

MAPC Resolution Approved May 7, 2016
Providing Supports to Improve
Math Learning for Students in Manitoba

Background

In 2014, grade eight students in Manitoba were reported as having the worst math skills in Canada, based on the standardized test results of the 2013 Pan Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP), administered by the Council of Ministers of Education (<http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/337/PCAP-2013-Public-Report-EN.pdf>). Various media outlets reported that all education stakeholders – including parents – are concerned with the results of this test and acknowledged that, while great things are happening in classrooms across the province, more work needs to be done to correct this problem.

Introduction Statement

It is widely understood that math education can be a challenging topic to teach as well as learn. Students often require a variety of methods and strategies to grasp both basic and complex mathematical concepts. Classroom teachers are responsible for determining which of these methods and strategies will work for each student. It is also understood that a variety of challenges may present themselves during the course of a child's education which may impact their learning – and enjoyment – of math. These challenges can include training for classroom teachers, addressing math anxiety in students, providing homework supports for families, and overcoming negative attitudes towards math in general.

In 2015, Manitoba Association of Parent Councils hosted a Math Forum for Parents for parents of school aged children in Manitoba to come together to learn about the 2013 PCAP results and how they impact children, teacher training in Manitoba, Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning curriculum and assessment methods involving mathematics, and the science of how children learn math. This forum also provided an opportunity for parents to discuss the challenges they face in supporting their child's math learning as well as identify solutions they believe will assist in addressing the problem. One idea that created great interest among the attendees was the idea of *math recovery teachers*.

By reflecting on the overall success that reading recovery programs have seen throughout the province in developing strong reading skills in the classroom and at home, it is believed that by training *math recovery teachers* in all school divisions in Manitoba student skills could improve as a result. For example, a *math recovery teacher* could work with students needing extra assistance with concepts and strategies – much the same as a reading recovery teacher would do - on a regular basis.

Action Request

Manitoba Association of Parent Councils (MAPC) requests that Manitoba Education and Training provide the resources necessary for every school division in the province to train and enlist math recovery teachers to increase the ongoing support for educators and students involved in numeracy and mathematics education in Manitoba.