

August 2011

Dear Parents:

Beginning in September, we receive sixth grade students whose parents believe that their children are candidates to go directly into seventh grade mathematics. In these cases, students take a placement test that ***is not a test of mathematics aptitude***. Rather, it is a demanding and comprehensive test of the sixth grade mathematics curriculum content. We assume that all students can and will master the sixth grade mathematics curriculum. The question is whether or not the student has already mastered enough of the sixth grade curriculum to recommend his or her placement in seventh grade mathematics in his/her sixth grade year. Please know that due to the rigor of sixth grade mathematics, only a handful of students over the past five years have needed acceleration to seventh grade mathematics while still in sixth grade. We do not wish to impose unnecessary stress on students who have no intention of advancing this year; thus, we are requesting your very candid opinion of your child's current mathematics needs and knowledge to help decide whether your child should take the test.

The test aligns with the State of Michigan Department of Education Grade Level Content Expectations for grade six. The Ann Arbor Public middle school mathematics course meets these state expectations. Additional information on this can be found at the following website:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MathGLCE_140486_7.pdf

Please carefully consider the list of mathematics skills on the reverse side of this letter; it is a sample of the skills taught in sixth grade math and of the types of questions found on the advanced placement test. ***If your child has already mastered all (or nearly all) of these skills and you would like us to test your child, please follow these steps:***

- 1) check off the personal traits that describe your child's behaviors regarding math,
- 2) check off the curricular skills your child has mastered,
- 3) sign at the bottom, and
- 4) have your child return this to his/her math teacher no later than Friday, September 10, 2010.

If your child passes the test with a strong score, he or she will be placed immediately in a seventh grade mathematics class. Students who have been accelerated must maintain high grades on all interim and quarter grades or be moved back to their grade level course. If your child does not receive a strong enough score for acceleration, you will have the opportunity to consider advanced mathematics placement again as your child enters seventh grade and eighth grade mathematics. Our staff will consult with you at those times based on your child's performance in sixth and seventh grade mathematics.

Our teachers look forward to meeting you and learning how to best serve you and your child.

Student name (please print)

Parent signature

date

Advanced Mathematics Criteria

(for incoming sixth graders who wish to test out of sixth grade mathematics)

Advanced math testing will occur in early September. **The test is designed to meet the State of Michigan Department of Education Grade Level Content Expectations for Grade 6.**

Additional information on this can be found at the following website:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Math_06_87408_7.pdf

Students who demonstrate proficiency on the test, and meet the following criteria are recommended for advancement to seventh grade math.

Personal Criteria: The student...

- Tracks assignments and due dates without adult assistance
- Produces work that is organized
- Asks for more work and more difficult problems
- Is mature and would work well with older children
- Has consistently scored at the top of his/her previous classes in standardized math tests as well as in class work and tests.

Curricular Criteria: The student...

- Has mastered rational numbers (knows how to add, subtract, multiply and divide fractions, and can convert between percents, decimals, and fractions); including creation and explanation of a drawing to represent a given situation
- Understands and can use integer exponents (positive only); can express numbers in scientific notation
- Can locate positive and negative numbers on the number line, including decimal and fractions
- Can solve applied problems involving rates
- Can plot ordered pairs of integers and use ordered pairs of integers to identify points in all four quadrants of the coordinate plane
- Can compute the volume and surface area of cubes and rectangular prisms, given the lengths of the sides
- Can use variables, with units, to represent quantities in a variety of contexts
- Uses symbolic notation (variables) to describe patterns and solve problems
- Can simplify expressions of the first degree by combining like terms, and evaluate using specific variables
- Has mastered integer operations (knows how to add, subtract, multiply and divide positive and negative numbers)
- Understands and can list the possible outcomes of probability and their relationship to certainty (combinations and permutations)
- Can solve equations in the forms of $ax + b = c$ for positive integer coefficients less than 20, and interpret the results
- Can convert between basic units of measurement, within a single system (customary and metric)
- Understands that for polygons, congruence means corresponding sides and angles have equal measures
- Understands and can apply basic properties of lines, angles, and triangles, including the following: triangle inequality, vertical angles, supplementary angles, complimentary angles, congruence using parallel lines
- Can create a table, graph, and write a linear equation to represent a given situation; can use the graph to estimate quantities within and beyond the graph