

Independence Students Excel Under Tougher Standards

McGraw-Hill My Math Helps Bridge the Gap to Common Core Achievement



Success Story: Independence Primary School (PreK–4)



Independence Primary School
Independence, Ohio

Overview

Independence Primary School (PreK-4) is located in northeastern Ohio, in the affluent Cleveland suburb of Independence. It is part of the Independence Local School District, which served 1,001 students during the 2013-14 school year. The district has received excellent or higher rankings on the Ohio Department of Education's report card for 10 years.

Independence Primary School includes morning and afternoon preschools, a multi-handicapped unit, and kindergarten-through-fourth-grade classrooms. The U.S. Department of Education has twice recognized the school as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. In 2013-14, Independence Primary School received an A on the state's performance index, which is based on the average achievement level of all state assessments given during the year.

McGraw-Hill My Math: aligned with state, school expectations

Independence Primary School began using *McGraw-Hill My Math* in 2012 as a way to align its math curriculum to the Common Core State Standards. *McGraw-Hill My Math* focuses on the Common Core's three components of rigor: Conceptual Understanding, Procedural Skill and Fluency, and Application. Each component is woven throughout the program in equal intensity, helping students progress toward higher achievement levels. *McGraw-Hill My Math* is used in every grade, from kindergarten through fourth.

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The lessons in *McGraw-Hill My Math* are challenging and encourage independent thinking.

— Megan Menger
Teacher

2013 – 2014



DISTRICT ENROLLMENT
1,001 STUDENTS

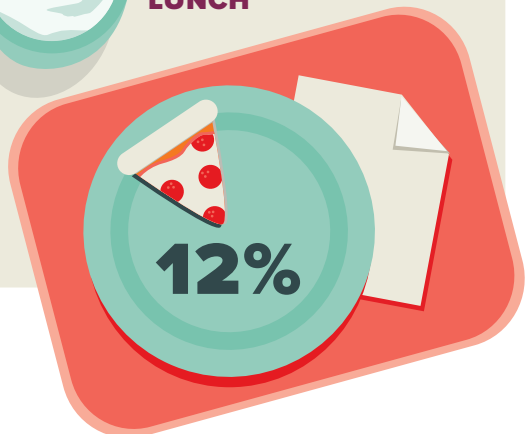
**INDEPENDANCE PRIMARY
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT**
326 STUDENTS



**94% WHITE AND
NON-HISPANIC**



**FREE & REDUCED
LUNCH**



Engagement, rigor, and differentiation

Dan Czikray, a third-grade teacher at Independence, says he appreciates the fact that *McGraw-Hill My Math* is effective for all students, regardless of their math skills. He recalls a transfer student from another district who could not add one-digit numbers.

“She struggled like crazy at first, but throughout the year she made constant progress with the aid of the *McGraw-Hill My Math* program,” Czikray says. “I am very glad to say she was able to pass the Ohio Achievement Assessment at the end of the school year.”

Czikray believes part of the reason for the student’s success was the wide variety of resources available to engage different types of learners.

“I like this series because it provides so many extra resources for my students to help them perform at their best,” Czikray says. “I feel that is why I have so many students performing in the advanced level. Many series I have worked with do not provide this.”

Second-grade teacher, Megan Menger agrees that *McGraw-Hill My Math* works well for all types of learners, including those learning English.

“*McGraw-Hill My Math* allows teachers to differentiate instruction quite easily,” she says. “I make use of the Reteach and Enrichment worksheets frequently to meet the needs of all my students. I also use the manipulatives that came with *McGraw-Hill My Math* in almost every lesson. The students love using these tools, and they really help the students to more deeply understand what they are learning.”

McGraw-Hill My Math was instrumental in helping his students maintain high level achievement, while meeting the more difficult Common Core State.

– Dan Czikray
Teacher

Menger recounts an instance in which one of her students was struggling with a chapter on money.

“I was able to use the money manipulatives, along with some of the extra printables that are available, to work with her one-on-one on the skills,” she says.

Menger also sent home extra practice pages, including the Reteach and Enrichment worksheets, so the student’s parents could reinforce what their daughter was learning in class.

“By the time the end of the chapter assessment came along, this student had become proficient with the money concepts and skills. She performed successfully on the test,” says Menger.

Menger and Czikray praise curriculum features such as interactive ebook pages for each lesson that they can display on an interactive white board, easily accessible videos, and comprehensive online materials. Menger says *McGraw-Hill My Math* is the first program with easy display and writing capabilities for each interactive lesson page, which are also aligned with students' textbooks.

"The lessons in *McGraw-Hill My Math* are challenging and encourage independent thinking," she explains. "*McGraw-Hill My Math* includes problems that work on the students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills in each lesson. There is also a question at the end of each lesson that works on connecting their writing skills to math."

Enabling parental support

Both Czikray and Menger say *McGraw-Hill My Math* is structured in a way that makes it easy for parents to help their children. Menger's second-grade students participate in POP (Power of Practice) each week with their parents to review math facts, she says. To keep parents up-to-date and involved, the school sends home the Math at Home letters and games that accompany the curriculum at the beginning of each chapter. Menger says the school also sends home the My Review, glossary page, and vocabulary cards at the end of each chapter so parents and students can review for the end-of-chapter assessments together. Czikray says he provides student passwords to parents so they can access the online *McGraw-Hill My Math* resources.

Students thrive meeting tougher standards

Each year, Independence Primary School third- and fourth-grade students are measured in reading and math using the Ohio Achievement Assessment. Ohio Department of Education statistics show students in both grades consistently score in the top three achievement categories: Proficient, Accelerated, and Advanced. Every year since 2010-11, more than 96 percent of these students scored in the top three categories. More than two-thirds of students scored in the Advanced or Accelerated range. Few achieved Basic or Limited proficiency.

"All of my students were at the Proficient and Advanced levels before using the McGraw-Hill Education series," Czikray says. "That was under the old standards in education. Without *McGraw-Hill My Math*, my students would not have scored as high under the new standards."

Conclusion

It's clear that *McGraw-Hill My Math* is filling a need at Independence Primary School. The curriculum is engaging students, supporting parents as they help their children, enabling good teachers to excel, and bringing the rigor students need to today's classroom. Most importantly, it's helping students achieve consistently high proficiency levels while more is demanded of them.



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