

## LEARNING IN THE CITY

# Program Reaches Out To 'Gifted, Talented'

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Calvin Morgan-White often brings home a blue book filled with algebra problems and excitedly tells his mother, Tamara Morgan, about the work inside.

It's not really homework, Calvin tells her. And yet, he'll continue working on the math problems long after he has

arrived home, Morgan said.

"This is all he ever talks about," Morgan said of the material her son brings home from the after-school math club at Breakthrough Magnet School.

Calvin, 9, is the kind of

student who could be overlooked in a school system widely concerned about closing the achievement gap and getting more of its students to score at proficient levels on state tests.

But the small, after-school math club run by the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education is reaching out to "gifted and talented" students like Calvin at four Hartford schools.

The students are learning math concepts at one to two grade levels above their own, said M. Katherine Gavin, a professor and researcher at UConn.

Gavin started the math club last year at Breakthrough Magnet School, Batchelder School, Burr School and the Noah Webster Magnet School. The club uses a gifted and talented math curriculum that Gavin developed through a

federal research grant. Travelers, which sponsored the club last year, recently issued another grant to UConn to continue the club.

"Most after-school programs are recreational or remedial," Gavin said. "I think sometimes the needs of these [gifted] students are not met in the classroom."

Gavin said the club is meant to catch gifted students early, before they become bored because they aren't being challenged enough in school.

The club is meant to be fun, and students don't feel like the learning is a labor, said Dishonda Dukes, the math club adviser at Breakthrough.

"There's not as much paper and pencil," Dukes said. "It's usually an activity, and they're working in groups more."

This week, the students in Breakthrough Magnet's club showed off algebra board games they designed at a family game night — often stumping their parents on math problems that had to be solved.