Math Policy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Division of Instructional Programs- Mathematics Branch

# General Information

This FAQ document was curated based on pre-submitted and live questions during Math Policy Virtual "Office Hours" hosted by MSDE'S Mathematics Branch on April 24, May 9, May 22, June 6, and June 17, 2025. These sessions were open to LEA leadership, educators, families, students, and community members across the state. If your question(s) are not answered below, or if any response is unclear, please reach out to Lyndsey Brightful (lyndsey.brightful@maryland.gov) or Stacie Marvin (stacie.marvin@maryland.gov).

# Topics

## ACCELERATION

**How will MSDE ensure that districts are not over-accelerating students?**

MSDE's Acceleration Guidance (released by Fall 2025) will outline expectations on when, how, and what data should be considered in determining appropriate acceleration in math, beginning in grade 3. In addition, MSDE will continue to evaluate student progress on rigorous, standards-aligned statewide assessments every year in grade 3-Integrated Algebra.

**How, or will, on-level and honors be designated in this new policy?**

MSDE's Mathematics Branch is collaborating with MSDE's Advanced Academics Branch to provide clarity of expectations for Honors courses. Currently, designation of Honors courses remains at the discretion of LEAs.

**What is the intention for the accelerated math program tracks in grades 3-5? Is this intended to be a separate math track like secondary level, where students can be taking different levels of math, or will students receiving GT services in math be what is considered the 'accelerated' math track while they continue to take the on-grade level standards?**

MSDE's Acceleration Guidance will outline expectations for accelerated math course progressions in grades 3 through 5. Students may be identified for math acceleration, Gifted and Talented, or both. All students who demonstrate readiness for math acceleration based on demonstrated mastery of current grade-level math content standards should be provided access.

## ASSESSMENT

**Will any changes be made to the 2% rule to accommodate the "common unit or modular based assessments aligned to grade-level standards across all schools from grades K-8" and/or the requirement that students in grades 3-7 "be evaluated for math acceleration and readiness at least once a school year"?**

Unit or modular based assessments aligned to grade-level standards should be utilized as both formative and summative assessments in support of grade-level, standard-aligned instruction. The expectation for *common* assessments across districts will not provide any additional assessment requirements. Forthcoming Acceleration Guidance will outline best practices and processes for identifying students that will utilize existing common unit and/or modular assessments, MCAP data, LEA benchmarks and/or qualitative data to make acceleration decisions. This process will not require additional assessments.

**Will there be a universal screener for math interventions in elementary grades K-5? If so, what will this look like? Is it given to all students?**

MSDE is actively collaborating with our partners in higher education to develop a Numeracy Development Framework that outlines core content for each grade level. MSDE encourages the use of this resource and multiple student data references to identify students who are not meeting grade-level standards for numeracy development. By the school year 2026-2027, each LEA will develop and implement a district-wide process to identify and support students who exhibit difficulties with learning mathematics.

**When (after which course) will the Integrated Algebra MCAP be given?**

The Integrated Algebra state assessment will be designed to be administered when a student is enrolled in the Integrated Algebra 2 course. The assessment will cover standards in Integrated Algebra 1 and some standards in Integrated Algebra 2. MSDE's Mathematics Branch is actively collaborating with MSDE's assessment team to clarify and communicate all assessment updates, ensuring alignment between statewide math assessment and revised standards, course progression, and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) assessment requirements in middle school and high school. These updates will be communicated as soon as available, in advance of the testing window for any impacted assessments.

**When and how will the change from Algebra 1 MCAP to Integrated Algebra MCAP take place? How will these changes impact the state assessments? Will the pool of vetted questions just be reassigned to the corresponding grade level and the assessments will be considered valid due to the vetting process, or will the assessments move to a vetting process where scores are not counted until the test is considered valid? When will MSDE release blueprints to state what exactly is on the Integrated Algebra assessment?**

MSDE's Mathematics Branch is actively collaborating with MSDE's assessment team to clarify and communicate all assessment updates, ensuring alignment between statewide math assessment and revised standards, course progression, and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) assessment requirements in middle school and high school. These updates will be communicated as soon as available, in advance of the testing window for any impacted assessments.

**If an accelerated student takes the Integrated Algebra assessment in grade 8, can it still count toward CCR if they score proficient?**

Yes, but they will still need to take a high school assessment for federal accountability requirements once they enter 9th grade.

**Will there be funding for students to take the SAT, PSAT, or AP exams if they need these assessments to meet federal assessment requirements in high school?**

MSDE's Mathematics Branch is actively collaborating with MSDE's assessment team to clarify and communicate all assessment updates, ensuring alignment between statewide math assessment and revised standards, course progression, and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) assessment requirements in middle school and high school. These updates will be communicated as soon as available, in advance of the testing window for any impacted assessments.

**How will the use of MAP assessments align with the new standards?**

The use of MAP assessments, or any progress monitoring benchmark assessment, is at the discretion of LEAs. MSDE recommends LEAs audit the current usefulness of the data gathered from these assessments and prioritize use of the curriculum embedded, grade level standard aligned benchmark assessments from their adopted curriculum to evaluate student progress.

**Can you provide more details about the language in the policy around CCR, specifically why students earning a final grade of A, B or C in a secondary math pathways course in which Integrated Algebra is a prerequisite will be included in the Math Mastery option of the CCR standards?**

Students who earn an A, B, or C in a secondary math pathway course are demonstrating college and career math readiness, so the inclusion of this for the math mastery option acknowledges this as a measure of College and Career Readiness.

## CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

**What changes are affecting elementary instruction?**

Maryland's revised College and Career Readiness Mathematics Standards were adopted at the July 2025 State Board of Education meeting. Current timelines in the Mathematics Policy require LEA implementation of the PreK-8 standards in school year 2026-2027.

**How and when will the new curriculum be rolled out and is there a plan for students with special needs and emerging English learners?**

The current timelines in the Mathematics Policy require LEA implementation of the PreK-8 standards in school year 2026-2027, Integrated Algebra 1 standards in 2027-2028 and Integrated Algebra 2 standards in 2028-2029. Each local school district and school board will determine the specific curriculum that will be used in schools.

Beginning in school year 2026-2027, each local school district will develop a process to identify and support students who exhibit difficulties with learning mathematics. They will be implementing, with MSDE guidance, support structures for students with disabilities and multi-lingual learners. MSDE's Office of Teaching and Learning will also continue to support quality resources and professional learning aligned to meeting unique needs of all student groups.

**To what extent will teachers be expected to utilize explicit instruction and/or manipulatives?**

Math Policy Section III, Advancing Numeracy Through Consistent, Clear, and Effective Mathematics Instruction, outlines statewide expectations for mathematics instruction. This includes supporting the development of numeracy through mathematics instruction that is intentional and visible, implemented strategically and systematically, and supports students' development of conceptual understanding and procedural fluency.

**What curricular products will align with the new standards? Will HQIM materials vetted through MSDE align to the new Standards and Integrated Algebra? What's the status of this process? Have curriculum providers being used in the school districts been made aware of these shifts?**

MSDE's HQIM Branch will be reviewing the most commonly used curricula in the state in alignment with Maryland's HQIM framework and rubric, which prioritize alignment to standards. In Maryland it is up to each school district to decide which curriculum to use that best meets the needs of their local context. The adoption of new standards will necessitate a need to evaluate curriculum currently in use in each school district to ensure alignment with the new standards. MSDE anticipates that a district's adopted HQIM aligns to the overall content standards for PreK- Grade 8. MSDE will also facilitate Common Curriculum Communities with LEA Mathematics Supervisors to prepare resources, strategies to support targeted instructional shifts and aligned professional learning for each curriculum for grades PreK-8. MSDE will provide additional resources to support the implementation of Integrated Algebra standards. More information will be provided by Spring 2026.

Curriculum providers are aware of Maryland's revised standards. Math curriculum reviews will begin at the end of August, and the first reports will be published in December. MSDE will share the full list of initial math instructional material reviews within 1 month of the beginning of the review process. Any questions about the HQIM initiative can be directed to Christine Fulton, Director of HQIM at christine.fulton@maryland.gov.

**Will resources that are created for Integrated Algebra courses by MSDE be free and available to the school districts and the public?**

MSDE will provide additional resources to support the implementation of Integrated Algebra standards. More information will be provided by Spring 2026.

## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

### What are the parent and student expectations in this policy?

This policy is grounded in MSDE's commitment to provide every student with meaningful math experiences that emphasize the development of numeracy and algebra readiness which supports success in secondary math pathways aligned to student college and/or career interest and life. The policy outlines requirements for assessing students' numeracy proficiency, beginning in third grade, including family communication and partnership in developing plans to support student progress. LEAs will hold regular forums for communicating the shifts in math policy beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. Student and family engagement in these collaborative opportunities will be crucial.

### Are there any recommendations to parents to help learn mathematics at home?

Beginning in Fall 2025, MSDE will be releasing Family Guides to provide specific strategies for families to support numeracy development at home and to support LEAs in the creation of strong partnerships with families in the mathematical development of their children. Beginning in the school year 2026-2027, local school districts will be required to develop a systematic approach to family communication across all schools.

### How can Out of School Time (OST) organizations support the changes defined in the policy?

All organizations can contact MSDE's Director of Mathematics, Lyndsey Brightful, at lyndsey.brightful@maryland.gov to discuss any specific initiatives to support implementation of Maryland's Mathematics Policy.

## IMPLEMENTATION

**How soon will this policy go into effect?**

Maryland's Mathematics Policy was adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education on March 26, 2025. Each initiative will be implemented according to the timeline outlined in the policy. Throughout Summer 2025 and School Year (SY) 2025-2026, MSDE will be collaborating to provide necessary guidance documents, professional learning, resources and support for community outreach to facilitate the implementation of all initiatives. One of the major shifts is the implementation of revised PreK-8 Standards in SY 2026-2027, followed by Integrated Algebra 1 in SY 2027-2028 and Integrated Algebra 2 and the updated aligned assessment in SY 2028-2029.

**Does MSDE plan to develop any guidance on 'emotional growth and confidence in mathematics, and is there any work being done on initiatives related to developing a positive 'math identify'?**

MSDE is currently organizing committees of LEA Leadership stakeholders to develop Student Support resources and guidance for mathematics instruction. A component of this work will involve research-based recommendations on the facilitation of positive mathematical identities and how all educators can support student growth in this area. Guidance and resources will continue to be developed and shared with LEA Math Policy Liaison Teams throughout SY 2025-2026.

**Will the MSDE guidance on MTSS, Math Acceleration, Integrated Algebra and Numeracy Frameworks be completed by Fall 2025, and will they be separate documents?**

We anticipate that guidance documents and the Numeracy Development Framework will be available by Fall 2025. These will all be separate documents available via MSDE's Mathematics Branch website and MSDE's Math Supervisor documents. Integrated Algebra Frameworks will be available by Spring 2026.

**Please explain the role of "LEA Liaisons" defined in the policy, and their responsibilities in the implementation of the policy.**

LEA Liaisons will be central to the planning and implementation of the Math Policy in each school district. Beginning in school year 2025-2026, these teams will collaborate with MSDE for planning, implementation, and communication of each initiative in the mathematics policy. They will be responsible for ongoing professional learning, community outreach and continuous improvement cycles and feedback to MSDE. LEAs received a full outline of Math Policy LEA Liaison Team expectations via a Superintendent's Transmittal memo in July 2025.

## INTEGRATED ALGEBRA

**Will there be an elective Geometry class students will have the option to take?**

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR 13A.04.12) requires all LEAs to align their curriculum to Maryland's College and Career Readiness Mathematics content standards for math credits for all elementary, middle, and high school students. This will include revised PreK-8 math standards beginning in SY 2026-2027, Integrated Algebra math standards beginning in SY 2027-2028, and Integrated Algebra 2 math standards beginning in SY 2028-2029. Secondary Math Pathway course expectations will be clarified and communicated based on the recommendations of the Standards Framework and Validation Committee convened during SY 2025-2026. LEAs can continue to implement elective courses at their own discretion.

**What are some of the challenges high schools may face as we transition to a more integrated approach to mathematics instruction and what supports will be offered to help school districts make the transition?**

MSDE will develop and implement professional learning in various modalities across the state to support the implementation of all revised standards beginning in Summer 2025. This will include Standard Companion Guides and an aligned asynchronous course that will provide more extensive examples, learning opportunities that students should and should not engage in, and connections to modeling, reasoning, and financial literacy. The guides for Grades PreK-8 will be available in SY 2025-2026 to prepare for implementation in SY 2026-2027.

We recognize that the shift from the traditional Algebra-Geometry-Algebra 2 course progression to the 2-year Integrated Algebra course progression will be a significant change. Beginning in Spring 2026, MSDE will provide instructional resources and additional Integrated Algebra focused professional learning to support this transition.

**What is the plan to prepare kids to master the math concepts they need to take calculus by 12th grade as it's a gateway to college?**

The PreK- Integrated Algebra 2Mathematics Standards Framework and Validation Committee (SFVC) and Launch Years Task Force reviewed existing high school mathematics standards for Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2 courses and revised these standards to develop a more coherent and intentional learning experience that supports all students to master foundational mathematics content by the end of 10$^{th}$ grade aligned to the Prerequisite content needed for students to access Precalculus in grade 11 and Calculus in grade 12 for students who choose this pathway. These committees are comprised of PreK-12 mathematics educators, administrators, LEA Leadership, MSDE Mathematics Branch and educators from colleges and universities across Maryland.

Maryland’s Launch Years Task Force will continue to collaborate with Maryland’s Secondary Math Pathway Standards Framework and Validation Committee to clearly outline the content of all four outlined Secondary Math Pathways: Quantitative Reasoning, Data & Data Analytics, Calculus, and Statistics and Probability.

Future works include collaborative refinement of college admission requirements to acknowledge the rigor and importance of all Secondary Math Pathways as equal gateways to college and careers.

**In what grades will Integrated Algebra 1 and Integrated Algebra 2 be taught?**

These courses are on-grade level for 9th and 10th grade, respectively. There will be acceleration guidance released in Fall 2025 that will advise on best practices for students to access the courses in middle school.

**Will students be allowed to use the Desmos graphing calculator in these courses? Will all standards be calculator allowed, or only some?**

Standards will be coded for calculator use in the PreK-Integrated Algebra 2 Companion Guides.

**I want to know how this will impact students who are currently in middle school. Especially if they take algebra in 8th grade. What will high school look like? What paths will be available in high school for kids who are accelerated in middle school via compacted 4/5 and 5/6?**

Any student in any grade who is enrolled in Algebra 1 for the first time in the 2027-2028 school, will be enrolled in Integrated Algebra 1. They will then take Integrated Algebra 2 and the aligned Integrated Algebra assessment the following year. After the successful completion of the Integrated Algebra courses and the Integrated Algebra assessment, they will have the opportunity to take a minimum of two additional mathematics courses in any of the four outlined Secondary Math Pathways of Quantitative Reasoning, Data & Data Analytics, Calculus, or Statistics and Probability. Middle school students who complete the Integrated Algebra course and assessment requirements before high school will have the opportunity to take more courses in one or more Secondary Math Pathways.

**Will all the CCSM Geometry standards be covered in the Integrated Algebra course sequence? How will teachers be able to cover more content in the same timeframe?**

Maryland's revised College and Career Readiness Mathematics Standards are available in a crosswalk style document to clearly articulate how standards have shifted, including Geometry. By streamlining only essential content, and avoiding duplication with other secondary math pathway courses, the Integrated Algebra 1 & 2 Standards are designed to be taught over two successive years.

**What are the requirements for students matriculating into Maryland schools who may have completed Algebra 1 in another state?**

The evaluation of transcripts, credit determination, and course enrollment for transfer students will continue to be at the decision of each LEA. MSDE will provide resources to support LEAs with opportunities for content bridging from Algebra 1 to Integrated Algebra 2.

**Is financial literacy being written into the content/standards for the new Integrated Algebra 1 & 2 courses?**

Financial literacy is a natural context for learning many of the standards from PreK through Integrated Algebra 1 & 2 courses. The companion guides that will be released in the 2025-2026 school year will highlight opportunities for integration and application of financial literacy components within the standards.

**Can Integrated Algebra be taught on a block schedule?**

It is recommended that Integrated Algebra is taught in a yearlong daily course format. More information and specific recommendations will be available with the release of Integrated Algebra instructional resources. Ultimately, scheduling decisions are determined at the discretion of LEAs.

**Are there any other states offering a two-year Integrated Algebra foundational experience?**

Appendix A outlines some of the initiatives to modernize high school math across the country.

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

**I'd like to understand the connection of the policy to classroom and professional learning.**

"The PreK-12 Maryland Mathematics Policy is designed to catalyze significant improvements to teaching, learning and achievement in mathematics from early childhood through secondary grades." To that end, the policy outlines recommendations for coherence in math programming and support structures in schools, defining intervention for students not achieving grade level proficiency in numeracy and educator supports for providing consistent high-quality instruction. Math policy aligned professional learning offerings can be found in MSDE's professional learning catalog.

**What is the vision for professional development to help schools/teachers transition to the expectations set forth in the policy? How will these shifts look different in our classrooms? Are we still focusing on our chosen curriculum?**

MSDE has already begun partnering with local school districts to identify key personnel who will be involved in the planning and implementation of professional learning for educators on the revised math standards and other policy initiatives. Professional learning and alignment across the state will be the priority of the 2025-2026 school year. In addition, MSDE will be developing an optional course, *Maryland Effective Mathematics Educator,* that will be available by Spring of 2027. We encourage all educators to utilize this professional learning experience as a component of their Individual Professional Learning Plans for licensure renewal and will collaborate with LEAs and teacher preparation programs to embed this course into already existing structures. Math policy aligned professional learning offerings can be found in MSDE's professional learning catalog.

**What shifts are needed in mathematics teacher education programs (for both future and current teachers) to ensure successful implementation of this policy at both the elementary and secondary levels? Will teachers be provided with online modules so we can plan for the upcoming shifts?**

New and veteran teachers will need to familiarize themselves with the revised standards, and the most significant shifts in the secondary (Integrated Algebra 1 & 2) courses. Standard companion guides and an online course will also be available to support understanding revised standards. All mathematics teachers, administrators, special education and multilingual teachers and other support professionals will be encouraged to take the Maryland Effective Mathematics Educator course when available. The topics in that course should also be integrated into new teacher preparation programs for Maryland educators. MSDE will also facilitate Common Curriculum Communities with LEA Mathematics Supervisors to prepare resources, strategies to support targeted instructional shifts and aligned professional learning for each curriculum for grades PreK-8. MSDE will provide additional resources to support the implementation of Integrated Algebra standards. More information will be provided by Spring 2026.

## SECONDARY MATH PATHWAYS

**What options will there be for intervention for students with math disabilities and those who are not planning to attend college?**

In Section IV of the Mathematics Policy, the first standard is “Access and Equitable Mathematics Opportunities”. By school year 2026-2027, local school districts must implement systems and frameworks for mathematics instruction to provide responsive, differentiated support that meets the needs of all students, including those requiring intervention, enrichment or acceleration. MSDE will be releasing additional guidance on specific recommendations for creating these systems by Fall 2025. MSDE expects that all students will graduate high school with mathematical readiness for the college or career pathway of their choice.

**When will we know what standards are supposed to be covered in classes such as Advanced Algebra with Financial Applications, Discrete Mathematics, etc?**

We anticipate that the Maryland State Board of Education will adopt proposed Secondary math pathways standards by Fall 2026 based on the recommendations of the Secondary Math Pathway Standards Framework and Validation Committee convened during SY 2025-2026. Prior to their adoption, they will be released for public comment and suggested revisions. On this timeline, the Secondary Math Pathways Standards would be implemented in the LEAs during the 2027-2028 school year.

**Is there a component of the policy that incorporates career language into the math curriculum?**

The overall redesign of the core secondary mathematics sequence ensures that all students are College and Career Ready in Mathematics (CCRM) by the end of 10$^{th}$ grade and have multiple pathways and opportunities to explore rigorous mathematics content thereafter. This readiness equips all students to successfully pursue a diverse range of secondary mathematics pathways, tailored to their interests and future goals. Secondary Math Pathways of Quantitative Reasoning, Data & Data Analytics, Calculus, and Statistics and Probability are all expected to provide learning opportunities that are applicable to students who will pursue career opportunities after high school.

**Can a graphic of the secondary course pathways be provided?**

MSDE’s Mathematics Branch is actively collaborating with MSDE’s Office of Communication to provide graphics and media resources aligned to Maryland’s Mathematics Policy. These resources will be available beginning in Fall 2025.

## STANDARDS

**What are common concepts and topics you expect PK and Kindergarten students to master each year?**

Overall, the revisions to the Prekindergarten and Kindergarten standards aim to clarify expectations, emphasize specific strategies and representations, and strengthen foundational numeracy skills. There will not be significant changes to the content.

PreK students will develop foundational numeracy skills by counting to 20, recognizing numerals, and understanding and comparing quantities. They will represent and solve addition and subtraction situations within 5 using multiple methods. Geometric reasoning will be developed through describing and comparing attributes like length and weight and naming and sorting two- and three-dimensional shapes.

Kindergarten students will continue their numeracy development by counting to 100, writing numerals, representing and comparing quantities up to 20, and beginning to understand place value. They will represent and solve addition and subtraction situations within 10 using various methods. Geometric reasoning will be further developed by describing measurable attributes (length, weight, capacity) and identifying, describing, and creating models of two- and three-dimensional shapes.

The revisions also introduce expectations for PreK and K students to count backwards, subitize, and work with repeating patterns. These changes aim to enhance students' number and operation sense as well as algebraic thinking.

Maryland's revised College and Career Readiness Mathematics Standards are available on MSDE's Mathematics Branch website. MSDE's Numeracy Development Framework and Grade Level Family Guides will also be posted online when available.

**As the standards increasingly focus on standards that support algebra and other secondary content, will life-based math skills such as money, telling time, data and measurement be completely eliminated?**

No. The Standards Framework and Validation Committee has updated and clarified the Common Core Standards for Math, and, in some cases, shifted content for coherence across grade levels. Some of these updates have provided for modernization of the content focus, but overall skills and procedural fluency are focus areas across domains.

**How will the new standards be implemented?**

Current timelines in the Mathematics Policy require LEA implementation of the PreK-8 standards in school year 2026-2027, Integrated Algebra 1 standards in 2027-2028 and Integrated Algebra 2 standards in 2028-2029. Revised standard implementation support from MSDE will include crosswalk documents, companion documents for each standard, curriculum communities with math LEA leaders, MSDE's Numeracy Development Framework, instructional resources for Integrated Algebra, and aligned professional learning and technical assistance for all resources.

**I notice that there is going to be a big change in teaching math. How will the curriculum change to meet these requirements. Can you enlighten us?**

In the state of Maryland, curriculum is selected by each local school district. MSDE is facilitating the vision of prioritizing equitable access to rigorous, relevant, high-quality mathematics education for all students in grades PreK through 12 by partnering with school districts in developing and implementing professional learning for educators. The release of the PreK-Integrated Algebra Standards, and then the Secondary Math Pathway Standards will happen at least a year prior to their implementation in the local school districts. This will allow the districts to align their curriculum with the new standards. We will be partnering with the local school districts to simultaneously provide professional learning for educators who will be implementing the standards shifts in their classrooms.

**How will Modeling and Reasoning be reflected in the new standards?**

Standards remain content focused. Standard Companion Guides will provide more extensive examples, learning opportunities that students should and should not engage in, and connections to modeling, reasoning, and financial literacy. Professional Learning opportunities, including an online asynchronous course will also provide additional opportunities to connect revised standards with mathematical modeling and reasoning.

**With the growing prevalence of data science in all career tracks, will the new policy and testing incorporate more instruction on statistics and data analysis?**

Data science and statistical jobs are among the fastest growing and most highly rated. With most industries becoming more data-centric, the need for data science knowledge beginning at the earliest grades will provide access for Maryland students to enter a workplace that is increasingly reliant on this type of knowledge The revised standards address this need and include emphasis on problem solving, student discourse about authentic applications and a variety of visualizations of data from early grades through Integrated Algebra. Statewide mathematics assessments will continue to be aligned with Maryland's College and Career Readiness mathematics standard for each grade level.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

**Is there a list of approved mathematics interventions?**

MSDE is currently developing Student Support Guidance for mathematics. This guidance will outline recommendations for mathematics support relative to intervention resources, scheduling and data-informed identification of students for Tier II and Tier III instruction. This guidance will be released by Fall 2025 so it will be available for LEAs to utilize when planning for the 2026-2027 implementation of their support systems.

**Many LEAs offer a mathematics course for students arriving in schools with interrupted learning. This course does not count as a math credit but does count as the 9th grade year of math. They then take an intervention course and Algebra 1 in 10th grade to 'catch up' on math credits. Once Integrated Algebra is implemented, how can we support these students in our schools?**

Currently, students can earn a high school credit for a math transition course in high school as outlined in COMAR 13A.04.12. However, when this COMAR is updated in alignment with the adopted math policy (SY 2027-28, class of 2030-31 and beyond), this option will be removed. After analysis of current practice, we view the transition course as an equity barrier because this course is not acknowledged as a high school math credit by most college systems across the country, including the University of Maryland College system.

All students who have not earned an Algebra 1 credit by Grade 9 should be enrolled in Integrated Algebra 1 in 9th grade beginning in SY 2027-2028. MSDE supports a co-requisite model where students who may need additional support in developing core skills are also enrolled in a support course, while still having access to Algebra content and credit. This also supports access to college and career aligned Secondary Math Pathway courses for all students by 11th grade. LEAs can continue to implement elective courses at their own discretion.

**How will the new policy/structure address the persistent learning gaps and lack of basic skills that we see in our lowest-performing high school students?**

The Math Policy intends to improve statewide practices to address the needs of all students in Maryland who have had falling proficiency rates in mathematics over the last decade. Through this policy, MSDE is demonstrating our commitment to building comprehensive systems to ensure that all students receive responsive support when they need it. The policy defines the four interconnected domains for numeracy that reflect a developmental progression from fundamental concepts in early grades to advanced skills in high school. Student development in these domains will be monitored, and specific learning interventions will be implemented for students who are not mastering content across these domains based on developed LEA MTSS systems.

Beginning in school year 2026-2027, each local school district will develop a process to identify and support students who exhibit difficulties with learning mathematics. They will be implementing, with MSDE guidance, support structures for students with disabilities and multi-lingual learners. MSDE's Office of Teaching and Learning will also continue to support quality resources and professional learning aligned to meeting unique needs of all student groups

**How do I organize the math concepts for an autistic classroom of six students at different levels?**

Beginning in school year 2026-2027, each local school district will develop a process to identify and support students who exhibit difficulties with learning mathematics and implement a Multi-Tiered

System of Supports for mathematics instruction to provide responsive, differentiated support that meets the needs of all students, including those requiring intervention. Math teachers and special educators should connect with math leadership in their LEA for support developing and implementing the most effective strategy for each classroom context.

# Appendix A: A National Effort to Modernize Secondary Math Pathways

Maryland joins over 25 other states in rethinking high school mathematics to improve equity, access, and relevance. A key part of this work involves examining whether the traditional Algebra–Geometry–Algebra 2 (AGA) sequence best serves the diverse needs, interests, and postsecondary opportunities of today's students. The list below highlights a few examples of how other states are developing alternatives to the traditional AGA pathway.

Through the Charles A. Dana Center, the University of Texas launched the Launch Years Initiative, which supports over 20 states in modernizing secondary math course sequences and developing open, relevant pathways. While not all participating states have formally adopted changes, each is actively engaged in ongoing conversations and planning efforts to integrate this work into state-level policy.

Dana Center Mathematics Pathways

States Involved in Launch Years Initiative

An overview of modernizing high school math initiatives in some other states are outlined below.

### ALABAMA

Alabama revised its high school math standards to emphasize essential concepts and integrate mathematical topics across courses. The updated approach moves away from siloed sequences and now allows students to choose math courses aligned with their individual interests and postsecondary aspirations.

Alabama Course of Study Mathematics

### COLORADO

Since 2023, a task force of Colorado educators, higher education faculty, and advocacy groups has been developing recommendations to reimagine secondary math pathways. Their work focuses on expanding opportunities in the final one or two years of high school and redefining what it means to serve students' future needs and interests. The task force has published a working paper outlining proposed pathways and policy recommendations.

Colorado Mathematics Pathways

### GEORGIA

Georgia offers multiple options for students to meet high school math graduation requirements. In addition, the state has integrated topics across its high school courses and modernized its Advanced Algebra course to include 21st-century skills and real-world applications, similar to Washington's approach. To promote equitable access, Georgia provides a corequisite support course alongside all core math classes. This ensures students are prepared to engage in a variety of fourth-year pathways aligned to their goals, such as Mathematical Decision Making, Mathematics or Industry and Government, and Calculus.

Personalized Mathematics Pathways

### OHIO

Ohio requires four credits of high school mathematics but specifies Algebra 2 or Math 3—or a course deemed *equivalent in mathematical reasoning*, not necessarily content. This definition opens the door to alternative courses to traditional Algebra 2 that extend mathematical growth but broaden content options. The remaining three credits may be earned through any high school-level math courses. After a shared two-year foundation, students can pursue one of five pathways: Precalculus, Quantitative Reasoning, Discrete Math and Computer Science, Data Science Foundations, or Statistics and Probability, each aligned to varied postsecondary interests and goals.

Math Pathways Overview

### OREGON

Oregon has restructured its high school math pathway into a 2+1 model, featuring a two-credit core focused on essential algebra, geometry, and data concepts for all students, followed by a third credit aligned to individual postsecondary goals. This approach is designed to support deeper learning, relevant application, and the development of strong mathematical identities, while moving away from a one-size-fits-all sequence. Districts have flexibility in course design, including integrated pathways.

High School Math Pathways – 2 + 1 Model

### UTAH

Utah uses a statewide, three-year integrated high school math sequence to provide all students with their secondary mathematics foundation. Supported by an open-access set of instructional materials, this common experience fosters consistency and collaboration across districts. After completing the integrated sequence, students select from four specialized course pathways based on their interests and postsecondary goals.

Utah High School Mathematics Graduation Pathways

### WASHINGTON

Washington policy guarantees high school students the right to choose a third-year math course that aligns with their postsecondary goals, rather than defaulting to a traditional sequence.

To support more relevant options, Washington developed *Modern Algebra 2*—a redesigned course that streamlines traditional content into a focused first semester, followed by a second semester where teachers select from application-based modules such as Data Science, Financial Math, and Advanced Modeling. This flexible structure ensures all students engage with meaningful math that connects to their futures.

Pathway Policies

Modern Algebra 2