

Math Buddies Annual Report 2016-2017  
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With assistance from Judy Connelly, Literacy Connections

In the fall of 2016 Judy Connelly, Book Buddies Coordinator for Literacy Connections, and I investigated beginning a Math Buddies program. Literacy Connections was already running the very successful Book Buddies program, and as an off-shoot of that, two other volunteers and I served as math helpers instead of helping with reading. We met with the principal and vice-principal of Krieger School who were very enthusiastic about starting Math Buddies.

And so we began. We followed the model of Book Buddies where volunteers went to a City of Poughkeepsie School typically once a week to work one-on-one or in the classroom with students who needed extra math help. Judy was to do all of the administrative work, including obtaining background checks on the volunteers, preparing materials for the volunteers and matching the volunteer to a teacher. I was to recruit AAUW Math Buddies. This new program, thought of as a pilot program for the first year, was to also include volunteers from outside of AAUW. Using our database, I contacted all AAUW members who expressed interest in STEM, and Judy and I held an orientation for those who expressed interest.

The program is off and running! We currently have 12 active Math Buddies, 2 at Clinton School and 10 at Krieger School. Seven help in a classroom setting, 5 help in small group or one-on-one outside the classroom in grades 2 through 5. Three of the 12 were returning Math Buddies (the 2 at Clinton and me) and 9 of the 12 were new Math Buddies. Of the 9 new Math Buddies, 5 were recruited through AAUW (Martha Brajuha, Kathy Friedman, Susan Joseph, Suzanne Turetzky and Roberta Tracy, plus me). Additionally Jennifer Hafner filled-in for two months in the winter. The remaining heard of the program through United Way, CLS, or IBM.

AAUW does not financially support this program at this time.

Judy Connelly writes the following: "The feedback I've gotten from teachers has been extremely positive. Kathy Friedman (AAUW) works with Mrs. Stewart's 3rd grade class and Mrs. S told me that she wishes Kathy could come every day. Mrs. Wojtak whose 5th grade class has help from both Martha Brajuha (AAUW) and Tanya Buchanan (IBM) recently told me, 'I love my fabulous Math Buddies.' At our recent volunteer get-together, Roberta Tracy (AAUW) was telling me about the progress she has been seeing one of her Math Buddies make throughout the year. Mrs. Waldschmidt is extremely happy to have Susan Joseph (AAUW) volunteer with her 5th grade special needs students. Susan volunteers with both reading and math. And, you know how much Ms. Cader values your time and Kevin's. " I personally find this volunteer experience extremely rewarding.

We consider this pilot project a success and will continue it next year with all of those volunteers who wish to continue. At this writing, expanding the program with more volunteers next year is unknown, due to funding considerations.

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