View From The Hill   
(02/04/10)   
  
**Operation Comics**

What do comic books have to do with learning mathmatics?  A lot if you are a student at Cumberland Trace Elementary.  
  
Amy Bingham explains in this week’s “View from the Hill.”

These three comic books filled with math curriculum were the brainchild of WKU Assistant Dean Bruce Kessler.  It’s part of a plan to get students excited about this particular subject.

“Their attitude toward the math class when they know comics are going to be involved is very positive.”  
  
These sixth graders at Cumberland Trace Elementary say using comic books to learn  math made it fun!  
   
“I think it got more people to learn it because it was an age appropriate thing, it was a comic book, everyone likes comics.”  
   
“It was more fun than just doing a bunch of math problems and writing on the white board.”  
  
Dr. Bruce Kessler got the idea for a math comic book at a conference where a cartoonist took minutes of the meeting.  
   
“I thought we should be able to do this with math.”  
  
After getting a grant to cover printing costs…Kessler wrote and even illustrated many of the stories about two students who help a super hero solve problems.  
   
“It has to be a situation where the strength he has, and he’s a very strong guy, does not solve the problem.”  
  
Dr. Janet Tassell has been assessing the effectiveness of the comic books.  
   
“It was a change of pace ..that’s a common reference we get…the students look forward to trying to figure out the characters and predict what’s behind Dr. Kessler’s mind when putting this together.”  
   
“I think it taught a lot of kids a lot of things they didn’t know easier than a textbook would have.”  
   
“I like the comic books…it helped understand some aspects of math.”

Kessler says he plans to secure funding for at least two more comic books and may even use some ideas the students submitted for future characters.  
  
With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.