

RULEVILLE MATH STARS MEET THEIR ALGEBRA CELEBS



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Algebra Nation study expert Rachelle Felix signs student Rodney McClendon's workbook. Felix, along with two other study experts of Algebra Nation, surprised the eighth grade pilot class at Ruleville Middle School Monday.

An eighth grade class at Ruleville Middle School had a huge surprise Monday during its Algebra class.

The students at RMS have been participating in a state-funded pilot program called Algebra Nation, a leading online and mobile algebra resource that began in fall of 2016.

A group of educators from Algebra Nation, along with State Sen. Willie Simmons, came to see the program in action and spoke with the students and asked them questions.

Algebra Nation was created in 2013 when the University of Florida joined forces with Study Edge, a tutoring program, to create a highly effective online resource to dramatically improve student achievement in Algebra 1.

"Algebra Nation is a good way for me to learn things that I don't really get in the classroom, so I can go to Algebra Nation and get some more information on it to really understand it," said student Miracle Williams.

All of the students agreed that Algebra Nation is the best online source for students to use when they do not understand their work inside of the classroom.

Many also said they have the app on their cell phones and iPads and that helps them out a lot.

Student Rodney McClendon said, "Our generation relies on technology a lot, so with Algebra Nation instead of reading these boring books, you can go on the computer and work out the problems just like that."

The students receive an Algebra Nation workbook that gives step-by-step instructions of the math problems which helps as well.

The students at RMS with the highest test scores in math were selected to participate in the pilot program in the Sunflower County School District.

Simmons said that Algebra Nation is a great program and seeing how excited the students get when he is asking them about it shows him that they are having a great learning experience.

"We need to see Algebra Nation in more of our districts in the state, and we are going to work on that," said Simmons.

Algebra Nation's tutors, or study experts Amy Adams, Rachelle Felix, and Darnell Boursiquot, who teach the students how to solve math equations online, surprised the students.

The students were really excited to see their favorite tutors and talk with them.

Study Edge owner Ethan Fieldman said, "The students have been knowing three study experts from online for quite some time now and they are like celebrities to the students, so we can't wait to see their faces when the study experts walk in."

Fieldman, co-director of Algebra Nation, Melody Pak and associate director of Algebra Nation Taylor White said this program teaches the students how to study and it prepares them for when they reach other levels of math.

Pak said, "Algebra Nation is something that the students really love, and we have a waitlist of districts who really wants to get in."

Pak hopes to bring Algebra Nation statewide so that every single district in Mississippi can have access to it.

"This seems like something that students really love, and we really love doing it, and we really love Mississippi," said Pak.

Allison Berg, seventh and eighth grade teacher at RMS, said he enjoys teaching her students and she loves to see her Algebra Nation class excited about their work.

Berg said, "I see more confidence, and I see more vocabulary and that's what I push for in the classroom, they are definitely more confident in their work."

"Their representation and their autonomy in this is like really, really powerful to me," Berg said.