

Moraga School District

JM Math Pathways

FAQs

What percentage of 6th graders will be in the accelerated vs. standard path next year?

This percentage will be based on the amount of students that are ready for acceleration which will be determined by their scores in our (3) assessment criteria. We are anticipating a 30/70 split with the 70% taking the Common Core path.

After the initial 6th grade Math placement are there options to accelerate while at JM?

Yes, there are more acceleration points during the 3 years that a student attends JM. Teachers can recommend a higher level Math class based on consistent student performance. Parents can also request acceleration to a higher Math class. For advancement to be considered, students would need to meet the (3) part assessment criteria set for all JM Math courses. Following this process will ensure students are properly placed in JM Math courses.

If your child has communication difficulties, will they be limited all the way through the common core math program? What will be done to help them compensate as they take assessments?

Writing mathematical explanations is a new skill for the majority of students. It requires the teacher to be involved in the writing process of explaining reasoning. One tool used to aid students with mathematical writing is google docs. Through google docs teachers can comment in real time with a student and emphasize steps that need more explanation. In the past, students would submit work, and the teacher would simply assign a grade with little feedback. Explanations can now be an interactive process with critical feedback before student submit work.

The mathematical tasks provided through our partnership with the Silicon Valley Math Initiative (SVMI) enable our students many opportunities to *talk* about rich math problems. These discussions help to foster a student's understanding of the written problems and help to strengthen their written skills. Good speaking and listening skills are precursors to good writing skills.

My child is in 5th grade at a private school. How can he take the assessment for 6th grade?

When you register your child at JM's front office, an appointment time will be set for your child to take a math assessment to determine placement.

How will CCSS affect the amount of homework?

In past years, homework was tilted towards practice of particular skills. This, often times, meant doing a prescribed number of problems, usually involving an algorithm. (Find volume of rectangular prisms, for example.) As we have begun to transition to more "common core" problems, we have often reduced the overall number of problems needed to be completed, since each problem will involve more steps and therefore more time. Our hope and expectation is that the overall time commitment should not be different than in years past.

What can I do to support my child with CC homework?

You can continue to support your child's foundational skills, as well as be familiar with the textbook format and online support. While Common Core problems will involve a wider variety of skills, it is still paramount that kids master "the basics". From multiplication tables in 6th grade to fluency with integers and fractions in 7th grade to a firm grasp of variable equations in 8th grade, these skills will continue to play a vital role.

What support will be offered for students struggling with the new depth of knowledge required?

A support class elective will be offered based on student need and sign-ups. Students will also have many opportunities in class to work on mathematical tasks. The conversations around these tasks are meant to encourage deeper thinking in all students. Tasks will be developed to allow all students an entry point and then a ramp that may be above the grade level standard. This encourages students to work to their ability and exposes all students to high levels of mathematics.

Will the district be providing new textbooks for JM students?

JM teachers are currently involved in piloting textbooks during the 2014-15 school year. This process will include requesting sample materials from approved publishers and completing a comprehensive review of these materials to determine the suitability for Moraga School District students and teachers. The MSD Math textbook adoption committee will then provide a recommendation to the Governing Board about adopting new instructional materials

Are students practicing on computers since testing is computer based?

Yes, all students took practice tests in the computer lab in both math and ELA. JM students participated in Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) field testing in April and May 2014. The textbook pilot materials have also provided a platform for students to improve their online skills.

How and when will parents know about their child's Math placement?

Current students will remain on their current pathway unless they successfully complete the challenge process. Incoming sixth grade students will receive email notification in the middle of June.

What support will be provided to students to "catch up" and improve their skills with CCSS?

JM is offering a support classes for students who are in need of intervention, this would be in addition to their regular math period. The class would shadow the students' math class and provide support. The class will serve as both a preview and review of the material taught. Time will also be spent on developing number sense. CC6, CC7 and CC8 will be set up to give students lots of practice with the mathematical practices outlines in the common core. At home, parents are also encouraged to ask their child about real life math situations as they arrive. Any mental math that can be done on a car ride or in a casual setting is a wonderful way to increase a child's number sense and is encouraged.

What are the new CCSS features that help students with lower skills improve their understanding of Math concepts?

Students will have a variety of modalities to show understanding. The common core standards in Math emphasize the use of modeling, critical questioning and encouraging students to solve problems and equations in more than one way. Class discussions are also a predominant feature of the common core. This allows all students to hear the mathematical thinking of their classmates. Sometimes this helps to bridge the gap between what a child already knows and the concept being taught. If needed, students at JM can take two periods of Math to help bridge the challenges of the new common core Math standards.

Will the results of the MAC assessments be provided to parents?

Individual scores on the MAC assessment and placement tests have historically not been shared with students. 6th and 7th grade students will see their results in class.

How will the district determine either the CC standard or the 6/7A Math Pathway for 6th grade students?

Students in 6th grade will be evaluated on their MAC assessment score, their yearlong test average and their mathematical habits.

Can my child take an Algebra I online or summer course?

Students can complete online or summer courses as a preview to the JM Algebra course. To be placed in Geometry students will need to meet all the placement criteria for Geometry.

How can a student move between pathways?

If it's determined that students are mastering their grade level Math work on a regular basis, they can request to be considered for advancement to a higher level Math course. This process would include analyzing assessment data, including MAC data, end-of-course assessment data and the Mathematical "Habits of Mind" assessment completed by their regular Math teacher. The final determination of Math course placement is completed by the site administrator at JM.

The CCSS are rich in language and writing? How are you going to ensure student success?

Writing mathematical explanations is a new skill for the majority of students. It requires the teacher to be actively involved in the writing process. One tool used to aid students with mathematical writing is google docs. One tool used to aid students with mathematical writing is google docs. Through google docs teachers can comment in real time with a student and emphasize steps that need more explanation. In the past, students would submit work, and the teacher would simply assign a grade with little feedback. Explanations can now be an interactive process with critical feedback before students submit work.

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What Special Ed support is available?

In addition to learning skills classes, several of our classes have push in aide support. This allows the learning center to keep abreast of the what is expected of the students and the manner in which

they are being instructed. These aides often take notes that are then used in learning skills to reinforce the material. It also ensures that everyone knows when tests are scheduled and what is expected on homework assignments.

What differentiation will be offered within classes?

One place you will see differentiation is in the homework. We often have different levels of homework intended to give practice to everyone, but challenge those students who need something extra. Most teachers offer extra credit challenges, as well, either within the curriculum or as additional, optional work.

The mathematical tasks offered by the common core also offer differentiation. These tasks offer an entry point that is accessible to everyone and then a ramp that challenges students who are ready. The class discussions around these tasks allow more students access to the difficult layers of these tasks. The mathematical practice of argument construction forces students to be able to articulate their answer in clear terms that are understood by many.

How is the Moraga School District preparing teachers for the CCSS shifts?

We are meeting regularly with other districts to talk about the CC and what implementation looks like in their districts. We are members of the SVMII and as such attend professional development sessions offered by the institute. We have been to trainings at the county office. This year we had a teacher on special assignment who was able to assist with curriculum development and implementation. We attended the California Math Council's conference in Asilomar which focused on modeling mathematics through the common core. All of our math teachers will be trained to assess math performance tasks. We have all studied the new standards in detail, created new content for classes, and implemented performance task assessments.

What can I do to help my child prepare so they can be on the accelerated path?

Students who will be successful in an accelerated path do not generally need additional help or motivation. They already tend to learn and understand new math concepts quickly. One area where support may be needed is in the development of good independent learning skills. These skills include: consistent, timely and thorough completion of assigned work including turning those assignments in; organized work and work materials; the desire to do extra credit or pursue mathematical projects independently; the ability to clearly explain verbally and in writing all the steps needed to solve and problem.

Where is computer science related math covered?

The related math is covered in Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra 2. The prerequisite for Computer Science is Algebra 2. Campolindo also offers an AP Computer Science course for advanced students.

What percentage of AUHSD students take AP Calculus AB/BC and AP Statistics?

27% of the graduating 2015 class are taking either Calculus AB or BC. 56% of the class is taking either AP Calc or AP Stats.

What happens to the high school students already on the current path? Do they switch to Common Core?

The 2014-2015 school year will be a transitional year with respect to Common Core math implementation at Campolindo. By the 2015-2016 school year, Campolindo will implement all of the Common Core math standards in Algebra 1. Full implementation of Common Core Geometry will take place the following year. Full implementation of Common Core Algebra 2 will take place the following year. The staggered implementation allows students to properly prepare for the rigorous Common Core standards.

Can current JM students get to Calculus BC?

Yes, if they are currently on the advanced math track or if they accelerate while in high school. The school's emphasis will be on properly placing students in the appropriate math course.

What happens with next year's 8th grade (2014-2015) students taking Geometry when they enter Campolindo in 2015-2016?

Depending on their performance and teacher recommendation, they will take either Algebra 2, Algebra 2/Trig, or Algebra 2/Trig Honors.

What is Math Analysis?

Math Analysis combines the trigonometric, geometric, and algebraic techniques needed to prepare students for the study of pre-calculus. The course also strengthens student understanding of mathematical problems and reasoning.

Does the new common core Math standards skip trigonometry? Do students have access to trigonometry only through the accelerated path?

No, trigonometry is covered extensively in Common Core Geometry and Common Core Algebra 2.

If Campolindo doesn't fully transition to the Common Core until 2015-2016, what is the Common Core class a current 8th grader will take that year?

Depending on their 8th grade math course, they will either take Common Core Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, or Algebra 2/Trig.