

Kids' calculators don't add up for parents

By **Barbara Taormina**/ btaormin@cnc.com

Friday, October 22, 2004

A small group of first- and second-graders now are learning to do their math problems with a calculator, a practice that has some parents wondering where math is headed in the North Andover school system.

The perennial question of how to teach elementary school math was the hot topic at this week's School Committee meeting.

Parents expressed doubts about Everyday Math, one of three programs being piloted in North Andover schools. Everyday Math teaches children how to use calculators to solve everyday problems.

"This program is in front of approximately 100 kids in the district, with the possibility of being the program for the entire district, and it really falls short," said Ed Maguire, a parent and former School Committee candidate. "The School Committee needs to look at the program and take action."

While parents had a range of complaints about the program, they focused this week on the use of calculators by some of the district's youngest students.

"I have a lot of concerns about the calculators," said Paula Porten, whose second-grade daughter is in the Everyday Math program. "We are doing a lot of things at home, but I think this program is detrimental to learning the basic operations of math."

Parents asked school committee members to look at the program and make a decision. Maguire repeatedly asked board members if they thought it was appropriate for first- and second-graders to be using calculators.

But most school committee members were reluctant to offer their opinions. They said it would be most productive to talk with the committee of teachers that chose Everyday Math as one of the three pilot programs. That committee looked at a wide range of programs over the summer in the hope of finding a replacement for North Andover's current math program. Most parents and teachers agree the TERC program that is now being used has fallen far short of its promise.

School board member Chuck Ormsby insisted that the parents were not raising esoteric issues and suggested fellow board members form a subcommittee to review the program.


But committee members generally preferred to wait until they could hear from the Math Committee and its consultant.

They offered assurances to parents that their children would not be losing out by participating in the pilot program.

"These programs don't all have failure rates," committee member Al Perry said. "I'm confident the kids are

Herald Interactive Tools


 [View Graphic Version](#)


 [Email to a Friend](#)


 [Sign Up for Home Delivery](#)


 **SEARCH:** Enter keyword(s)


Recent Local News

 [Poll workers bracing for huge turnout](#)

 [State rep race gets 'nasty'](#)

 [LGH breaks ground for new emergency center](#)

 [Every vote counts: Library hold special election for kids](#)

 [The other two candidates for president](#)

not going to get hurt."

[[contact us](#)] :: [[print advertising](#)] :: [[online advertising](#)] :: [[Browser Upgrade](#)] :: [[Jobs](#)] :: **[Click here for home delivery](#)**
or call **1.800.882.1211**

© Copyright of CNC and Herald Interactive Advertising Systems, Inc.

No portion of townonline.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)
0.008797