

Jefferson Davis Parish School System Leads in Math Excellence

McGraw-Hill My Math Essential
Success Tool



Success Story: Hathaway High School (PreK– 12)



Hathaway High School
Jennings, La.

Overview

Hathaway High School is a largely rural school serving students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Located in southwest Louisiana, it is part of the Jefferson Davis Parish School System. Hathaway's school performance scores are consistently the best in the

district, and the school earned an A on its most recent 2013-14 state report card. The school's scores on the ACT and the ACT's EXPLORE and PLAN tests have all shown growth and are higher than the national average.

McGraw-Hill Education at Hathaway High School: a decades-old relationship

Hathaway High School is no stranger to McGraw-Hill Education's programs. Educators there say the district has been using McGraw-Hill Education titles for many years. Superintendent Brian Lejeune notes that the district currently uses several McGraw-Hill Education products, including *Glencoe High School Science Series*, *SRA Open Court Reading*, and *Glencoe Math*, adopted three years ago for grades six, seven, and eight.

Two years ago, the Parish School System adopted *McGraw-Hill My Math* for grades K-5. Like the adoption of *Glencoe Math* before it, *McGraw-Hill My Math* was implemented to ensure seamless alignment with new Common Core State Standards adopted by Louisiana.

Aligned with state expectations

McGraw-Hill My Math focuses on the Common Core's three components of rigor: Conceptual Understanding, Procedural Skill and Fluency, and Application, which are woven throughout the program in equal intensity, helping students progress toward higher achievement levels. *McGraw-Hill My Math* (PreK-5) and *Glencoe Math* (6-8) share a common authorship team, digital platform, and instructional features. Together, these two programs form a continuum of instruction across grade levels.

"We knew we needed to get something that was Common Core aligned, specifically in math, because we didn't have anything," says Lejeune, who taught and led in the district for more than 30 years before becoming superintendent two years ago. "We put teachers together and did research and came up with *McGraw-Hill My Math* as the best option."

2013 – 2014



DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

495 STUDENTS (PreK–12)



93% WHITE



3% BLACK



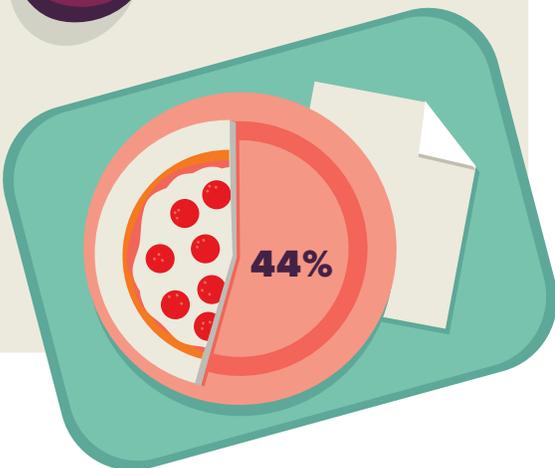
3% HISPANIC



1% NATIVE HAWAIIAN
& PACIFIC ISLAND



FREE & REDUCED
LUNCH



Engagement, relevance, and differentiation

Lisa Semmes, a fifth-grade math teacher at Hathaway who is going into her fifth year at the school, says, “*McGraw-Hill My Math* has been instrumental in engaging students who didn’t like math before.”

“I can understand because I was a student who didn’t like math,” Semmes acknowledges. “I’ve had several students tell me they never liked math until they got to my class, and it’s because we do it step-by-step, and I don’t make them do it alone. I might start out with the independent practice with them, or say ‘let’s do the even numbers together,’ and sometimes they’ll then say ‘let’s do the rest!’ We do the math in My World together every day.”

She describes the math curriculum used prior to *McGraw-Hill My Math* as not nearly engaging enough for her students. “In this day and age, students need something that jumps out at them. They want something colorful, something with contrast, and the old curriculum was just black and white.”

She says *McGraw-Hill My Math* engages students in many different ways. For example, Semmes says students enjoy the problem-solving investigations because they capture students’ interest and relate to things they know. She says the investigations are so successful in making math relevant that she often finds herself in discussions with her students about real-life experiences that mimic the lesson.

Our teachers feel comfortable that *McGraw-Hill My Math* is providing the information we need to help our children be successful.

— Brian LeJeune
Superintendent

Semmes notes that *McGraw-Hill My Math*’s problem-solving strategies lead to valuable discussions about the steps taken to solve a problem or alternate techniques for solving a problem. She finds that the writing portion part of chapter reviews does a good job of fulfilling Common Core requirements for explaining math concepts in writing.

Also, Semmes finds that *McGraw-Hill My Math*’s online features result in increased student engagement, especially in conjunction with her classroom’s ActivBoard, an interactive whiteboard she uses daily.

“When we use *McGraw-Hill My Math* on the ActivBoard, my students all want to be part of the lesson,” she explains.

Other *McGraw-Hill My Math* features Semmes appreciates include the Personal Tutor, Am I Ready? pages, and the Reteach and Enrich pages, which help with differentiated instruction.

“We’ll break off into groups, and I’ll have some kids doing the Reteach and some doing the Enrichment,” she says. “Often, the kids doing the Reteach might look over and see the Enrichment activity, which is more like a game and

more challenging, and then want to do the Enrichment after successfully completing the Reteach.”

LeJeune says from a district-wide perspective, one of *McGraw-Hill My Math*’s most attractive attributes is its consumable feature so students can write in the book.

McGraw-Hill My Math + ALEKS® = student enthusiasm

Elmira Trent teaches junior high math and piloted the adaptive, supplemental program *ALEKS* with her students this past year. Semmes’ fifth-grade class participated in the pilot and was impressed.

ALEKS includes a skills-based diagnostic test to determine which skills students already know, which they are ready to learn, and skills they still need to master. Students are given a skill to work on and questions to answer. *ALEKS*’ adaptive technology tells students immediately whether they’ve mastered the concept or whether they need to practice again. All the while, students are shown their progress visually in charts and a dwindling list of to-dos.

“The *ALEKS* program is just the most extraordinary thing, and something my students beg to do every day,” Semmes says. “They like to be able to see what they’re learning and how far they’re progressing.”

Students show progress

In spring of 2015, Hathaway students were assessed using the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test, which measures student knowledge according to what is expected under the Common Core. Results of the assessments have not yet been released.

However, LeJeune says he’s already seen a difference in how students are responding. “Last year was our first opportunity to take standardized assessments that were PARCC-like,” he explains. “After utilizing *McGraw-Hill My Math* for a year, our percentage of students scoring Advanced rose, and our percentage of students scoring Mastery rose.”

LeJeune notes that several other school districts have inquired about *McGraw-Hill My Math* and visited Jefferson Parish to see it firsthand. They leave impressed with what they observed according to LeJeune.

“We’re very pleased with what we’re seeing,” LeJeune says. “Our teachers feel comfortable that *McGraw-Hill My Math* is providing the information we need to help our children be successful. We’re excited to be using it.”



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