



St. John the Baptist Parish School Board

Making *A+* Difference: Accountability Assessment Achievement

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August 15, 2014

Dear SJBPA Parent,

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The SJBPA Curriculum Department is eager to welcome your child back for the 2014-2015 school year. This year, all students in grades K-11 will learn math using a new curriculum called *Eureka Math*. We are excited to provide your child with such a high-quality program of math instruction.

What is *Eureka Math*? Why is our district using it? Quite simply, we believe it offers students a better way to learn mathematics. You may have seen the headlines: *Mathematics achievement of American students has fallen behind that of students in other countries*, and *Students in Louisiana are struggling compared to students in other states*. In a nutshell, the way math was taught in the past basically did not prepare students for the higher demands of college and careers today. Our schools will now be working to improve teaching and learning to ensure that all students graduate high school with the necessary skills to be successful in their chosen careers. *Eureka Math* will help to prepare students to meet those higher demands.

Use of *Eureka Math* means three major changes:

- ❖ Teachers will concentrate on teaching a more focused set of major math concepts and skills.
- ❖ This concentration will allow students time to master key math concepts and skills in a more organized way throughout the year and from one grade to the next.
- ❖ It will also call for teachers to use rich and challenging math content and to engage students in solving real-world problems in order to inspire greater interest in mathematics.

Indeed, during the curriculum review process, *Eureka Math* was the only math curriculum to receive the Louisiana Department of Education's top (Tier 1) rating.

As you support your child in practicing math at home, you will notice some differences between *Eureka Math* and the math textbooks you may have used when you were in school. These differences include:

- ❖ An emphasis on mathematical *concepts* instead of mathematical *procedures*. In other words, students will work to understand and explain why math works the way it does instead of *just* memorizing facts or steps.
- ❖ Students will use a variety of methods to solve problems. These methods will include the standard ones that students have always been taught, but they will also include methods that rely on making sense of math problems using diagrams, tables, and hands-on materials.

For more information on *Eureka Math*, please go to our district's curriculum page located at <http://www.stjohn.k12.la.us/pages/SJBPA/Departments/Curriculum>, and click the "Parent Resources" link. You will find a number of additional resources for parents of children at all grade levels.

We look forward to supporting you and your child in a successful learning experience this school year.

Sincerely,

Quentina Timoll
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of Curriculum

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