

Pollock Elementary School Named 2007 Recipient of Prestigious No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Award

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The United States Department of Education has chosen Philadelphia's Pollock Elementary as a National Blue Ribbon School for 2007. The No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools Award, one of the most prestigious education awards in the country, honors schools for helping students achieve at very high levels and for making significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

"These schools are proving that when we raise the bar our children will rise to the challenge," says U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings. "It takes a lot of hard work by teachers and students to become a Blue Ribbon school, and it's a privilege to celebrate their great efforts."

Principal Kathleen Quinn and Mrs. Andrea Miller, Program Support Teacher, will attend the award ceremony in Washington DC on November 12th. After the official ceremony, the school is planning an event at school to celebrate the award. "We'd like to invite everyone from the First In Math® organization to join us, as the program is so instrumental to our rise in test scores," says Quinn.

Located in the School District of Philadelphia's East Region, Pollock Elementary has fully embraced the First In Math® Online Program. Their

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FIM 2006 statistics were impressive: Nine of the top 10 players in the District were Pollock ES students.

"I continue to say to anyone who asks about our achievement that First in Math® has played a huge role. In my 38 years as an educator I have never seen kids so willing to challenge themselves," explains Quinn. "We have great teachers and an atmosphere that values high achievement, but definitely, positively, First In Math® is a key component of our success."

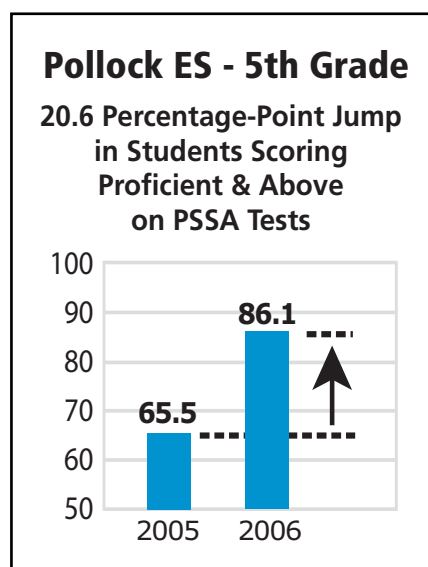
Pollock is only the second school in Philadelphia to win the Blue

Ribbon award; Hill Freedman School received the designation last year. Both schools are consistently ranked among the top First In Math® schools.

At the end of the 2006-2007 FIM season, Pollock was ranked #2 in the 'Top 100 Schools in the State.' They are presently ranked #1 in the 'Top 100 Schools in the Nation' for the 2007-2008 season.

Pollock experienced a large increase in the number of students scoring Proficient & Above on the PSSA tests, with 86.1% of Pollock 5th graders scoring at P&A levels, a 20.5% percentage-point increase from the previous year.

Third-grade results mirrored those



¹ The National Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmark is 45% of students scoring "Proficient & Above".

of their 5th-grade counterparts. The 2006 scores showed that the percentage of 3rd graders scoring P&A increased 12 percentage points over the 2005 scores, to 82% P&A.

Commitment to the First In Math® Online Program continues to strengthen math scores throughout the School District of Philadelphia's Northwest and Northeast Regions. First In Math® schools dominated a recent SDP "Top 10 Highest-Scoring Schools in Math" list. Both regions each have at least five schools among the District's Top 10 Schools in Math for the 2006-2007 school year.

"We are extremely proud of the No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools designation, and we are also very proud to be on the Top Ten Elementary Schools in math in the city," says Principal Quinn. "We may be a very diverse school, with more minority and lower-income students than other elementary schools on the list, but our math scores went up in overall average and up in three of the four tested grades."

Among the Top 10 SDP Schools overall in math are: Hill Freedman; Conwell; Pollock and Anne Frank. Not coincidentally, these are also the

four highest-ranked First In Math® schools in Pennsylvania.

Andrea Miller, a driving force behind the school's FIM success, says the program is an amazing educational tool, because "it teaches much-needed thinking and computation skills and raises test scores. **First In Math® generates excitement among teachers, parents and especially the children. It is a vital part of the educational process here at Pollock.**"

Benefits Shown District-Wide

The January, 2006 issue of The Urban Educator (Published by the Council of the Great City Schools) reported that the entire School District of Philadelphia saw test-score gains for a fourth consecutive year, and credited the FIM program for contributing to the math gains.

FIM was used district-wide in more than 2,600 third to eighth grade classrooms during the 2003-2004 school year, when the program was implemented. Math scores went up the first year, and the district recorded even greater math gains in the second year of the program. The 2004-05 PSSA test results showed an 8.5

percentage-point hike in overall math scores. In comparison, reading scores rose less than 2 percentage points above 2003-04 results.

Among top-ranked First in Math® schools in PA, 23 of 27 schools that scored double-digit increases on the 2004-05 PSSA in eighth grade were in the School District of Philadelphia, which used the program extensively.

Students CAN deliver—once they are motivated to achieve.

The First In Math® Online Program, developed by Suntext International Inc., draws on the company's 18 years of experience in igniting the achievement process among diverse populations. Combining the family of 24® game products with the power of internet technology, Suntext has created a program with a proven track record of improving math skills and raising overall test scores. The First In Math® program is easy to implement in schools, and poses no additional load for classroom teachers.

Teachers use the program's real-time assessment to see the percentage of students mastering basic facts, the degree of students' test preparedness before tests occur and more. ■

Learn more about the correlation between FIM and increased test scores at www.firstinmath.com, where you can download Case Studies such as: *Scientific-Based Research Study conducted by WestEd: Evaluation of the First In Math® Online Math Program; 2004-2005 Case Study: School District of Philadelphia - YEAR TWO* and more.