

#### CLARKSTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT FAST FACTS

- Largest public school district in Rockland County, NY
- Graduation rate of 93%, well above state average
- 11 elementary schools
- 6.6% eligible for free or reduced-price lunch
- 2.5% English Language Learners
- 12.1% special education

#### DREAMBOX IMPLEMENTATION

- Deployed since 2010
- 11 elementary schools
- K–5 classrooms
- 3,700 students

#### FUNDING SOURCE

- District software budget

#### ABOUT DREAMBOX LEARNING

DreamBox Learning's Intelligent Adaptive Learning™ program accelerates learning by ensuring every student works continually in their optimal learning zone and helps all students achieve math proficiency.

# Transition to Common Core

Bridging the gap between current standards and the Common Core

## → CHALLENGE:

Supporting greater focus, coherence, and rigor in mathematics instruction

As Clarkstown Central School District in Rockland County, New York, began the transition to the Common Core State Standards, they searched for a supplemental math program that would support the shift to greater focus, coherence, and rigor in mathematics. The district was looking for something that would help students who needed more support. Recognizing that some students were struggling with math concepts in intermediate and middle school, Clarkstown Central School District decided to prioritize early intervention in the primary grades. Principal Lisa Maher notes, "The gap only widens the longer you wait. We needed a strong, visually-based online program to build the foundational conceptual understanding of core content that is closely aligned to the Common Core."

## → SOLUTION:

Provide a visual model to develop conceptual understanding

A team of Clarkstown teachers across 11 elementary schools investigated many supplemental math programs, but found most of them inadequate for the district's needs. "The vast majority of programs out there just took a standardized test and converted it to digital form. That's fine for test prep—but not fine for helping with teaching

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—Dr. Marianne Strayton, Teacher,  
Clarkstown Central School District

the developmental concepts of math," said Dr. Marianne Strayton, a classroom teacher who was on the district committee. "DreamBox stood out for its use of representations and visual models that support how students learn and acquire understanding of mathematics."

Another teacher on the committee, Wendy Ansons, agrees. "DreamBox has the best visual models for conceptualizing math I've seen. We have been impressed at how tightly aligned DreamBox was with the Common Core,



**“DreamBox has the best visual models for conceptualizing math I’ve seen. We have been impressed at how tightly aligned DreamBox was with the Common Core, the quality of instruction, and the expertise of the DreamBox academic advisors.”**

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## → IMPLEMENTATION

### Flexibility to fit every classroom’s culture

Clarkstown’s teachers have particularly appreciated DreamBox’s online nature, which has allowed for variety in its implementation.

Students use DreamBox in computer labs on a weekly rotation, during center time within their classrooms, and at home. Wendy Ansons, a kindergarten teacher in the district, sees DreamBox as a way to build a stronger home-to-school connection and to reinforce skill building. “Technology is a great



connection between school and home. Since DreamBox is online, students can learn anytime from anywhere, and teachers have access to the information on student progress,” said Ansons. Some teachers who are looking to increase students’ time on individualized areas of need use DreamBox as a homework option, especially during weeks where computer lab time is limited.

Clarkstown teachers also use the DreamBox Interactive Whiteboard Lessons, from the Dreambox Teacher Tools, as an introduction to a classroom lesson. This helps connect the students’ individual experiences with the classroom learning. Mrs. Ansons’ students love the 10 frame flash game, which they use as a warm-up.

DreamBox reporting has become a very useful tool for teachers. The reports can be used diagnostically, to see why a particular student is not able to move forward in the curriculum, as well as during RTI meetings with parents and other staff. The reports can also be used to identify cohort groups of the same skill level that can work together during class time.

## → RESULTS

### A hands-on introduction to the Common Core

In addition to the Mathematical Content Standards, the Common Core also provides Standards for Practice, a guideline on the ways students should engage in math across grade levels. They include abstract and qualitative reasoning, real-world modeling, use of appropriate tools, and others. DreamBox is tightly aligned with these concepts

and that alignment has been evident in Clarkstown’s usage of the system.

As principal Lisa Maher describes, “In workshops, our [Common Core] consultant will talk about quick images and modeling with linking cubes. Teachers will now say, ‘Oh, I’ve seen that in DreamBox!’ As teachers work more closely with the Common Core standards, they see the conceptual connections within the visuals and tasks used in DreamBox. Often when teachers are demonstrating these newer strategies in class, students say ‘Oh! That’s like in DreamBox!’”

The Content Standards are rigidly scaffolded from grade to grade. Because

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of DreamBox’s alignment to the Common Core and its ability to assess individual concept understanding, Clarkstown started noticing gaps in student learning. DreamBox was integral in helping Clarkstown address those gaps. John Krouskoff, Technical Director for the district, notes “DreamBox meets each student where they are. Our teachers see DreamBox as a welcome addition to their toolbox.”

For more information, contact DreamBox at 877.451.7845, email [schools@dreambox.com](mailto:schools@dreambox.com), or visit [dreambox.com](http://dreambox.com).