

## Middle School Mathematics: Allison Colvin Renews the Spark!

Allison Colvin, 6th grade math teacher at Campbell County Middle School in Northern Kentucky, is feeling refreshed—and not just because summer break is almost here!

“I can honestly say that being a part of these KCM programs has renewed my passion for teaching math!” said Colvin.

Colvin, a teacher for 18 years, who has taught everything from reading to Algebra 1, was seeking an opportunity to re-awaken her educational spark. It began with the 2014 KCM Conference.

“At the conference I went to a session by Anne Burgunder and was totally inspired by her presentation. I also found out about the MaRtI Middle-6 program and went back to my principal, Jason Smith, and asked to go.”

For the past year, Colvin has immersed herself in two of the Kentucky Center for Mathematics’ middle school professional learning experiences (PLEs): Mathematics Response to Intervention (MaRtI) Middle and Mathematics Content Coaching, both of which incorporate Metamorphosis’ coaching methods as

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Allison Colvin, 6th grade math teacher at Campbell County Middle School, is all smiles about teaching math (and celebrating pi day!).

presented by Anne Burgunder.

Participation in both of these PLEs has impacted both her teaching and personal enjoyment of her chosen profession.

“The MaRtI Middle-6 program has been a wonderful experience. I learned small changes that could have major impact on student learning. I learned that using a question as simple as, ‘What do you notice?’ can be a great formative assessment tool to see what students already know and what they still struggle with,” said Colvin.

In addition, Colvin said, “I was super excited [about Mathematics Content

Coaching]...I learned about Math Congress and also about working with teachers in the classroom in developing lessons and using strategies to help their students.”

As a result of being part of these KCM programs, Colvin says, “I have learned to value all the strategies students have and use in their mathematical problem solving. I think for most of my teaching career I just focused on making sure students were getting the correct answer...Now I try my best to really let students take the time to explain how they got their answers. As a result...my students are more engaged in their learning, because their strategy is valued and appreciated.”

The mean growth of Colvin’s students on the NWEA MAP test for the 2014-2015 school year was 6.6 Rasch units, whereas only a growth of 6 was the expected norm.

For other teachers seeking to “renew their spark,” Colvin advises that they should never forget why they went in to the teaching profession: “Don’t get lost in all the other ‘stuff,’...Focus on your students and doing your best to work with them.”

When Colvin isn’t in the math classroom, you can find her spending time with her family, playing the piano, or reading—though she’s never far from thinking about her students: “My dream is to never hear another person say, ‘I was never any good at that math stuff,’” said Colvin.

To learn more about KCM PLEs and/or to register for an upcoming opportunity in your area, visit [www.kymath.org](http://www.kymath.org).