Empowering Students in Math
Learning Happens Here

AMY ZORZETTO: I see students self-regulating. I see students deciding their own learning. They're empowering themselves to make the right choices in lots of ways and so I think that the student choice, the student voice, the idea that they own the learning, that I'm not the holder of the knowledge, they're the ones that are learning whatever it is that they want to learn.

Learning isn't just about sitting at a desk and doing that. It's about the whole person. So it's about them understanding about how they interact with each other. The way they learn in this classroom is that there's a lot of collaboration and without those collaboration skills that sometimes that wellbeing is difficult and so we focus on how to build the collaboration skills and how to be able to work with others. And we also take the time that if you need the time by yourself to be able to do that and I think that, that has really helped them in their understanding of what their needs are whether they're academic or whether they're emotional needs how they can--that's really important and both of those pieces go hand in hand.

JO-ANNE CORBIN-HARPER: When you first walk into Amy's you go okay, interesting. But then you have to come in. You have to come in, you have to walk through, you have to talk to those kids. Because at first glance you might think how much learning is really happening in that room? But when you stop and you talk to the kids, not even talk to the teacher or the aid, talk to the kids and then you know there's a lot of learning going on.

STUDENT: I think because we work together in the same classroom. We're like a family.

STUDENT: Some people say that fractions are in a lot of things, and we're not doing fractions sometimes, but we are doing fractions always so you're doing a lot of things that you don't know that you're doing and learning.

STUDENT: People always come over and ask me if that's helping my learning and if it is I know that, and if it is I'll just stay there. And if it isn't I know if it isn't so I just go do something else.

STUDENT: Sometimes when I work by myself all the ideas are from me. I like ideas from somebody else so that we can combine them and make a better idea.

STUDENT: This learning really helps us learn because instead of just handing us a sheet of paper with math questions and stuff like that we get to learn through play.
STUDENT: I like having the free choice of math in this classroom. You get to get anything out and do any math you want. So that I think is kind of fun.

STUDENT: We do learning in a different way. We get to choose how we do our learning. We don't all do the same thing.

STUDENT: I think that people learn more in this type of classroom.

AMY ZORZETTO: I honestly every morning come to school, can't wait to hear what the students are going to come up with. So they are so articulate, they are so willing to learn and ready to learn. It has inspired me to do more.

JO-ANNE CORBIN-HARPER: Parents love Amy because you're seeing your kid grow. So which parent does not want that? You're not only seeing your kid grow academically, you're seeing them grow socially. So if you're seeing your kid grow socially and then all the pieces are coming together of course parents want that, and they welcome that. And to sit and have those conversations with your kids at the dinner table what they've done today and see your kid excited about learning, that's what you want because the kid wants to get up in the morning and come to school. They enjoy being here.