

Online program helps Florence algebra students

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FLORENCE, S.C. – Solving for “x” can be fun. At least, that is what students at Southside Middle School who use Algebra Nation say.

Algebra Nation, a new online resource for Florence School District One, uses instructional videos from several tutors, called “study experts,” who teach algebra with a thorough yet entertaining approach.

On Tuesday, three Algebra Nation study experts surprised a Southside math class with a visit.

“I feel like a celebrity came to our school,” said Sarah Danner, an eighth-grade student at Southside.

Students asked questions about how videos are filmed and how study experts got their jobs. Before the bell rang, study experts autographed students’ workbooks.

“Algebra is not one of my favorite things in the world, but it’s still really cool because they make it understandable and enjoyable at the same time,” Sarah Danner said.

Each study expert teaches with his or her personal style. Some move through material quickly. Some teach at a methodical pace. Others are particularly fond of humor. There is a way for every student to access a teaching method

that fits their needs, said Scott Carter, an eighth-grade math instructor at Southside.

“They each have their personal preference for choosing one of the five experts to help them through,” Carter said.

Algebra Nation videos can provide study or homework help. If students do not grasp a concept in class, Carter said, Algebra Nation allows them to easily access the material anywhere.

“If you get stuck, they’ll help you,” said Nasirah Wilson-Bueno, an eighth-grade student at Southside.

Carter also supplements his classroom instruction with Algebra Nation videos.

Carter said he hopes Algebra Nation helps increase test scores.

“My scores here at Southside have typically been pretty high, but last year I did see a little drop,” Carter said. “So, I’m hoping it’s going to boost those back up.”

Algebra Nation started in Florida and has spread to five states, including South Carolina. Algebra Nation develops material that aligns with each state’s standards.

Currently, 688 students in Florence District One have logged in to the Algebra Nation resources.

In South Carolina, the program is funded by the state legislature.