

Student Math Proficiency Grows with Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics in Colorado School District

Overview

Aspen School District implemented Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics with students in Grades K–12 between the 2020–2021 and 2023–2024 school years. The district is located in central Colorado and serves approximately 1,500 students in Grades K–12. In Spring 2024, Imagine Learning collected teacher survey data to better understand how teachers are using the curriculum. To measure changes in mathematics abilities, Imagine Learning also analyzed Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) mathematics assessments scores.

Aspen School District, Colorado

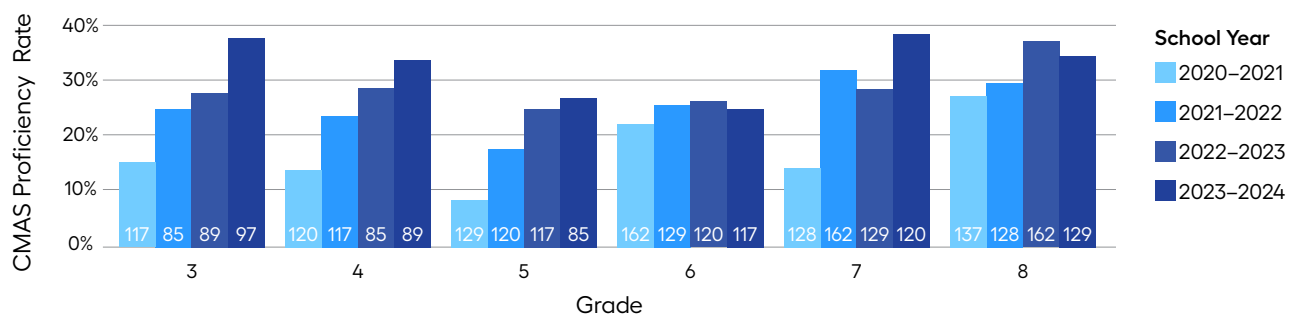
Demographics (N = 1,415)	Percent
Free/Reduced Price Lunch	9.9%
504 Plan	6.9%
IEP Plan	13.1%
Gifted/Talented	13.0%
English Language Learner	8.7%

Results

Results from the survey demonstrate that teachers believe Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics supports their students’ learning. At least 90% of teachers strongly or somewhat agreed that students were motivated to persist through difficult content, were appropriately challenged, discussed math at a high level, and had improved mathematics problem solving abilities. At least 80% of teachers would recommend Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics to another teacher who is not currently using the curriculum and found the curriculum to be more effective than what they used previously.

Findings from the CMAS math assessment show that Aspen students’ mathematics performance improved since the district adopted Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics (Figure 1). Note that the CMAS assessment was optional in Spring of 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so results from that year should be interpreted with caution. Proficiency rates have largely increased in the last three school years, with 2024 proficiency rates exceeding 2022 rates in Grades 3 through 5 and Grades 7 and 8.

Figure 1. Percentage of Students Achieving Proficiency on CMAS Math, 2020–2021 through 2023–2024 Aspen Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics Students, Grades 3–8



Note: The numbers at the bottom of each bar represent the number of students with scores in a given school



High-quality instructional materials like Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics play a pivotal role in supporting both student learning and teacher effectiveness. Research highlights that students benefit from structured, standards-aligned resources that scaffold their understanding of mathematical concepts, resulting in stronger achievement gains (Steiner et al., 2018). These materials promote equity by ensuring all students have access to rigorous, grade-level content, regardless of their background (McCarty, et al., 2023). For teachers, high-quality materials serve as a foundation for effective instruction, reducing the cognitive load associated with lesson planning and increasing their ability to differentiate for diverse learners (Bondurant, 2022). When consistently implemented, high-quality instructional materials foster deeper student engagement and equip teachers to create more impactful learning experiences, making them an essential component of successful mathematics education. Survey results indicate that teachers see the benefits of Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics at work in their classrooms. Assessment results confirm that the teachers' commitment paired with the instructional materials are contributing to growing mathematical success in the district.

References

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