

## **Reaching Mathematics Expectations** (Grades 6 – 12)

### **1. Algebra Support (Teachers)**

**\$270,000**

To compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global economy, proficiency in mathematics is critical. The goal of the Algebra Support Class is to accelerate student learning, close gaps in student math skills and ensure students successfully complete Algebra 1. More than ever, successful transition out of high school – whether it be to college, into a trade school, or directly into the workforce – requires that students be proficient in higher levels of math. Basic Algebra is the “gateway” to these higher levels, including geometry, Algebra II, trigonometry, and calculus.

Research shows that remedial mathematics most often leads to lower achievement and on-going needs for remediation. Through a comprehensive, district-wide effort, the Renton School District eliminated all remedial mathematics courses in 2009. Additionally, a re-alignment of the mathematics curriculum P/K-12 was completed. New curriculum materials were adopted and on-going professional development is being provided including an “Endorsement Academy” in partnership with Seattle University where Renton School District teachers earn their mathematics endorsement (State funded grant).

As the gatekeeper, successful completion of Algebra 1 can be the determining factor in a student’s career potential and the ability to compete in the job market. In keeping with the Renton School District’s position that all students will excel based on the expectations placed on them, the District eliminated all remedial math classes in 2009-10 and replaced them, instead, with additional Algebra support classes. This “double dosing” to ensure success in Algebra I required teachers for the students who were struggling and would have otherwise been put into remedial math. The district added 4 additional teachers who have been specifically trained to support struggling Algebra 1 students. The students have a second period of algebra support and give up one elective.

First semester results show that of the 1121 students taking Algebra I, 598 students entered Algebra Support. The 598 students are those that received a D or F grade in their 8<sup>th</sup> grade math class. In the first semester of 9<sup>th</sup> grade, of those students enrolled in Algebra 1 *with* the Algebra Support class, 54% of those are passing Algebra 1 with a C or better. 79% are passing Algebra 1 overall, compared to less than 50% passing in 2008-09. Without algebra support these students were not likely to pass Algebra 1 in their freshman year. This is a critical, gateway class.

The funding to maintain the teachers to support the successful implementation of the high standards, rigor and relevance in mathematics that has been developed is ESSENTIAL.

Funding for this program provided by a grant which has been eliminated by the state for 2010.