



Spotlight on Learning – Curricular Competencies in the Math Classroom

The curricular competencies for math are broken into four areas of focus. The first is reasoning and modeling which includes skills such as the ability to estimate reasonably and demonstrate fluent, flexible, and strategic thinking about numbers. The second is understanding and solving which includes applying flexible and strategic approaches to solve problems. Thirdly, communicating and representing through which students explain and justify mathematical ideas and decisions in many ways. Finally, connecting and reflecting where students use mistakes as opportunities to advance learning. These curricular competencies, which reflect the “do” component of our curriculum, are not new to our instruction, but the assessment of these curricular competencies using the Ministry of Education’s proficiency scale has elicited much discussion between math department teachers and, more recently, their students.

The Ministry of Education has provided a Proficiency Scale, and, on that scale, it states that a student who is Proficient demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning. This is the third interval of four on the scale. Many students, and I’m sure this is true for their parents as well, have questioned why a test or quiz or assignment mark above 90% only correlates to a 3 on a 4-point scale. We explain to our students, that in many areas of math, we don’t give the students an opportunity to be Extending - demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies. In our first two units of pre-calculus 12, students were taught skills for graphing and factoring that will be used in chapters throughout the rest of the course and on into Calculus. The skills were taught, and those same skills were assessed and, as a result, not a single student obtained a proficiency score higher than proficient, despite numerous stellar test results. In addition, while a unit may focus on multiple competencies, we may only choose to assess one or two on any given assessment.

Proficiency Scale ¹	→			
	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Extending
	The student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a partial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.

Currently, our 12s are in the midst of studying Logarithms. Our curriculum barely scratches the surface of this incredible mathematical tool and some of our students are ready to take a deeper look, to explore, to extend their understanding. What does it mean to be proficient in our math

classes? It means you get it... you have a complete understanding.... you can demonstrate the skills you’ve been taught... you can explain it to a friend... you likely have an A. What does it look like to be extending in our math classes? It looks like our students who want to know more about Logarithms, who want to go beyond what we’ve taught in class and explore their own interests in the topic. The best part of that extending category is that we don’t know exactly what it might look like in every area of math but I’m quite certain our students will show us.

Part 1: Tough Conversations at Home: A Mini-Series on Racism and Anti-Racism

Raising teens is not an easy gig. We are up against the influence and constant bombardment of media, social media, music, and the ever-powerful peer groups our teens connect with. Many would argue that raising teens is getting harder because information of all sorts is at their fingertips and getting them to step away from social media can be a task that results in tensions so high, we avoid it altogether. Sometimes conversations are so tough, we don’t know where or how to start.

Our first installment in this mini-series outlines ways for adults to engage with, communicate and talk to our teens about race and racism.

Uji Asika, the author of *Bringing Up Race: How to Raise a Kind Child in a Prejudiced World*, wrote a book to help parents engage openly and honestly with kids of all ages. As a Black mother raising two boys, she has been having these talks since they were small. Uji Asika, acknowledges how hard it can be to talk to your teen about cleaning their room, let alone, big stuff, like race. When it comes to talking about the big stuff, many parents and adults recognize the importance and do not want to get it wrong.

Below is an excerpt from her book, that provides some ways to begin having these crucial conversations with our teens.

How to Discuss Race with Teens

1. Talk about what they're hearing on the news.

No matter their age, do your best to shield your child from graphic or violent imagery. The viral sharing of Black bodies being brutalized is both dehumanizing and desensitizing. However, most teens will pick up on major news stories through mainstream channels and social media. So don't switch off and pretend it's not happening.

Talk to your teen about what they might have seen or heard and how it makes them feel. It's okay to share some



of your own difficult and painful feelings around events too. You don't have to act like you have all the answers, but it helps to show empathy. It also builds trust with your teen so you can have more open conversations going forwards.

Try to connect the dots between where we are and how we got here: For instance, violence against Black people has a long history in the U.S. going back to slavery. Here in Canada, the intentional and systematic destruction of our Indigenous culture, language, and communities through residential school system. There's also a long tradition of people resisting injustice. Discuss what actions you can take to promote racial justice in your community such as joining a protest march, starting a petition at school, or writing a letter to your representative.

2. Talk about what they are learning about in school

Maybe there are still a lot of questions your teen might have. Maybe they feel empowered to talk action. Find answers to those questions together. Help them with that project. Share your experience as a teen. If they have an idea of ways to promote anti-racism, or activism, or want to start a club, find a teacher, counsellor, or administrator who will listen and work collaboratively to support your teen with their ideas.

3. Discuss the way they talk about race with their peers.

If you eavesdrop on your teen when they're talking to their friends, you might get a rude awakening. Teenagers can sometimes sound quite crass and even bigoted. If your child says something offensive, try not to fly off the handle about it. Kids say a lot of stuff they don't mean. However, do disrupt it with a simple "Hey, that's not cool" or "Have you thought about what you're saying?" Steer them towards kinder, more inclusive language. Remind them frequently to check their privilege or biases. By doing so, you are not only interrupting the behavior and conversation, but you are also giving them a few lines to use to interrupt future conversations.

Be sure to remark on what they're doing right too. Using phrases like "I'm so proud that you're the kind of person who speaks out against discrimination" will reinforce and remind them of the kind of person they want to be. Above all, focus on listening and asking questions, rather than lecturing them. You will learn a lot about your teen and how they engage with the world outside your front door.

4. Watch out for the type of media they consume.

Teens need their privacy, but it's essential for parents to be aware of what media they're consuming. You should have discussions about how to use technology safely, and how to look for multiple, trusted sources so they don't get stuck on a singular perspective.

Like most teenagers, my boys are glued to their phones 24/7. Every now and then, I'll prod them about what they're watching and ask them to tell me about it in their own words. I've done this ever since my eldest became obsessed by WWE wrestling at age 6. One day, I asked him to tell me about it. After he spoke for over an hour, I realized there was more to it than guys beating each other up! He was drawn in by the storytelling, mythmaking, and displays of strength, camaraderie, and resilience.

One thing I recommend is watching shows with your teen. As a family, we watch a wide range of TV including older shows that might be lacking in racial sensitivity. You might avoid these, but I see it as an opportunity to have nuanced discussions with kids around narratives and how they evolve. You can talk about why so much media centers a white (often male) perspective and why it's important to seek out more diverse stories. Here's a list of shows and films to spark conversations around race.

5. Talk about how to respond to a racist comment or incident.

Most children will encounter some form of racism or bigotry by the time they reach high school. Whatever your child's race or ethnicity, it's crucial they learn how to respond. Should they challenge the offender, or is it safer to walk away? Can they turn to a trusted adult? What kinds of things should they say?

Role play at home can be helpful. It's also useful to arm your teen with simple, set phrases like, "Don't say that. It's racist" or "Just stop. I don't find racism funny." The key lesson is to disrupt racism as it happens and not to be a passive (and complicit) bystander. However, teach them to avoid confrontation if they can and to ask a grownup for help if a situation escalates become further pieces to disrupt, and address racism in our schools and communities.

Racism is tough. Experiencing racism is tougher. Talking about it doesn't have to be.

Post-Secondary Night Success

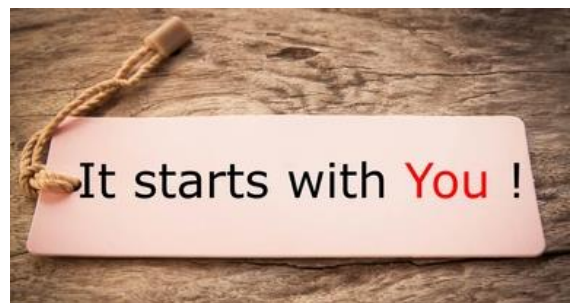
Last Wednesday we opened our doors and welcomed grade 11 and 12 students from across the district to learn about and explore institution and program options from over a dozen universities and colleges from across the province. We estimate that we had over 200 students and parents in the building. If you were unable to attend on Wednesday, you are encouraged to meet with Ms. Solgaard and/or Mr. Gill in the career counselling center to learn more about programs, deadlines, prerequisites, scholarships, and bursary opportunities. Make an appointment soon, as deadlines for applications, always come faster than you think.

Character Word of the Week: Responsibility

Taking responsibility means being accountable for your actions, your words, and your obligations.

How it can look when put into action:

- Attending regularly and being on time.
- Admitting mistakes and making amends.
- Setting and pursuing goals; taking initiative for self-improvement
- Working diligently.
- Communicating clearly and honestly; listening carefully.



- Showing courage.
- Being persistent.
- Planning ahead and using time wisely.

October: Vitamins for Vitality

You probably know that the food you eat affects your body. Many studies have shown the connection between your food choices and your overall health. Proper nutrition keeps skin, teeth, and eyes healthy, supports muscles, boosts immunity, strengthens bones, and helps reduce the risk of diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic illnesses. New research finds that your food choices may also affect your mood and mental health. You should eat foods that contain vitamins and minerals. This includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, and a source of protein. It's not easy for everyone to eat healthy but you CAN make better choices for yourself!



Self-Care Mondays – Journalling: Mindfulness in Motion

You may be surprised to learn that one of your best wellness tools is a journal. Journaling offers an array of benefits — from easing stress to sparking self-discovery.

Journalling helps relieve stress and change a mindset

Journaling can be a great pressure releasing valve when we feel overwhelmed or simply have a lot going on internally," says Amy Hoyt, PhD, founder of Mending Trauma. For example, in patients, families, and healthcare practitioners from a children's hospital reported a reduction in stress levels after completing this journaling exercise:

- write three things you're grateful for
- write the story of your life in six words
- write three wishes you have

Journalling encourages distance from negative thoughts

When negative or worried thoughts arise, it's easy to get caught up in their catastrophic stories. Jotting down your thoughts, however, "creates space and distance to consider them in a more objective way," says Sabrina Romanoff, PsyD, a clinical psychologist in New York City. This distance is formally called cognitive defusion, a helpful concept from acceptance and commitment therapy. "The idea is that you are not your thoughts, emotions, or physical symptoms; instead, you are the context in which they occur," says Romanoff. In other words, if your thoughts aren't serving you, you don't have to believe them. Instead, you can use journaling to see your thoughts as separate from you.

COMING UP THIS WEEK

Sunday October 25

- Swim to Fraser Valley meet in Hope

Monday October 24 – ABCD

- Diwali
- Sr Girls T2 Volleyball @5pm
- Drop everything and read day

Tuesday October 25 – CDBA

- Counselling/Admin Meeting
- Cross Country Meet in Aldergrove @10:30am
- Sr Girls T1 volleyball @5pm

Wednesday October 26 – BADC

- School Safety Meeting @CORE @8:30
- THRIVE leadership meeting@2:35
- Gr 9 Girls Volleyball @3pm
- Jr Girls Volleyball@3pm
- Sr Girls T1 Volleyball @5pm

Thursday October 27 – DCAB

- Thrive Leadership meeting @2:35
- Secondary Admin Meeting 3:15 to 5pm
- JV Football @home @5pm
- Haunted Hallway@7pm

Friday October 28 – CDBA

- SLO
- Gr 9, Jr and Sr girls teams away at Tournament
- Sr Football@ GW Graham
- Grad Breakfast @8:30 to 9:20

Journalling can help you figure out next steps

Writing down your thoughts and feelings about a situation is the first step in understanding how best to proceed. Once you've calmed down a bit, you might find that your emotions are trying to tell you something:

Maybe your anger is a sign that you need to set a stronger boundary with someone. Or your sadness is nudging you to reach out and strengthen your connections.

Seeing your concerns, questions, and emotions in black and white gives you a clearer picture of your needs. Even a simple list of pros and cons can provide deeper insight into your desires — certainly more so than a jumble of thoughts knocking around in your head.

Journalling deepens self-discovery

Think of yourself as a puzzle: You get to discover a different piece or pattern every single day. Journaling provides a much-needed pause to help us reconnect to ourselves and rediscover who we are. When we write, we learn our preferences, pain points, fears, favorites, and dreams.

We are constantly evolving. Journaling helps us to listen, bear witness to these changes, and simply get to know ourselves a whole lot better.