



ARDSLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Stuart Horlacher, *Principal*

Jennifer Goldenberg, *Assistant Principal*

September 10, 2024

Dear 5th Grade Families,

While our 5th graders just recently entered middle school, we have received feedback over the years requesting communication at the beginning of 5th grade about our math offerings for the future.

Next year, all students going into 6th grade will continue their math program in a 6th grade math class aligned to the Next Generation Learning Standards. At the end of 6th grade students may continue at the regular pace or begin a program which will accelerate one year. Regardless of math placement, if a student takes four years of mathematics at the high school, they will complete topics in Calculus. The **accelerated sequence** is listed below:

Grade 7	Cover topics from the 7th grade and most of the 8th grade Math Curriculum
Grade 8	Cover the balance of the 8th grade math curriculum and all of Algebra I
Grade 9	Geometry
Grade 10	Algebra II
Grade 11	Pre-Calculus
Grade 12	Calculus/AP Calculus and/or Statistics/AP Statistics

In the interest of meeting the wide range of math abilities, a very small number of students will be placed in an honors sequence in 6th grade. Students in this honors sequence represent the highest achieving (5% to 8%) of our math students. Our experience indicates that to be successful in this honors sequence, a student must exhibit a passion for math, exceptional talent in the understanding of mathematical concepts, the ability to do high level abstract thinking, the ability to work independently, exhibit above average organizational skills, and exceptional study habits. The purpose and goal of this rigorous program is to give our highest performing mathematicians an appropriate challenge to meet their current level.

It is important to understand that while we celebrate the success of our 5th grade math students, earning high grades in 5th grade math does not simply translate to an eventual placement in the honors program. It is only appropriate for students to be considered for further testing if they have **exceeded expectations on grade level assessments** and have demonstrated the following:

- Ability to reason abstractly
- Capacity to work independently and stay on task
- Evidence of superior problem solving skills
- Consistent completion of high quality class work and homework
- Passion and enthusiasm for learning math
- Willingness to take on challenging tasks

In the spring, we will ask you if you would like your child to participate in a three part placement test, which will be administered in mid-May. This placement test is rigorous, yet is appropriate for students who should be considered for an honors placement. Conversely, it could prove to be an unpleasant experience for any student who does not meet most of the criteria mentioned in this letter. We have listed several benchmarks below that can serve as quantitative data - in addition to all the qualitative data mentioned previously - to help you make an appropriate decision that is in the best interest of your child:

- **Student earns at least an A average for 5th grade math for quarters one, two and three.**
- **Student earns a minimum score of 4/6 on each of the five Continental League Contests (administered monthly, November - March).**
- **Student earns a score of at least 20/30 on a Math League contest that will be administered during math class in the spring.**

Again, it is important to remember your child will still have the opportunity to be considered for acceleration at the end of 6th grade if s/he does not participate in the honors placement testing at the end of 6th grade. We'd like to emphasize that it is not in your child's best interest to be placed in the honors sequence, where topics are covered at a much faster pace and there is an expectation of independent learning at a young age, if they have not met all the aforementioned benchmarks.

Please bring any questions you may have to the Math Information meeting being held at the end of Back to School Night on Thursday, September 12.

Sincerely,

Mr. Stuart Horlacher
Principal

Ms. Linda Nappi
AMS Math Curriculum Leader