

Vision Grant Update 2023-Findley

This past year, I was awarded a Vision Grant to help with small group, student led instruction. This grant was titled "Manipulate Small Group Success". This grant was designed to help students lead in explaining their reasoning behind their answers to a math problem. At JET, we integrated a curriculum this year called iReady Mathematics, which is a program under Curriculum Associates. This math program helps students to work through a rigorous math curriculum through the use of student ownership, mathematical reasoning, and problem solving skills. This program utilizes various manipulatives as a tool to help students explain their answer to math problems. The supplies that I received through the Vision Grant allowed me to have plenty of resources available to fit right in with the idea of students explaining their own thinking while using this curriculum.

I have watched my students grow as they learn to explain their thinking while using math vocabulary. By having multiplication chart pop-its, fraction bars, percentage flip charts, geoboards, students have been able to explain their thinking through the use of these manipulatives, while also mapping out and explaining their thinking on the white board. I have even been able to use these manipulatives in small groups. Just this week, we were working on Equivalent Expressions. Students were able to come up to the roll around white board during small group time and explain which ones were equivalent expressions and why, by using words like coefficient, constant, and factors. A few weeks ago, when we were working on the area of triangles, students were able to use the geoboards to show that a triangle is like half of a square or a rectangle, as they could see that with their rubber bands. That helped them to understand why the formula for the area of a triangle is half of the base times the height. This is something that has become a routine for students. Their routine is to get an answer, and then defend their answer to their group, while proving their answer through multiplication charts, equivalent flip charts, geoboards, and the white board. Normally, in a math class, students get the answer to a problem, and then move onto the next problem. By utilizing the resources provided in the grant, students have created new mathematical routines that will really help them in the future.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity that this grant has given me and my students, not only this year, but last year as well. Through the use of research, best practices, and the opportunities to provide financial support for things that will help my students the most, I am appreciative for this grant in many ways. This year, my students have grown as leaders in the classroom through the opportunities that they have had to back up their thinking, explain their reasoning, and prove their answers through various manipulatives. This is preparing our students to be leaders in the future, as they work with others in their careers to explain their reasoning, problem solve, and make a difference everyday.

