

Guidelines for Incoming Ninth Graders and Their Parents Regarding Math Placement

There are five options for your incoming ninth grader:

Intro to High School Algebra 1-2
Algebra 1-2
Geometry
Honors Geometry
Honors Algebra 3-4.

The following are descriptions of courses available to incoming freshmen:

Introduction to High School Algebra – This class is designed for the student who needs to master computational skills such as fractions, decimals, and percents. This class will also be helpful in preparing you for the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), which you take in the spring of the tenth grade.

Algebra 1-2 – This class is designed for the majority of incoming ninth graders. **A strong foundation in Algebra is absolutely crucial for future math study.** Many students may have taken Algebra in middle school. **However, if you have not mastered (mastery means a B+ or better) this topic, you should REPEAT this class in high school.** In fact, a complete understanding of beginning Algebra is so important that students with low “B” grades in eighth grade algebra are urged to carefully consider retaking the class in high school. Algebra 1-2 classes are scheduled to have 20 students. Students who enroll in this class and continue with four years of successful math study will be college ready.

Geometry – If you do not feel comfortable taking Honors Geometry, a possible reason may be that you do not feel your Algebra skills are strong enough, or you want to pursue other honors classes without overextending yourself. If so, we believe you should take Algebra 1-2.

Honors Geometry – This class is designed for the student with strong Algebra skills ready for honors mathematical study in high school. You should have earned a strong “B+” grade or above in eighth grade Algebra and have teacher recommendation. If not, you should strongly consider taking high school Algebra 1-2 as a ninth grader. Students taking this class and continuing on the honors track throughout high school will be taking college level (Advanced Placement) classes as a high school student.

Honors Algebra 3-4 – This course is designed for the student who took Geometry at the middle school and earned an “A” grade. Since these students are a full two years advanced in their mathematical study, you will be in classes with older, more experienced students. You will also be relying heavily on your Algebra 1-2 and Geometry skills. Students and their families are cautioned not to take this class if there are signs of weakness in a student’s background (e.g. low grades, low STAR test scores, etc.).