

Early math program = higher test scores

Students at two Fayette County elementary schools are reaping the rewards of an intervention program aimed at helping them establish a foundation in math at an early age.

Yates Elementary and James Lane Allen Elementary School applied for a Kentucky Primary Mathematics Intervention Initiative grant last year after identifying a need to bolster math instruction for kids who were struggling in the subject.

“The sooner you can intervene and get a child on track, the better chance you give them for success,” said James Lane Allen principal Greg Williams.

The program first tests students in kindergarten through third grade to see if they are below level in math. A full-time teacher, whose position was funded by the two year grant, works with those kids who need more help in the subject area. Students then receive specialized instruction in addition to their normal math class.

So far, the results have been impressive.

“We saw gains in all the kids. The majority of students were able to return to the regular classroom and perform at grade level and are not in the program this year,” said Yates Elementary principal Ketsy Fields.

Students made gains in other areas as well.

“What we see in the students is they exhibit more confidence,” said Fields. “Their self esteem is better, they have a positive attitude toward math, and are excited about math.”

From now until December 17, 2007 schools may submit primary intervention grant applications to the Kentucky Department of Education for the 2008-2009 school year. For details, visit <http://kymath.org> and select “Intervention.” Continuation of funding beyond year two is uncertain, but Mathematics Intervention teachers are hoping that they will be able to continue the work that is making a big difference for their students.