



State of New York County of Broome Government Offices

Broome County Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Students Thrive in Math Through Movement-Based Learning at Whitney Point CEA

(BROOME COUNTY, NY) – During the 2025-2026 school year, Whitney Point Caryl E. Adams (CEA) Primary School hosted a Math & Movement professional development workshop, made possible at no cost through the Broome County Health Department’s Creating Healthy Schools and Communities (CHSC) Grant.

Math & Movement is a kinesthetic, multi-sensory approach to teaching multiplication facts that integrates physical activity with colorful floor mats. Developed by Suzy Koontz, founder and CEO, the program was inspired by her own daughter’s learning experience. The training helps teachers connect math instruction to New York State essential standards NY-3.OA (7a-7b), which focus on fluently solving single-digit multiplication and related division problems.

Graci Shrauger, CEA Math Interventionist, took the program a step further by attending the 2-day intensive Math & Movement training last June through a grant provided by the nonprofit, the National Math Foundation. Inspired by the results, she launched a six-week pilot project with her third-grade students.

During the project, students explored multiplication facts (3s, 4s, 6s, 7s, 8s, 9s) using the mats and corresponding notebooks. On the first day, the class reviewed a pre-test and engaged in group activities on the mats. Days 2-4 focused on independent practice, with a post-test on the fourth day. Graci observed that students retained the concepts long after the initial lessons.

“When we revisited the concept later, my students remembered it. They could connect it back to the movement-based activity and explain their reasoning. That showed me the learning truly stuck beyond the initial lesson,” said Shrauger.

The pilot project yielded remarkable results: students demonstrated 132% growth in their multiplication fact fluency over the six weeks.

“After implementing Math & Movement in my lessons, I noticed a big shift in my students’ confidence. They were more willing to explain their answers, share their thinking, and try challenging problems. Math class became active, collaborative, and engaging,” added Shrauger.

“The CHSC grant program was thrilled to see the sustainable impact of the Math & Movement initiative at Whitney Point CEA,” said Brooke Goosman, Public Health Educator with the Broome County Health Department. “Programs like this help schools integrate physical activity into the classroom in meaningful ways. By combining movement with academic learning, teachers are creating engaging environments that support both student wellness and educational success.”

Math & Movement is offering additional 2-day intensive professional development sessions for educators. Participants will gain hands-on experience with kinesthetic strategies that make math and literacy instruction active, inclusive, and engaging. Attendees leave with a ready-to-use toolkit of playful, standard-aligned activities designed to boost fluency, confidence, focus, and retention for all learners. More details are below but for additional information, contact Suzy Koontz at suzy@mathandmovement.com.

Dates and Times:

March 26 & 27 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

May 7 & 8 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

June 4 & 5 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

Location

Math & Movement Learning Center, 40 Catherwood Road, Ithaca, NY.

CHSC is a five-year initiative funded by the New York State Department of Health to establish and support healthy behaviors in high-needs communities. The New York State Department of Health Division of Chronic Disease Prevention implements evidence-based, evidenced-informed, and innovative public health strategies in order to support New Yorkers to live healthier lives and eliminate health disparities by reducing the incidence and burden of chronic diseases and conditions. For more information, visit https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/obesity/prevention_activities/chsc/

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