

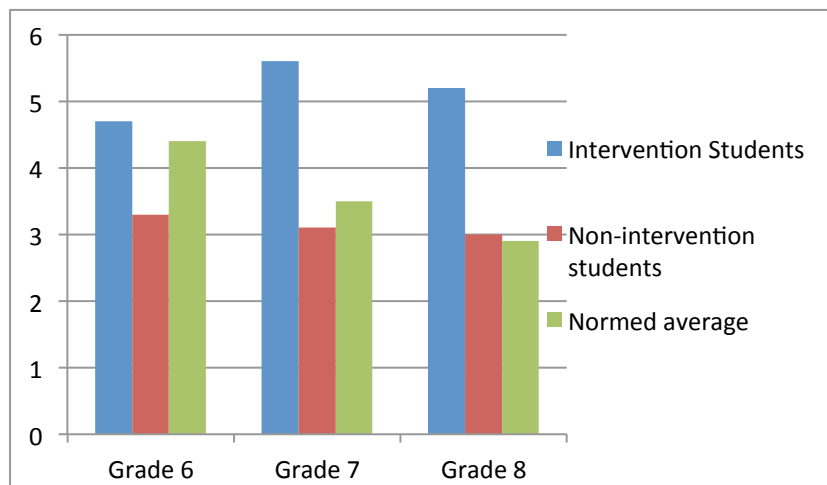
AN INTERVENTION STORY OF SUCCESS

In 2017, an Assistant Superintendent and the Mathematics Program Specialist of a large urban school district in Northern California wanted to improve math achievement of students in grades 6-8. In particular, they wanted to target struggling learners whose math skills were one or two grade levels below what was needed for success in their core math class. Their thinking was that, with proper support, this group could get the boost needed to be ready for high school and beyond. Funding was set aside so that each site would receive funding for two sections with a ratio of approximately 20 students per teacher.

The district coordinator contacted the Center for Mathematics and Teaching, and they put together three customized programs (grades 6, 7, 8) to be used for a second period intervention class. Each program combined resources to front load concepts and skills that would help students to be more successful with current work, and a skills routine designed to fill gaps in a systematic way. Pacing plans incorporated the *MathLinks* curriculum and resources. Ongoing professional development was provided to all teachers in the program.

The district used the NWEA as an interim assessment. Results showed that intervention students outperformed all other students as well as the national average.

2017-2018 Middle School Math Fall to Winter RIT Growth



Some noteworthy observations:

- Eligibility was based on criteria that combined teacher recommendations and test scores. Then students were invited to participate.
- Professional development helped teachers to understand the goal of the program (we want students to do better in their current class), and to learn math content and strategies to achieve this goal. Teachers found strategies learned in PD to be valuable for all of their classes.
- About 94% of participating teachers attended at least one PD session. About 20% of participating teachers attended at least half of the PD sessions offered. The district coach helped all teachers who requested assistance.
- Front-loaded pacing plans, combined with appropriate math materials, gave teachers direction and focus for their classes.
- Teachers reported that students were more confident as the year progressed. This translated into greater engagement and participation, more willingness to share, and completion of more work in both classes.
- Teachers also reported more confidence in their own teaching as the year progressed.
- Reported concerns included student and parent buy-in to the program, inconsistency in the execution of enrollment criteria, and scheduling challenges at various sites. As a result, one change moving forward will be that the name of the program will be “Math Foundations” rather than “Math Intervention.”
- Many teachers preferred intervention curriculum to their current core program, and expressed frustration that it was not available to everyone.