

Math Buddies Annual Report 2019-20
Barbara Van Itallie, Chair
With assistance from Judy Connelly, Literacy Connections

Math Buddies continues into its fourth year.. This is a joint project with Literacy Connections, and a spin-off of their very successful Book Buddies program. Volunteer Buddies are from AAUW and other organizations as well. Current AAUW Math Buddies are Mary Lou Davis, Maria DeWald, Kathy Martin, Suzanne Turetzky, and Barbara Van Itallie. Unfortunately the number of Math Buddies dropped this year. Additionally there are Math Buddies from outside of AAUW. And many other AAUW members serve as Book Buddies, (some were former Math Buddies) in many Dutchess County Schools.

Unfortunately our visits to the school stopped by the beginning of March due to the pandemic.

Book Buddies go into a City of Poughkeepsie or Arlington elementary school typically once or twice a week to work one-on-one or in the classroom with students who need extra math help. Judy Connelly does all of the administrative work, including obtaining background checks on the volunteers, preparing materials for the volunteers and matching the volunteer to a teacher. I recruit AAUW Math Buddies by using the AAUW membership database looking for members interested in STEM, holding a table at the open house, adding a page to our Face Book site, and speaking about the program at a meeting.

Literacy Connections covers most of the administrative costs of this initiative, although I have occasionally requested funding from AUW in the past.

Judy Connelly tells us that the response from teachers that have Math Buddies in their class is extremely positive. Not only do the children receive help with their math but also have another adult showing interest in them. The Buddies themselves find this a very rewarding experience too. Kath Martin writes, "The young lady I was working with was showing promise and improving her math skills. I miss working with her and dread to see how much these children will lose during this time away from school."

Teachers continue to ask for Math Buddies but we do not have enough of them. STEM is an AAUW priority but our branch has little presence in any STEM area other than this modest Math Buddy program. I will continue to look for new recruits.