

URGENT! CHANGES TO THE MATH CURRICULUM

WHAT IS GOING ON?

Rumor has it that this summer, when school ends and parents disperse, the administration will make a push to adopt a new math curriculum - Singapore Math – to start in the Fall of 2013. Mr. Brown –the curriculum coordinator- has been evasive, to say the least: he has obfuscated about the timeline and about the rationale for adopting Singapore Math.

WHAT CAN I DO?

1. **Sign a petition asking the School Board not to rush:** Go to <http://chn.ge/10JHe1r> It takes less than a second and it makes a world of a difference.
2. **Spread the message:** Get 5 parents to sign the petition, and ask each of them to commit finding another 5 parents. This is one ‘chain’ you won’t regret having participated on.
3. **Speak up!** Come to the School Board meeting this Thursday, June 6th at 7pm, to voice your opinion. You can speak your mind, or we can give you talking points if you prefer. This is the most helpful thing you can do: we need to show we care enough to show up.
4. **Sign up to Volunteer:** We know you are busy, we simply ask your reply to this email so we can add you to a list for future announcements.

WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?: NOT SURE WHERE I STAND

Independent of whether you like the current math curriculum (Everyday Math), we can all agree that it is a bad idea to introduce a new program (Singapore Math) without providing enough time and resources for teacher training. Even if Singapore was a better program, it would be disruptive for current students to have to change programs midcourse elementary school. And in any case, it is not clear that Singapore Math is the best program. For these reasons, we are asking the School Board that:

1. No changes be made to the elementary math curriculum in the academic year 2013-14.
2. The district uses the next 12 months to properly assess the educational value of the competing math programs.
3. No changes be made to the elementary math curriculum until the issues are properly addressed and presented with transparency to the community, including elementary school parents and teachers.
4. When/if changes are made, they are implemented in a gradual manner, grandfathering children who had started in the current curriculum, to minimize the disruption to education brought about by having a student change programs midcourse.

WHO ARE YOU? Our names are Diego Fernandez-Duque and Jodie Baird. We are the proud parents of two Chestnutwold students: Santiago (5 Lab), and Malena (2MA). Jodie has volunteered as a homeroom parent and for Art in the Classroom. Jodie teaches at Swarthmore College and at the Phebe Anna Thorne Preschool of Bryn Mawr College. Her area of expertise is ‘cognitive development’ (how children think and learn). Diego has been in the Chestnutwold classrooms as a guest, teaching kids about Argentina and also about the Brain; he

has been involved in the Science club at Chestnutwold. Diego teaches at Villanova; his area of expertise is 'cognitive science' (how people learn).

I WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS ISSUE. Here is a [letter](#) we wrote to the board on April 4th. Feel free to contact Diego (diego.fernandezduque@villanova.edu) with any questions. Thanks.