



MATH FOR ALL

**MATHCOUNTS GOLD LEVEL EXCELLENCE
COMMUNITY PROJECT**

By Potomac Pi-Rates National Math Club

Evidence Part 1: Planning & Preparation



Goal: Prepare kits with math supplies and games for underserved kids aged 5-9 years old

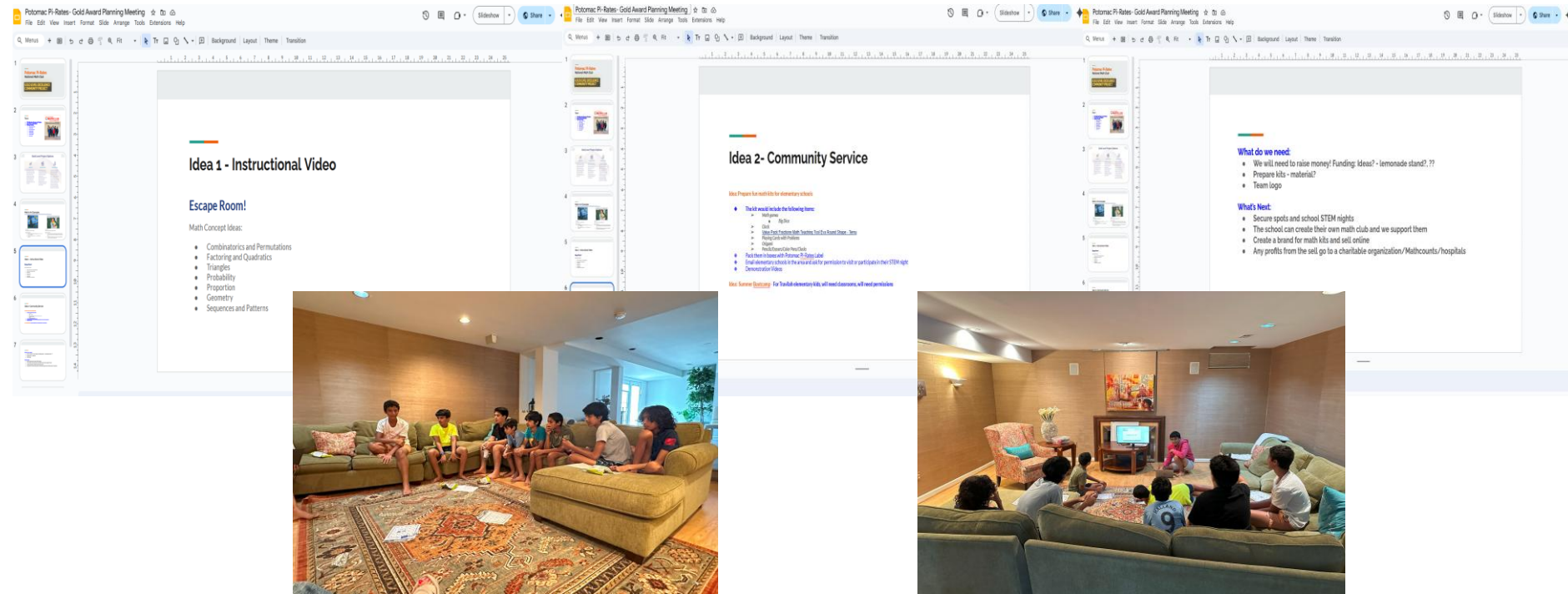
Description of the Project:

- ❖ While talking about our math club to the fellow students at our schools, we noticed a common thread - the widespread issue of math anxiety among peers, often rooted in an early fear of math. The situation worsened in recent years, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Nation's Report Card reveals that, in 2024, many fourth- and eighth-graders are performing below pre-pandemic levels in math and reading. This challenge is particularly severe in underserved communities, where limited resources hinder progress. **Believing that math can be both accessible and enjoyable with the right tools and strategies, our club launched a community project to support young learners. As a part of our community project, we constructed 50 math kits containing 17-rod abacus, math-related games, and accessories such as a Rubik's cube, notebook, pocketbook with fun mental math tricks and games, ruler, crayons, pencils, and markers. By providing these engaging resources, we hoped to help students overcome their fear of math, discover its fun side, and feel empowered to succeed.**
- ❖ **We donated these kits to the Chinese Community Center (CCC) in Houston (<https://ccchouston.org/>) that serves underserved kids from immigrant families.**

Evidence Part 1: Planning & Preparation

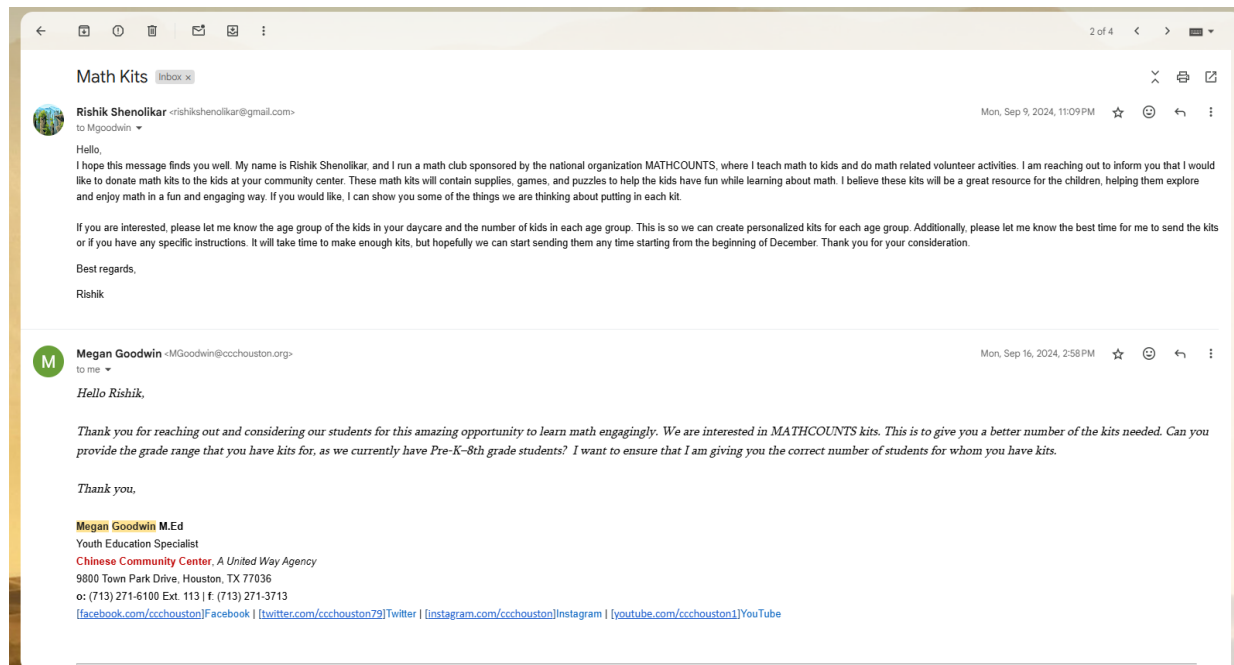
Brainstorming sessions: We held multiple brainstorming sessions before settling on the math kit project. Our first meeting was on June 30th, 2024. A few ideas included math escapee room (instructional video), summer bootcamp (community project), and weekly mental math sessions at a local elementary school.

First meeting – June 30, 2024



Evidence Part 1: Planning & Preparation

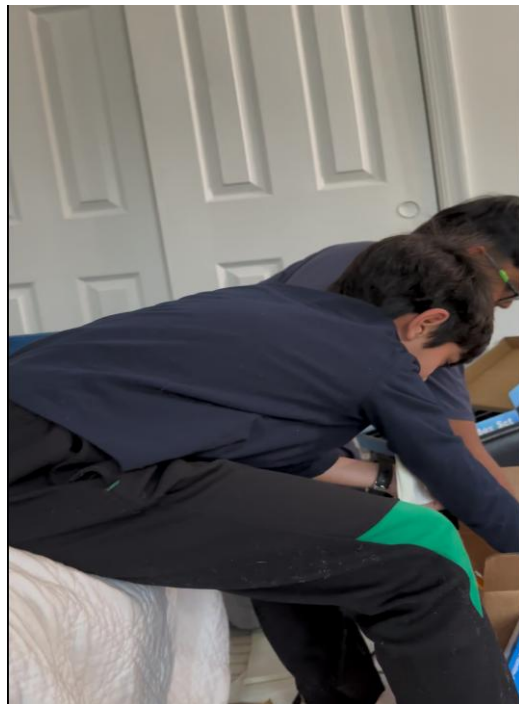
Final decision: We personally reached out to several teachers across different schools to share our mission and explore potential collaboration opportunities. Additionally, 3 of our club members met with the principal of a local school to discuss hosting a summer math bootcamp. Unfortunately, that opportunity did not materialize due to logistical and operational constraints. The inspiration for our math kits project stemmed from a positive and encouraging response from Ms. Megan Goodwin A Youth Education Specialist at the Chinese Community Center in Houston. Her support affirmed the need for accessible, engaging math resources, especially for students in underserved communities, and motivated us to move forward with this community project.



Evidence Part 2: Project Execution

- ❖ The first step in executing our project was deciding what to include in the math kits. One of our club members, who is proficient with the abacus, suggested introducing this powerful visual tool to younger students as a fun and effective way to build number sense. We also included Rubik's cubes, believing they would spark curiosity and problem-solving skills in an enjoyable format. Basic school supplies like rulers, markers, pencils, and erasers were added based on recommendations from the teachers we consulted. To round out the kits, we created a pocketbook filled with mental math tricks and games—many of which were inspired by activities we enjoyed through our MATHCOUNTS club.
- ❖ Next part was funding. Based on our research, the estimated cost of kit was \$10. So, we needed, \$600 (\$500 for kits and \$100 shipping). Through our GoFundMe campaign and contributions from family/friends, we raised the needed funds.
- ❖ Once our club president ordered all the material, we started assembling the kits! We met on Saturdays to assemble the kits. It took us 3 days (4-5 hours each session) to finish the 50 kits.

Club members in action
(video clip)



Evidence Part 2: Project Execution (Pictures)



Evidence Part 2: Project Execution

- ❖ The project execution was the fun part! We celebrated one of the club member's birthday too 😊
- ❖ Our math kits have been a hit with both faculty and students at CCC. The kits stood out for their creativity and uniqueness, offering a fun and engaging way to learn math. A total of 50 students from underserved immigrant families received our kits and have access to fun tools.
- ❖ Receiving an email filled with pictures of smiling faces truly made all our efforts feel worthwhile—it was a heartwarming reminder of the impact we hoped to create.



Hello Rishik,

My sincerest apologies for the delay in pictures. We have been very busy, and I took longer than I should have. Please forgive me.

Wow! Our feedback on the student kits is fantastic—they've been a daily hit! The Rubik's Cubes and abacuses were a huge win with so many students. Plus, the clocks have been a game-changer for teaching our first and second graders to tell time! And notebooks? Always a must-have! Seriously, being able to create awesome math challenges with these kits has been instrumental for our teachers—they're loving having these tools for engaging math activities. We absolutely love these kits!

Thank you again for allowing us to be a part of your amazing program. If you need anything else from us, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Good luck!

Megan Goodwin M.Ed

Youth Education Specialist

Chinese Community Center, A United Way Agency

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From: Rishik Shenolikar <rishikshenolikar@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 8:26 AM

7 Attachments • Scanned by Gmail



Our Journey (video clip)



Evidence Part 3: Reflection

1. How do you feel the service project went? Do you feel it was helpful to the community your club was targeting? Why or why not?

We all think our community project went really well! Our club worked hard together, and we got everything done on time. It was wonderful to see all of us excited and involved in the project to help out. We had some challenges during the project, but we managed to solve them as a team. The math kits that we prepared were a big hit with the students and parents at the Chinese Community Center in Houston, TX. The contents were helpful to the students, and they loved it. The people we helped were really grateful, and we could see how much it meant to them from the feedback we received. Even if we only made a small change with 50 kits delivered, it still felt like we were able to make a positive impact.



2. What is one thing you learned in preparing for and executing your club's service project? How might you apply this lesson in the future?

One thing we learned while working on this community project is how important teamwork is. At first, we didn't always agree on how to do things. Our club leader helped us navigate through things but there were some misunderstandings among club members. But when we started communicating better and working together as a team, things were much smoother. We realized that planning in advance and making sure everyone is working together really helps things run smoothly. In the future, we would like to make sure that we communicate clearly before starting the project, and make sure everyone has a chance to share their ideas well in advance. If the club member is not present at the planning meeting, we would update them via email or text. It will help us get things done more effectively and make the project better overall.

Evidence Part 3: Reflection

3. Describe your favorite moment from working on your club's service project. Why did this moment stand out to you?

The favorite moment from working on our service project was when we were making the math kits together. All of us had so much fun—club members were singing, joking around, and just enjoying each other's company while making the math kits. It didn't feel like work at all because we were all laughing and helping each other. We also celebrated Soham's birthday! This moment stood out to me because it showed how teamwork can be so much fun. Even though we were doing something important, like putting together math kits, we were still able to enjoy the process and have a good time. It made all of us realize that doing good for others can also bring people closer together and make awesome memories.

4. Describe a challenge your club faced while working on the service project. How did you address this challenge?

One challenge our club faced while working on the service project was finding a place for the community service project and also to share our math kits. We contacted several teachers and even met with a school principal to plan a summer math bootcamp, but it didn't work out because of scheduling and other issues at the school. Instead of giving up, we kept looking for other places where we could help. It took us almost 3 months after our first planning meeting to receive a positive reply from Ms. Megan Goodwin at the Chinese Community Center in Houston. She was excited about the idea, and that gave us the opportunity to share our kits with students there. This experience taught us to stay positive and keep trying, even when things don't go as planned.

5. What would you do differently if you were to complete this project all over again? Why?

If we were to do this project again, we would definitely start contacting schools and community centers well in advance. We realized that many places needed extra time to plan and approve projects like this, especially during busy times of the year. We didn't realize the scale of the project until we started it. By giving them more notice, we might have had more chances to partner with different schools or even run a small bootcamp like we originally hoped. Overall, we learned a lot from this experience and would be even more prepared the next time!

