

SHS Math Department FAQ's

Why is taking classes in the summer to advance not recommended?

Saratoga High School math pathways have been designed to allow students to build confidence and be successful in high school level math classes. As a department, we **strongly** encourage students to select the next course in the path with the guidance of their math teacher recommendation. It is the belief of the math department that summer courses do not allow students adequate time to learn, process and retain the material and thought processes that are needed for success in future math courses. As a department, we strongly discourage students from taking any summer school course to advance, as it is our experience that the negative effects of taking geometry (for example) in the summer versus a full year course generally are not seen until a student reaches Precalculus, or Calculus.

Saratoga High School does not have a placement exam for math courses. We offer open access to all math courses, however, note that there is a three week deadline to drop to a lower level class if the student isn't performing well in the class they signed up for and their grade transfers to the next class. In some cases, the lower classes might be full and students will not be able to drop and will have to remain in the more difficult level or drop math altogether.

Beginning with the class of 2022, students will no longer be awarded credits for summer classes taken between 8th and 9th grade. Students are able to take classes between 8th and 9th grade and move to the next level (though this is discouraged), but we will not give them course credit. The name of the class and grade earned will appear, but credit will not be awarded. The student needs to be cognizant of what will appear on their transcripts and they would want to speak to a guidance counselor about what colleges want to see on the high school transcript to make an informed decision regarding course work.

Should I take Honors Precalculus after Algebra 2?

No. The Regular Algebra 2 curriculum does not prepare students for the rigor or pace of Honors Precalculus course. Regular Precalculus will provide students with a review of difficult Algebra 2 topics prior to learning connected topics in Precalculus. The Honors Precalculus course does not provide review. In addition, the Honors Algebra 2 course covers more material and at more depth than the Regular Algebra 2 course does not cover. The Regular Precalculus course is designed to prepare students for further mathematical studies including AP Calculus AB or College-Prep Calculus

What is the difference between regular and honors courses?

At SHS we offer a regular course and an honors course at the Algebra 2 and Precalculus level. The difference between an honors course and a regular course is the level of rigor and depth of abstraction of assigned problems and amount of review expected from the previous course.

	Regular Course	Honors Course
Textbooks:	Both courses are taught from the same textbook	
Topic review:	Challenging topics from the previous math course may be reviewed in class prior to learning connected topics.	No review or very little review of previous course material.
Prepares students for:	AP Calculus, level AB, College Prep Calculus or college mathematics	AP Calculus, level AB or BC or college mathematics
State Standards:	Selected topics may be simplified while still meeting the Common Core State Standards in math.	Topics will be covered in a more theoretical manner than required in the Common Core State Standards in math.
Formulas:	Students may be given many formulas needed to work problems in assessments	Students will need to memorize all formulas needed for assessments.
Theory:	Students may be shown selected development of theoretical ideas and formulas.	Students will be tested on the development of formulas and theoretical ideas.