

## Youngsters commended for math skills

Justin Washington of Tates Creek Elementary has solved enough problems to rank as the No. 1 First in Math player in Kentucky, beating out more than 3,000 other fifth-graders statewide.

Justin and several classmates were recognized March 28 by Barbara Asteak, vice president of Pennsylvania-based Suntex International, the creators of First in Math. She came to town to congratulate the students and present them with medals and prizes.

Asteak also noted the success of second-graders at Athens-Chilesburg and fourth- and fifth-graders at SCAPA Bluegrass.

The First in Math online program is based on the popular 24 Game series -- a teaching tool that for 20 years has helped children sharpen basic skills such as computation, problem solving, number sense, critical thinking and pattern sensing.

Students earn electronic award stickers by solving problems within eight Skill Sets of increasing difficulty, from addition through algebra. Their stickers then are combined for a team total.

The top 10 schools will be recognized after the team competition closes out in April. Though individual student competition continues through July, Justin at Tates Creek has accumulated enough points that he cannot be caught!

**Fast fact:** Students throughout the U.S. have solved more than 340 million math problems on the First in Math Web site this school year, spending thousands of hours doing math!

**Online:** [www.firstinmath.com](http://www.firstinmath.com). The user ID is 'love' and the password is 'math.'