

# 5 Ways to Close Math Learning Gaps

On the latest [Nation's Report Card](#), 9-year-olds' math scores are still 4 points below pre-pandemic 2020 levels, and 13-year-olds have shown no significant change in math since 2023.

That kind of stall requires more than intensive intervention for a few students.



Kelly Pinkerton, Director of Assessment and Innovative Learning at Vail School District in Arizona, shares her district's approach to closing persistent learning gaps and building a solid foundation to support students as they take on more advanced math.

## 1 Monitor progress all year.

One screening in the fall tells you where students start, but doesn't tell you what happened by January. Pair fall, winter, and spring universal screenings with weekly progress monitoring so teachers can identify gaps while there's still time to act.

SpringMath universal screenings take 15 minutes and are group administered three times a year. The system generates scripted lessons and practice materials based on the results and adjusts each week based on student skill mastery.

## 2 Start with the whole class.

Before pulling students into small group or individual intervention, look at the data to see whether the majority of the class needs more support to master a skill before moving ahead.

When screening data show that 50% or more of students have not mastered a skill, SpringMath generates a targeted classwide practice routine. Students spend 15 minutes a day in paired learning and independent practice. Only students who still need support after the majority of the class has reached mastery receive targeted small group or individual intervention.

## 3 Build buy-in before you roll anything out.

Change sticks when principals and teachers understand the why behind the solution and how it will serve students. Vail started with a small pilot group of principals and schools, walked them through the reasoning for classwide intervention, and let them become advocates once they saw results on their own.

SpringMath provides onboarding, training, and ongoing support for leaders, coaches, and teachers to help them understand how the system works and the impact it has on math achievement.

## 4 Let data drive weekly instructional adjustments, not quarterly ones.

Most programs monitor the impact of an intervention after six or eight weeks. By then, a struggling student may have fallen even further behind. Weekly progress monitoring enables adjustments that will move a student toward mastery much sooner.

Progress monitoring is built into SpringMath lessons. Based on how students perform on weekly practice assignments, the system adjusts the next week's instruction to either provide more practice with a skill not yet mastered or to move ahead to the next skill. Teachers can course-correct up to seven times in the span it takes other tools to make one adjustment.

## 5 Expect your approach to change.

Student needs shift week to week and year to year, and a math MTSS system should shift with them. The goal isn't a perfect plan you set once. It's staying willing to adjust as your students, staff, and data change.

Adjusting to student need is at the heart of SpringMath. Lessons adjust weekly based on student data and teachers are not left to guess which students need more support and if interventions are working.

*"It's been really helpful to not only have the support page, but also a supportive team willing to listen and even implement some of our suggestions."*

— Kelly Pinkerton

Director of Assessment and Innovative Learning,  
Vail School District, AZ

## SEE IT FOR YOURSELF!

[Schedule a personalized demo](#) and our team will show you how SpringMath turns screening and progress monitoring data into daily classwide practice, plus targeted small group and individual support for students who need more.

