



Finding a Solution That Works for Every Student

HOW ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT MADE A TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN MATH INSTRUCTION

A year after Fayette County Public School District rolled out the **enVision Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 (enVision A|G|A)** curriculum in their high schools, we sat down with Kate McAnelly and Natalee Feese to discuss the results. Kate is the district's senior director of academic services and chief academic officer, and Natalee is a mathematics specialist and champion of mathematics in Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS).

Located in Lexington, Kentucky, the Fayette County Public School District empowers its schools to choose the curricula that work best for them. As a part of Superintendent Emmanuel Caulk's* Strategic Plan Imperative, a guaranteed and viable math curriculum for students was a priority. Superintendent Caulk put funding aside to ensure each school could purchase a program of choice. Without his vision and passion, this adoption would never have become a reality.

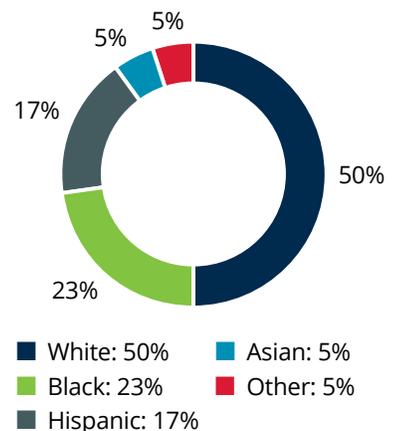
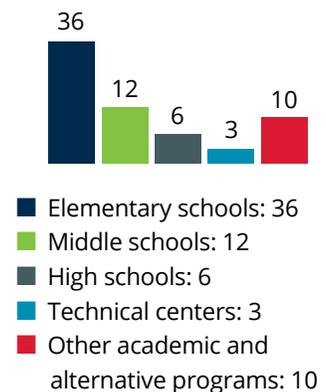
District Needs

There were several non-negotiable factors for the new math curriculum.

- Serve a diverse student population, with differentiating instruction for English learners and special education learners, as well as gifted and talented students
- Be available in multiple languages
- Meet the Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET) requirements, which help the district determine if a given curriculum meets state and district standards
- Have an online component with a digital data platform

*Named KY Superintendent of the Year by the Kentucky Association of School Administrators

FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT AT A GLANCE



5,059	Students classified as English learners (EL)
86	Native languages spoken by EL students
4,914	Students classified for special education

Source: fcps.net/fastfacts 10/1/2018

“Rarely will you see a district-wide math curriculum being implemented in Kentucky. We were able to find a program on the market that every school wanted. They all jumped on the bandwagon to receive the resources, materials, and professional learning support of the high-quality program provided by Savvas.”
 – Kate McAnelly



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Finding the Right Partner

After twenty-five years of the same math program, the district put together a council of stakeholders to help choose an updated curriculum for adoption. Committed to avoiding a top-down decision, the committee was comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, English language and special education teachers, and a panel of fifty students.

Though schools were able to choose their own solutions, the committee determined that **enVision A|G|A** met the needs of each individual middle school, high school and the district as a whole.

“ We had learning challenges along the way. We had highs and lows throughout the school year. We feel like our first year would be very common to many districts, but we had such great support from Savvas that we were able to move on at even higher levels. ”

– Nataliee Feese

One Goal, Three Priorities

The goal of the district was not simply to replace a curriculum but to implement transformational change. These changes took the form of three main priorities:



Ensure the new curriculum was used



Encourage mathematical discussions with all students

Balance math conceptual understanding, procedural skills and fluency, and application at an appropriate level of rigor for each student

Implementation Challenges

Rolling out a new curriculum is never easy. Because the same curriculum had been used for twenty-five years, some teachers had grown comfortable with the content they were teaching and resisted change, and new technology came with a learning curve. To address these issues and ensure all teachers had the tools and skills they needed, Fayette worked with Savvas as well as the Gates Foundation’s The New Teacher Project (TNTP) and Math Design Collaborative for professional development.

The district provided more than fifty teacher development opportunities designed to integrate within the district’s professional development plan. Monthly training sessions, after-school training, ongoing coaching, and administrator sessions led to success.

Teacher Collaboration and Peer Coaching

In addition to formal professional development, Fayette schools implemented observational math learning walks. Teachers visited more than 175 **enVision A|G|A** classrooms to observe lessons and learn from colleagues. The district also created a Lighthouse Team program where teachers were designated as peer coaches. These teachers volunteered to be videotaped while teaching to share effective practices.

Measuring Success

The Fayette County Public School District assessed the effectiveness of the new curriculum, professional development, and on- and off-site support through a variety of evaluations. A teacher survey at the midpoint and end of the year, along with a student survey, showed widespread usage and approval.

87%

of survey respondents reported either fully or partially using the curriculum throughout the year.

100%

of teachers reported the curriculum appropriately aligned to the standards their students required.

81%

percent of students reported feeling challenged by their math classes.

A majority of students experienced a strong learning culture (high expectations, persistence, and mathematical discussions).



“ The work between our school district and Savvas was not “one and done.” It took ongoing collaboration, problem solving, and support to be successful. For FCPS, success meant a transformational change in student learning which ultimately improved achievement. ”

– Kate McAnelly

Key Takeaways from FCPS

1

Improved student discourse: Students are beginning to engage more in the mathematical thinking and discussion that are critical for success.

2

Instruction at the right level of the standard: A big win is that students are receiving instruction at the appropriate level of rigor for their grade level. This is a critical improvement over prior years.

3

Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching: The Framework enhanced teaching observations and practices and led to thoughtful conversations. Having success measured and confirmed by multiple data sets has been critical.

4

High levels of engagement: TNTP, a key partner in the professional development and evaluation, was impressed by the experience and results. It was unusual to see such a high rate of sustained use of the new curriculum. Most districts start with strong usage at the beginning of the school year, but it drops as the year continues. For FCPS, teacher and student engagement in **enVision A|G|A** started high and stayed high.

“ We knew we were making big strides when, after the first year of implementation, 50 teachers willingly came together at the end of the school year on their own time to review the implementation from the past year and identify how to make it even more successful in year two. ”

– Kate McAnelly

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