



## **Is it too late for fifth graders to acquire numeracy foundations? Not so, according to teachers at Lawler Elementary, Grayson County**

The new Common Core State Standards for Mathematics contain higher expectations for all students. Fifth grade, in particular, is a place where lack of foundational number knowledge creates an obstacle to mathematical proficiency. Teachers at Lawler Elementary School in Grayson County are finding that fifth grade is not too late for gaining in-depth numeracy foundations!

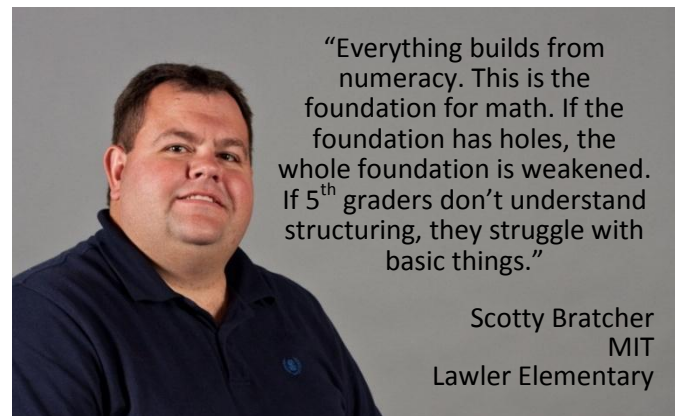
Having a full time MIT (Mathematics Intervention Teacher), funded through the Mathematics Achievement Fund, has paid off for Lawler Elementary. MIT Scotty Bratcher has been at Lawler Elementary since 2007, working with students and other teachers. From 2007 through 2011, the number of students in the school receiving proficient or distinguished KCCT mathematics scores increased by 50%!

Scotty has found his KCM growth allows him to benefit students in primary grades and older students as well. Scotty's wife, and regular classroom teacher, Melinda Bratcher explains how having an MIT at her school has influenced addressing the foundational gaps. "As a fifth grade teacher, it is assumed that students know and understand these basic skills, such as how to [break apart] numbers."

In collaboration, the MIT and regular classroom teacher were able to find and address the gaps from the very beginning of students' mathematics understanding and reasoning in order to provide the fifth graders with the foundational concepts and skills necessary to progress in their mathematics achievement.

"Once the students had all the holes filled in, the math made sense to them," said Melinda. The fifth grade students that were once struggling with basic mathematics concepts and received Novice level KCCT mathematics scores recently received Apprentice level KPREP mathematics scores.

Melinda added, "Without an MIT in our school, I would have never considered teaching basics of numeracy to fifth grade students. My advice is to not overlook the 'simple' math concepts that fifth grade teachers think students have mastered. Just because a student can work a problem using strategies does not mean they understand the 'why' behind it."



As an MIT, Scotty works with students receiving intervention from Kindergarten through fifth grade and he works as a teacher leader who shares expertise and research-based methods with regular classroom teachers throughout the school.