

MUSTANG MATH SUPERSTARS

Dear Parent,

Welcome to Lakeway Elementary's Mustang Math Superstars, a program designed to teach responsibility and help develop problem solving skills and creative thinking for your child in math. By expressing an interest in more challenging problem solving, your child will take the first step toward becoming an independent learner who is capable of addressing many types of problems. The basic purpose of the Math Superstars program is to provide the extra challenge students need in mathematics, and to do so in a structured, long term program that does not impinge on the normal classroom routine or the time of the teacher. The system is not meant to replace any aspect of the school curriculum - it is offered as an enrichment opportunity to students who identify with challenges and who want to be rewarded for their extra effort.

Participation in this program is optional. The main goal of the program is not necessarily correct answers, but critical thinking. Therefore, **Effort and Participation** are what we reward in this program. Any student, regardless of prior academic performance should be encouraged to participate. Students may start participating at anytime during the year. Even one worksheet will open your child's eyes to new experience in math that I can guarantee he/she will see at some point in their Math academic career.

This program is run by volunteer parents and funded through PTO. Each classroom has a Mustang Math Volunteer parent who will serve as your contact and will be the person grading all worksheets. All Mustang Math questions should be directed to your parent volunteer and not the teacher. Your class volunteer should be contacting you shortly to introduce themselves.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

Each Tuesday your child will receive a Math work sheet in their Tuesday folder. The worksheet will contain problems on the front and back. The number of stars you see beside a problem indicates the level of difficulty and the number of stars your child can earn for solving the problem. The completed work sheet will be due in the classroom by the end of the school day on its due date – most likely the following Tuesday. **LATE math sheets will be graded but NOT count toward earning any rewards given out.** Directions must be followed exactly for stars to be earned. All worksheets will be available to download and print off the school website at anytime if your child does not receive the worksheets or has lost it. Please feel free to have your child work ahead if you plan to be out of town or home sick. In addition, we have included a DUE DATE & HOME CHECKLIST sheet here for your child to use at home to keep track of how many sheets they have turned in. We want them to be held accountable for getting the sheets completed on time. Please encourage your child to keep this checklist in a school binder, folder or planner that they use each week to remind them to work on Math Superstars. Help them track how many sheets they have turned in and what they need to do to earn the rewards.

PROGRAM HISTORY:

The Math Program was developed and purchased from the state of Florida (Sunshine Math). This will be the second year LWE has run the program for grades 1-5 and we can only hope 2009-2010 will be as successful as last year. In 2008-2009, more than 90% of the students participated in the program at some point during the year and approximately 30% (142 students) worked consistently all year and turned in at least 80% of the worksheets and earned the Math Medal and celebration at the end of the year.

The program has a total of 25 worksheets per year. Your child's first worksheet is attached to this letter and is **Due by the end of day October 13th**. Worksheets should be turned into your child's classroom where there should be a decorated Math box to place the sheets in each week. Any page not turned in by 2:45pm on the Tuesday is considered LATE.

PARENTS ROLE:

Your role in Mustang Math Superstars is to *encourage and facilitate* your child's problem solving skills. During the week, help your child to find time to work on the worksheet. You may need to read the problem to your child, explaining any new words encountered. Feel free to suggest a strategy for solving the problem, draw a picture to illustrate the question being asked, or just listen as your child shares his or her thinking, but please **DO NOT JUST GIVE THE ANSWERS**. In order for this program to be effective, the students must do their own thinking. Encourage them to show their work and communicate with the grader on their paper with questions or comments for the grader to give a response. This shows effort.

The problems are very challenging and please remind your child that it is normal to **NOT** be able to complete every problem on a worksheet. Participation is awarded even if there are problems left unsolved. However, students are expected to make an effort and show their work and thought process. The process of reading, understanding and approaching the problems is a valuable step in solving many types of problems and is the first step to success.

RECOGNITION AND REWARDS:

We strongly believe in recognizing the students who do participate and make that extra effort in the Mustang Math program with the following items:

- Math Medals awarded for 80% participation (20 out of 25 sheets turned in on time)
- Monthly Ribbons for students that turn in **ALL** sheets for the month on time (This is 3 or 4 sheets in a row based on the month due dates)
- Trophy presented monthly at assembly to class in each grade with highest percent participation for the month
- Special celebration with Mr. Hicks for all students who earn a medal. We are already planning something new and exciting for our 2009-2010 Medal winners.

Thank you for your support and please feel free to contact us if you have further questions or concerns.

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