a better job supporting teachers, parents and guardians. We recognize that and we will work hard to improve those much-needed supports.

We know we have to do a better job providing professional development both to new-to-district and new-to-grade-level teachers, as well as to those who have been teaching Everyday Math for years. We also need to improve our parent outreach and provide more opportunities for parents and guardians to learn how to support their children.

The district will spend this summer reviewing the Council of the Great City Schools' report and will have an implementation plan to the school board by the end of August. After the plan is presented, the board will develop a recommendation to either find a new math program or to keep Everyday Math and enhance professional development and parent outreach and support for the program. Rest assured, there will be plenty of opportunities for staff and community input throughout this process. These opportunities will be announced as they arise. In the meantime, you can always provide feedback on any topic through the suggestion box on the ASD website at [www.asdk12.org/aboutasd/suggestions](http://www.asdk12.org/aboutasd/suggestions).