



## Freedom Elementary “Turbo-charges” its Performance Designation with a Proven Intervention Solution



“We were thrilled that our intervention strategy enabled us to make significant performance gains in a short period of time.”

*Jean Snyder, Principal at Freedom Elementary*

### Rallying Around An Ambitious Goal

In 2004, Freedom Elementary adopted the Ohio Integrated Systems Model for Academic and Behavior Supports (OISM), a comprehensive school-wide prevention and intervention model that provides support systems which address both academic and behavioral needs of all students. Any school adopting OISM scrutinizes student performance data on a regular basis to guide decisions related to any potential intervention. The overriding focus is on enabling the success of all students by meeting the educational needs of every student.

In 2005, Freedom Elementary embarked on a search for a comprehensive technology-based intervention solution that would work within the framework of OISM while addressing the learning challenges of its 3rd and 4th grade students. “Only 33% of our 3rd grade students passed the Ohio Math Achievement Test in 2004/05,” says Jean Snyder, Principal at Freedom Elementary. Alarming, the school also fell into ‘Academic Emergency’ that same year. “We were devastated and extremely concerned,” says Snyder. “We rallied ourselves around the explicit goal of changing our performance designation to ‘Continuous Improvement’, which meant bypassing ‘Academic Watch’ and jumping two categories in one year—an ambitious goal, for sure.”

### Focus on:

Academy of MATH®

### Fast Facts:

Location:

- Lima, Ohio

School:

- Freedom Elementary

Grades:

- K-4

Number of Students:

- 350

Student Demographics:

- White: 44%
- Hispanic 3%
- Black: 40%
- Other: 13%

Free and reduced lunch:

- 85.1%

Website:

[www.limacityschools.org](http://www.limacityschools.org)



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## Individualized Instruction “A Must”

The school’s educators quickly selected the Academy of MATH in part because of its rigorous intervention methodology—“prescribe, monitor and intervene”—and its proven ability to build fluency in the foundation skills of math. “We had some prior experience with the Academy of MATH. We liked the solid research-based approach of the program and the fact that with it we can deliver true, individualized instruction to each student,” says Deb Gronas, teacher.

Just over 100 students in the 3rd and 4th grades were targeted for the intervention. “The Academy of MATH systematically placed each student at the appropriate level based on their ability and worked through the Terms, Operations and Word Problems for each mathematical skill area,” says Gronas. “Our students really like it because they know the program is geared to meet their specific needs. They can progress in a positive and engaging learning environment without any competition amongst each other.”

## Results Driven

Guaranteed performance gains were critical. Students were tested in December 2005 to establish a benchmark, and again in May 2006 using the STAR assessment in addition to State testing. “In December my students tested 4.1. In May they tested 5.2. The program produced over a grade level gain in just 5 months with the students working in the lab for just 30 minutes, twice a week,” says Gronas.

Whereas only 33% of students had passed in the 3rd grade, over 60% of the same students passed in the 4th grade. “What makes this an impressive achievement is that in our school we’ve never had more than 40% of our 4th grade students pass,” says Gronas. “I really believe that the Academy of MATH boosted their confidence and gave them the jumpstart they needed.”

Impressive gains were also realized in the 3rd grade classes. “We tested from September to May and one class averaged a 93% increase,” says Gronas. “It’s even more striking that some students saw a 200% increase in their test scores.”

## Mission Accomplished

To realize their goal of jumping to a ‘Continuous Improvement’ designation, the school required a performance index score of 80.0 or above. “We scored 80.7,” says a triumphant Snyder. “We were thrilled that our intervention strategy enabled us to make the performance gains required to achieve ‘Continuous Improvement’. The Academy of MATH played a big role but I am also very proud to work with such a dedicated, hard-working team of professionals. The teachers’ buy-in and commitment behind this software implementation is what made this outcome possible.”

Now that the school has successfully upgraded its performance designation, Freedom Elementary can and will confidently build on its success in the future.

## About AutoSkill®

AutoSkill creates award-winning intervention solutions to help close the proficiency gap in K-12 schools. For over 15 years, its research-based programs have helped at-risk students to build fluency in the foundation skills of reading and math. The company’s core products, Academy of READING and Academy of MATH, deliver rapid, permanent gains so students progress in their education and administrators meet AYP targets. For more information, go to [www.autoskill.com](http://www.autoskill.com).

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