



DRAFT



Promising Practice Brief
Benson Primary School's *The Arithmetech Club*

Program Background

- The philosophy of *The Arithmetech Club* (TAC) is that "Arithmetic is what children construct out of their real-life experiences, and not something that is put into their heads from textbooks" (Mitchell & Reuter, 2003).
- TAC is an after-school math program designed to for second-grade students to fulfill needs that are unable to meet during the school day on a regular basis. TAC addresses both remedial and gifted learners, encouraging using skill practice and technology to reinforce classroom lessons. TAC also introduces and implements higher-order concepts, application and thinking skills.
- Recognizing that mathematics is everywhere, TAC encourages connections to students' real lives through the use of guest speakers, games, group problem-solving and community service projects.

Career Development Activity Highlights

- *Guest Speakers* –Each week an adult from the community attends the TAC to make a brief presentation about their occupation. They emphasize how mathematics used every day on the job. For instance, a physical education teacher might discuss using a stopwatch, a plumber might show how to read a blueprint and ensure lengths of pipe, a concrete contractor might discuss volume, or an author might explain how a book is made.
- *Community Service* – Part of the mission of TAC includes the idea that students should be involved in a community-building project. TAC oversees the collection of aluminum can tabs for *The Ronald McDonald House*, a not-for-profit organization that provides housing near medical care facilities for seriously ill children and their families. The students lead the collection of tabs, then count, graph, measure, etc. their progress during TAC. According to their website, the students have collected over 1,400,000 tabs to date!



DRAFT



Evidence of Success

- The program is in its sixth year, and they have released a book containing step-by-step instructions for creating an Arithmetech Club at other schools. More information about *The Arithmetech Club Manual* is available on their website at:
<http://www.itasca.k12.il.us/benson/arithmetech/index.htm>
- Recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education with a Connections 2002 Award of Distinction.

More Information

Additional information regarding The Arithmetech Club can be found online at
<http://www.itasca.k12.il.us/benson/arithmetech/index.htm>

Reference

- Illinois State Board of Education. (2002). *Sample Activities Elementary*. Springfield, IL: Author.
Retrieved March 27, 2007, http://www.isbe.state.il.us/career/pdf/career_elem_activiities.pdf
- Mitchell, P., & Reuter, A. (2003). *The Arithmetech Club*. Itasca, IL: Benson Primary School.
Retrieved March 27, 2007, <http://www.itasca.k12.il.us/benson/arithmetech/index.htm>