

Wetten Elementary transforms math program

When teachers at John Wetten Elementary chose their school’s new math curriculum, they did more than examine textbooks and review research. They took their top two approaches for a test drive.

Each grade level had two teachers on the team, so they planned a side-by-side comparison, piloting key lessons in the top two curriculums with their students. Afterward, they compared notes on student understanding, engagement, and learning. In the end, they chose Bridges, from Oregon’s Math Learning Center.

“Math looks different this year,” said Principal Wendy Wilson. “When you step into a math class, there’s a lot of energy in the room. You see students engaged in dialog, explaining their reasoning and problem solving approaches. Many kids now say math is their favorite class!”

The Bridges curriculum uses pattern blocks, geoboards, tiles, math games, and dice to teach math fundamentals like subtraction, geometry, multiplication, fractions, and probability. The hands-on approach helps children visualize different solutions to math problems, and encourages them to explore multiple ways of solving a problem.

PHOTO: Second graders Reid Scholl and Neliana Hermosillo practice arithmetic skills by playing a math game, part of John Wetten Elementary’s new Bridges math curriculum. Teachers say the new approach is highly engaging, and many students now consider math their favorite class.

.....
Gladstone High students earn college credits

Gladstone High School is offering a new college course this fall, Introduction to Business. The class introduces students to the American business system in a changing global environment. Students learn about economics, entrepreneurship, accounting, finance, marketing, and management.

The course instructor is a Clackamas Community College professor, so students can earn both college and high school credits for the class.

“We offer several of these classes, providing an easy way for high school students to experience college-level learning and begin earning college credits,” said Principal Kevin Taylor. “Because the class is taught on our campus, students feel more comfortable pushing themselves to a higher level academically. It’s a safe way to see what college is like.”

This dual-credit program has existed at Gladstone High for many years, offering popular courses like Psychology 101 and Public Speaking. Other new classes added this year include Introduction to Health Care and Music Appreciation.

Other opportunities to earn college credits at Gladstone High School include Advanced Placement [AP] courses, and dual-credit college classes taught by high school teachers in partnership with Oregon Tech, Portland State University, and other colleges.

“Given the high cost of college tuition, earning college credits in high school can save families thousands of dollars,” said Taylor. “It’s not uncommon for students to earn as many as 60 credits before graduation.”

PHOTO: Clackamas Community College professor Nathan Webster teaches an Introduction to Business course to Gladstone High School students. The class is one of many options the school provides for students to earn college credits on their high school campus.