

Kumon Math and Reading Supports National Push toward Mathematics Benchmarks for U.S. Students

Teaneck, N.J. – (March 13, 2008) - This morning, the [National Mathematics Advisory Panel](#) called for schools to focus on several "critical foundations" or benchmarks for U.S. school children. These recommendations require that by the end of the seventh grade, students should be fluent with whole numbers and fractions, and proficient with geometry and measurements.

“We are pleased to see the panel acknowledge the need for building stronger math skills in American children,” says Matthew Lupsha, vice president of education services for [Kumon North America](#). “Many high school students struggle in algebra because of their inability to master fractions earlier on.”

The [National Mathematics Advisory Panel](#) also proposed that children should gain mastery of arithmetic in early grades, teachers should focus on a smaller number of key elements and textbooks should be condensed to cover fewer math topics. According to the report, “difficulty with fractions [including decimals and percents] is pervasive and is a major obstacle to further progress in mathematics, including algebra.”

Unless schools focus their attention on improving students’ abilities for “quick and effortless” applications of arithmetic and algebra, the panel worries that the United States will continue to be outperformed by other countries.

Much like the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, [Kumon](#) Math and Reading Centers’ primary focus is helping students master the basic math concepts of addition, subtraction, fractions and algebra as preparation for more rigorous math courses.

Yesterday, [Bill Gates](#), a strong advocate of improving math and science education, urged Congress to increase the use of statistics to measure student progress. Gates stressed the competitiveness that exists in America today, and the need to do everything in our power to “ensure that America’s students and workers have the skills necessary to compete in a digital economy by providing them with the necessary educational opportunities and resources.”

“American’s phobia of math must end,” says, Lupsha. “Students need mastery of basic arithmetic in order to be creative, inventive and become leaders in the field of math and science.”

About Kumon Math and Reading Centers

[Kumon](#) [K ɔ̄-mon] is an after-school math and reading program. [Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2008](#), the learning method uses a systematic individualized approach that helps children develop a solid command of math and reading skills. Through daily practice and mastery of materials, students increase confidence, improve concentration and develop better study skills. [Kumon](#) has 26,000 centers in 45 countries and more than four million students studying worldwide. <http://www.kumon.com>

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NATIONAL NEWS MEDIA REQUESTS

Jenny Cherrytree
1-800-213-1613 ext. 226
jcherrytree@kumon.com

U.S. EAST

Caitlin McHugh
201-928-0444, ext. 456
cmchugh@kumon.com

U.S. WEST

Jenny Cherrytree
1-800-213-1613 ext. 226
jcherrytree@kumon.com

U.S. MIDWEST

Rasheda Williams
248-290-0450, ext. 233
rwilliams@kumon.com

U.S. SOUTH

Lindsay Isaacs
281-395-0200, ext. 24
lisaacs@kumon.com