

DreamBox Alignment with Performance-Based Learning Model Yields Learning Gains

Lincoln Orchard Mesa Elementary, Colorado

Three years ago, educators in Mesa County Valley School District 51 (D51) in Grand Junction, Colorado began implementing a performance-based learning (PBL) model district-wide. Rather than ask students to learn at a uniform pace, the D51 model allows individual students to progress from one curriculum concept to the next as soon as they demonstrate proficiency. Because DreamBox Learning® Math aligned so closely to D51's new instructional model and standards, math content facilitator Megan Bennet recommended piloting the program on a limited basis in Mesa County Valley elementary schools.

Jennifer Osborn, classroom teacher at Lincoln Orchard Mesa Elementary, says that at the time, "There weren't a lot of products out there that really honored mathematical thinking, but DreamBox did."

Osborn teaches both first- and second-grade students in her classroom, and participated in the initial pilot program three years ago. She's been using DreamBox ever since and says it's helped her to customize instruction not only for her struggling and high-performing students, but everyone in between. She explains, "For me, as a teacher, I really like to look at the standards my kids have mastered in DreamBox because instructionally that helps me identify gaps and plan targeted intervention."

Osborn's students started taking the NWEA® MAP Growth™ assessment this year. She uses DreamBox's real-time reporting to monitor student progress and to help them prep for intermittent assessments throughout the year. She also displays a wall chart in her classroom so students can track the number of lessons they complete in DreamBox. "My kids are all about tracking their own data," Osborn confides. "They're very much aware of what they're learning, why they're learning it, and how to apply the skills they're mastering in DreamBox to the math we do every day in the classroom."

“DreamBox allows our teachers to really provide in-the-moment differentiation to reach each student where they are.”

— *Leia Kraeuter*
Principal
Lincoln Orchard
Mesa Elementary



DreamBox is the foundation of a strong home-school connection

One of D51's long-term goals is to "promote shared responsibility for student learning through students, schools, families, and community members working together." Building a strong home-school connection is an integral part of that initiative, and DreamBox is helping to pave the way. Principal Leia Kraeuter says, "We really want parents to learn alongside kids, and cheer them on as they go."

Many adults didn't learn conceptual math when they were in school, and that can pose a real challenge for parents and guardians who want to maintain an active role in their student's education. DreamBox is helping to bridge that generational learning gap. Kraeuter explains, "Parents love DreamBox. It's helped them achieve a deeper understanding about how we do math in our schools. Parents come to conferences super excited about what their kids are doing."

Today, DreamBox is woven into school culture

Principal Kraeuter says that after using DreamBox schoolwide for three years, it's become part of the competency-based culture at Lincoln Orchard. "There is a DreamBox vocabulary here," says Kraeuter. "When we say DreamBox, everybody who works here and everybody who learns here knows what that means, and I think that makes a big difference."

She stresses that DreamBox is not just an intervention or acceleration tool. It's used by all students, at every level of readiness. She elaborates, "DreamBox allows our teachers to really provide in-the-moment differentiation to reach each student where they are."

Lincoln Orchard has a full-time instructional coach who provides professional learning support for Kraeuter's staff. Additionally, educators are taking advantage of the embedded MyFlexPD™ tool in DreamBox to help inform their teaching. Kraeuter says, "I do love the simplicity of DreamBox. I also appreciate the PD piece. If you want to learn how to do something, there's a video or a link on DreamBox that shows you how."

Classroom teacher Jennifer Osborn sums up DreamBox this way: "For my students, DreamBox is both engaging and educationally challenging. For me as a teacher, it's user friendly and accessible. And, it aligns perfectly with our instruction model!"

MESA COUNTY VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT 51 FAST FACTS

District serves **44 schools**,
24 are elementary

Enrollment: **22,105**

Grades: **K-12**

Free/Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL): **51.1%**

Minority Students: **29.5%**

Gifted and Talented (GT): **3.4%**

English as a Second Language (ESL): **3.7%**

