**Explanation of Math Curriculum**

Dear Parent,

 As you may already be aware of, the transition from 2nd to 3rd grade can be challenging at times, due to the need for all students to become more independent learners as well as an increased rigor from the curriculum. What I am attempting to do here is explain how to best prepare your child for success within the math curriculum throughout this school year.

**At Home**

 Most weeks, I will only be requiring at most 2 nights of math homework. My rationale for this is that I believe homework is simply a time to practice a skill that has already been both taught and learned effectively during the school day. However, this does not mean in any way that the lessons in which your child will encounter involve math concepts will not be challenging. I differentiate my lessons the best I can in hopes that all children are stretching their mental capacity each and every day, and I have an array of resources to encourage this throughout the year. While I will not be assigning nightly homework to return to school, I will be assigning online assignments via Moby Max and Ten Marks frequently, that will align with what we will be currently be learning in the classroom. Although students’ time spent utilizing these programs will not always count towards a grade, any time reinforcing current math concepts will be beneficial and increase their chances of success. You can find both links to these web pages on our class Weebly page. Also, I will have another link that will contain various programs in which your child can practice concepts that will be relevant to what’s being taught in class. In closing, I would also HIGHLY ENCOURAGE that your child their math facts at home. We will encounter many multiple-step, higher order math questions throughout the year, so students’ fluency of their facts in all 4 math operations is crucial to enabling them to get to that level of math understanding. There are various ways students can practice their facts, but I have found an electronic version that is very effective with 3rd graders. It is called Minute Math Electronic Flash Card, and can be found at Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

**At School**

 While in the classroom, on a typical school day the time we devote an hour to an hour and a half of math practice. This may seem like a long time on the surface to have 8 and 9 year olds to learn math, but is an adequate amount of time in allowing them to understanding and hopefully master the curriculum being taught. With the new Common Core State Standards, math is being both taught and learned in a new, hands-on way, which requires a deeper understanding and increased student collaboration than ever before. When I approached an upcoming chapter in the book last year, I had to spend time learning how to teach the material first myself before conducting the lessons in class. Along the way of using this new curriculum for the first time, I learned to be patient with the students in allowing them time to truly grasp the concepts, and to allow more time in class to encourage cooperative learning. Most days, we don’t use any papers and pencil, only the hands-on manipulatives, white boards, markers, and erasers. Also, I incorporate learning games into our lessons as much as possible, and sometimes edible types of learning activities. If students can relate personally to what they’re learning, they make better mental connections, thus boosting their learning potential. I also enjoy creating story problems that contain names of students in the class, and allow them time in the chapters to create their own problems for others in the class to solve. Once or sometimes twice a week, we will have computerized assignment days, where students will get to complete lessons on either Moby Max or Ten Marks in the lab. I do this to ensure that students will get time to practice navigating the sites, to provide alternative ways for students to demonstrate understanding of a concept, and give an opportunity for any student to utilize these resources who may not have the internet readily available after school.

I hope that you found this explanation of the math curriculum helpful. If you have any questions/concerns about anything throughout the school year, please feel free to contact me via email at jhansen@dunlapcusd.net.

Mr. Hansen