**303 Teacher Uses Music to Make Math Fun, Cool**

SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND — Student engagement is a goal in schools everywhere. A teacher in the Washington suburbs has found a way to engage and motivate students-- by bringing rhythm and fun to mathematics. The approach works well especially for students who speak English as a second language.

**Making math fun**

The voice heard in the video belongs to mathematics teacher Jake Scott. Most of the performers are his students. Watching videos is not part of their daily routine but it is one of the essential course materials in Scott’s classes at Montgomery Blair High School in a Washington suburb.

“I use rap because it is something that appeals to the students, also because music aids with memory," Scott explains. "So, if I can come up with rap and organize it and present it to the students, then that's helping get the student to memorize it.”

Scott started using rap videos three years ago. So far he has produced nine, including YouTube favorites “Triangle Experts” and “Quadratic Formulatic,” which have been viewed tens of thousands of times. “It is fun and the whole process is something that students appreciate,” Scott says.

**Empowering students**

In recent years, Scott has made a special effort to help students from other countries. “When they come here, their language skills are not up to par. So they are often times placed on a remedial level which is very low. Some of the students get discouraged and drop out," he states. "So I decide to focus on this group of students because many of those students are very capable.”

Lea Sanon’s family came here from the West African country of Burkina Faso two years ago. She appears in Scott’s Quadratic Formulatic video. “Before the video, I didn’t remember the quadratic formula. But right after he made the video and I listened to it once, I did remember everything," she says. "It is stuck in my head. It is kind of fun at the same time. I get to use in my Algebra II class right now.”

Abdullah Ibrahim, who immigrated from Iraq last year, says Scott makes math easy for him. “When I first came here, I was really bad in math," he admits. "After practicing with Mr. Scott, I mean thanks God. Now he decided me to go to honors program in the summer. I am doing well. So I am really proud of myself."

**More than a teacher**

Blair High School principal Renay Johnson is a big supporter. She even appears in Scott’s latest video, "Undefined Expressions".

“Mr Scott is very motivating and engaging for students," Johnson notes. "He enjoys what he does. As you know he engages students and mathematics through music. But he is also our wrestling coach. He also sponsors National Honor Society. And he is also a director of after school sports academy. I am lucky to have him here as a teacher.”

Scott was recognized as an outstanding educator last year by the Montgomery County Council. He was also honored as 2011 teacher of the year by an African-American civil rights organization.

Jake Scott says he wants mathematics to be something that students look forward to learning.
And he says the results will help them on a path to college and a career.

 **Vragen bij leestekst:**

1. Lees de titel en de kopjes van de tekst. Waar denk je dat deze tekst over gaat?
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2. Lees de eerste alinea. Waar komt deze muzikale wiskunde docent precies vandaan?
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3. Lees alinea’s 2,3 en 4. Wat doet de docent precies met muziek en wiskunde?
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4. Het tweede kopje heet “empowering students”.
Hieronder worden 2 studenten geïnterviewd. Maar er is iets vreemds aan de hand met hun Engels. Wat is er aan de hand en waarom?
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5. De directeur van de school waar de wiskunde docent les geeft, is ook enthousiast. Dat zegt ze zelf, maar dat blijkt ook uit iets anders, namelijk:
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6. Noem twee dingen die Mr Scott op school doet, naast wiskunde geven.
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7. Aan het einde van de tekst geeft de wiskunde docent twee redenen waarom hij wiskunde op deze manier aanbiedt. Welke zijn dit?
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8. Vertaal de volgende term “outstanding educator”
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