



News Release

News Release No. 1

For Information: Don Kennedy, 410-436-7118

20 January 2012

ECBC Empowers Cecil County Public Schools, Maryland with Digital Math Learning Tool

ELKTON, Md. – Cecil County Public Schools is the first school district in Maryland to receive Tabula Digita's math learning tool 'DimensionM' through the educational outreach efforts of the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC) -- sponsored by the National Defense Education Program (NDEP).

Looking to help local teachers enhance science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) components in their middle school curriculum, ECBC provided Cecil County Public Schools a package that included DimensionM licenses and a three-day professional development training for 23 of their middle school math teachers.

DimensionM is a digital learning program that engages students in applying mathematics with the latest 3-D video gaming technology. It enables students to strengthen their knowledge and skills in pre-algebra and algebra I by traversing a series of different missions that require solving math problems to proceed.

This teacher professional development, led by National Center for the Advancement of STEM Education (NCASE) instructors, is designed to facilitate the adoption of this math intervention tool into teachers' lesson plans and to familiarize educators with innovative teaching techniques.

"This training provides our teachers the opportunity to meet students' learning needs," said Cecil County Public Schools Executive Director for Elementary and High School Education Jeffrey Lawson, Ed.D., "in a way that is consistent with contemporary interest and best practice."

Covering standards-based, high-impact educational objectives, this tool serves teachers as a resource to introduce new concepts, support instruction, reinforce learning objectives and monitor students' progress through reports.

After a discussion on the student-centric pedagogical approach of this program and an immersion into 'DimensionM', teachers were encouraged to present concepts that suggested how to implement the new math learning program in the classroom.

In a concerted effort to connect government and education professionals, two ECBC employees joined the training. Research Biologist Brady Redmond, Ph.D. and Physical Scientist Stephen Harper participated in the three-day training to share their real-world experience in applying mathematical principles. Inserting their subject matter expertise when applicable, they gave teachers additional ideas on ways to frame the relevance of STEM around its application in future career pathways.

Participating teachers from Bohemia Manor, Elkton, North East, Rising Sun and Perryville demonstrated the type of creative and innovative thinking that will help ignite students' interest in math.

"I can speak on behalf of the majority of my colleagues when saying that these three days were not just an opportunity to learn about DimensionM, but also about NDEP and the educational partnerships that have been established [between Cecil County Public Schools and ECBC]," said April Alcorn, eighth-grade teacher at Elkton Middle School. "We are looking for any type of intervention or motivation to encourage our students to achieve high results in core subjects like math."

"And, we are very hopeful that this type of learning tool and instructional strategy will help excite students about STEM disciplines."

Click on the link to watch a video report: <http://youtu.be/XLm13GRDkck>

For more information about ECBC, visit <http://www.ecbc.army.mil/>.

ECBC is the Army's principal research and development center for chemical and biological defense technology, engineering and field operations. ECBC has achieved major technological advances for the warfighter and for our national defense, with a long and distinguished history of providing the Armed Forces with quality systems and outstanding customer service. ECBC is a U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command laboratory located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. For more information about the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, please visit our website at <http://www.ecbc.army.mil> or call (410) 436-7118.