

Tollgate Elementary School of Expeditionary Learning

701 South Kalispell Way

Aurora, CO 80017

Principal: Laurie Godwin

Tollgate Elementary School of Expeditionary Learning in Aurora, Colorado serves an ethnically diverse population of over 700 students in grades K through 5. Nearly half of the students are limited English proficient and about 65% are on free/reduced-price lunch. The school has been recognized by the state for significant growth in student performance across all student subgroups.

- 
- ◆ Elementary (K-5)
 - ◆ 55% Hispanic
 - ◆ 27% Black
 - ◆ 13% White
 - ◆ 3% Asian/Pacific Islander
 - ◆ 1% American Indian/Alaska Native
 - ◆ 82% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

Like all schools in Aurora Public Schools, Tollgate follows the district's rigorous math curriculum designed to build students' ability to explore, form conjectures, reason logically, and communicate mathematically. The curriculum is consistent with the Colorado State Academic Standards and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Principles and Standards for School Mathematics. The district believes the curriculum should be coherent, well-articulated across the grades, focused on important math, and supported by appropriate time and resources. The goal is for students to use a variety of mathematical methods and appropriate technology to solve problems and function confidently in a mathematically sophisticated world.

Tollgate's commitment to high achievement for all students contributed to its selection as an Expeditionary Learning School (ELS), which allows the school to provide rigorous professional learning for teachers to support higher achievement gains for all students through:

- A rigorous and engaging curriculum based on state and national standards;
- Active, inquiry-based learning strategies;
- A school culture that demands and teaches compassion and good citizenship; and
- Engaging topics and rich learning experiences that result in high-quality products and presentations of learning.

Teachers at Tollgate Elementary School follow the district's Pacing Guide/Long Range Plan and make use of the Unit Alignment/Unit Plan guide. The Pacing Guide helps teachers understand the goals for the year and provide all students equitable access to standards. The alignment guide uses the standards to set objectives based on key concepts and key vocabulary, helps teachers define necessary content knowledge to support student learning, and ensures consistency of expectations across grade levels.

Together, a district math coach and school teacher leader work to support classroom instruction, including collaborative lesson planning and demonstration lessons to help teachers make the most of the 90-minute math instruction block. This extended block allows students daily practice with number sense and computational development, as well as regular opportunities for in-depth work with major topics, such as fractions. The block is structured to include:

- Number talk
- Whole-group lesson with a three-part (launch, explore, summary) problem-based format
- Small-group work time
- Independent work time
- Assessment opportunities

The district's mathematics coaches and teacher leaders are working to review the math program in light of new Colorado Academic Standards based on Common Core State Standards. This work includes examining learning trajectories for topics such as fractions and proportional reasoning.