

Parent Letter

Parents' Introduction to *Kindergarten Everyday Mathematics*

This year your child will be using *Kindergarten Everyday Mathematics*, a program created through the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project. This program is based on research and experience that shows that young children are capable of more mathematics learning in kindergarten than was previously believed so long as the content is presented and explored in ways appropriate for children of kindergarten age.

Mathematics learning used to be treated differently from subjects in which discussion and creativity are welcomed. Learning was mostly by rote, memorizing equations and tables. Children learned to add and subtract, then to multiply and divide. But mathematics includes this and much more. To many of us, who learned to think of mathematics primarily as written work — problems of numbers and symbols written on paper, and solved on paper — it may be hard at first to believe that mathematics is taking place. Few papers come home. The children seem to be playing! But these playful activities are meaningful and productive and help children become independent and comfortable thinkers about mathematical ideas. Research has shown that young children often have difficulty with written and symbolic mathematics if it is emphasized too early — before a strong foundation based on understanding is built.

You will see your child become excited by a wealth of mathematics activities, including counting, numeration, measurement, geometry, patterns, data collecting and calculator use. Classroom routines such as keeping track of the days of school on a number line, monitoring and graphing the temperature and weather, recording attendance, counting the time it takes to clean-up, charting the daily schedule, gives children real-life opportunities to develop a variety of mathematics skills.

We hope that through experiencing *Kindergarten Everyday Mathematics*, you and your child will find that mathematics is useful, enjoyable, varied, and meaningful. Just as we know that telling stories and reading books to children helps foster a love of reading, in the same way, your support of mathematics learning will help your child to develop lasting confidence and competence. Your comments and questions are most welcome.

Sincerely,

The Kindergarten Teachers