

## **The Moore Math Project**

May, 2011

When plans developed in early 2009 for a math grant application through the 2009 DoDEA Partnership Grant Program, a major component would be an accessible after school tutorial program for military students. J.E.J. Moore Middle School, composed of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students, had offered an after school program at the school for several years in major subjects, including math. However, participation by military students was somewhat sporadic due to transportation issues. From post housing areas, a round trip to J.E.J. Moore Middle School averaged 18 miles. If it were a non-military working parent, the travel distance could be much higher. Transportation expenses alone for military families, was a major concern, not to mention alteration of work schedules and family routines. Could we find an on post location for a two days per week math tutorial program close to post housing. The Prince George County Public Schools system would then provide bus transportation to the selected site.

Although privately operated on post property, Ms. Rebecca McCallister, Marking Director with the Villages at Fort Lee, graciously offered use of a multi-purpose room at the Sisisky Community Center for three classes in year one of the grant. The site was centrally located within the housing area, thus within short walking distance of most quarters. As Prince George was a grant recipient, plans moved forward in year one, but as it became evident in planning for year two (2010-2011) that a fourth class was needed, it was also clear that the Sisisky Community Center site was too small. Numbers in year one were in the low 30's, but projections for year two could run in the mid 50's. At that point, Ms. Nancy J. Elzie, School Liaison Officer, initiated discussions with Senior Chaplain, Col. Byron Simmons, for possible use of the Fort Lee Chapel Complex classrooms, thus providing larger spaces and individual rooms for four classes. Again, this site would be centrally located and within short walking distance for most students. As plans progressed for chapel space in year two, Col. Simmons not only worked to provide classroom space, but was extremely supportive of our program and encouraged our efforts in a variety of ways. An evening parent orientation program was held at the chapel prior to beginning the second year classes which allowed parents and students to see firsthand the areas to be used, meet teachers and support staff, receive pertinent information, and ask questions. Military personnel and the School Liaison Officer were also in attendance. Sgt. Major Seay from the Garrison Commander's Office shared the uniqueness of the Fort Lee Program, as well as the importance of regular attendance and parental support.

The Fort Lee tutorial program has not only been stronger and larger in the second year, but even better attended. Enrollment increased from the low 30's to the mid 50's (as projected), from year one

to two. In doing year end random student interviews for 2009-2010, hoping to gain valuable information for improvement of the program in 2010-2011, students consistently referenced how the transportation issue would have negatively affected their families' budget, schedules and possibly their own attendance. Having just completed year end interviews for the second year, responses were even more positive as demonstrated by a sampling as follows:

1. Each student would attend again if offered on post.
2. It was easy to walk home and saved family cost and schedule changes.
3. "My grades are better...I went from a D to a B in math.....my teacher at school noticed my change....the teachers really help us....my teachers care....I just made an A on my math test.....we study things ahead, etc., etc.

Already, the Prince George County Public Schools System is looking at just how to continue the tutorial program beyond the grant. We know it has helped create positive change.