

Math and Movement

Syracuse City School District Teacher Training

The Onondaga County Health Department's Healthy Communities Initiative offered a Math and Movement program training for all Syracuse City School District Elementary teachers. Math and Movement offers an innovative approach to incorporate physical activity within the classroom while also enhancing mathematics skills through cross body movements. In 2016, the Syracuse City School District adopted an enhanced wellness policy which focuses on both healthier eating and increased physical activity. According to the CDC, it has been well documented that students who are physically more active tend to obtain better grades, school attendance, cognitive performance, and classroom behavior. Hence, this training supports the new Syracuse City School District Wellness policy by offering a new way to incorporate physical activity.



The event was held on Saturday, January 20, 2018 at Delaware Elementary School and a total of 26 teachers participated. Five Syracuse City Schools were represented at the event including: Franklin Elementary, Dr. Weeks Elementary, Dr. King Elementary, Lemoyne Elementary, and Delaware Primary. Suzy Koontz, the founder and CEO of Math and Movement, instructed the training. She provided teachers with hands on demonstrations of lessons, interaction with the materials, and the skills to apply Math and Movement strategies. All teachers who participated will receive a floor mat, allowing each to replicate what they learned at the training. Teachers will receive a teacher's manual for demonstrating how to incorporate what they learned right into their common core curriculum. Further, this will **allow the teachers to create an environmental and practice change within their classroom.**

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and many teachers requested that, in the future, we bring similar trainings for other areas of study such as English Language Arts. Over 95% of surveyed participants strongly agreeing that the presenter was knowledgeable, and nearly **70% strongly agree that they felt confident to implement the use of the mat and information learned into their core lesson plan.**



With the Syracuse City School District's commitment to the enhanced wellness policy and Onondaga County Health Department's commitment to improving the health of the residents of the City of Syracuse, more events like Math and Movement will continue to be offered. Programs like Math and Movement are helping to create a healthier and more engaged student body in the Syracuse City School District.

Evaluation will be done at 3, 6 and 12 months at each school building who received a mat to measure how teachers are using the mats; if the teachers notice a difference in academic performance; and to determine if additional materials are needed to support the use of the mat within the classroom.

