

OLYMPUS JUNIOR HIGH MATHEMATICS HANDBOOK 2008-2009

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Mathematics is important—some say that it is the key that opens the door to higher learning—and so it needs to be accessible to all learners. Our programs recognize this and strive to meet the needs of all learners through a variety of teaching strategies. We also structure our programs based on the idea that students develop a better conceptual understanding of mathematics and stronger problem solving skills when they:

- Are actively involved in the learning process
- Study mathematics that are useful and relevant
- Are part of a learning environment where they feel safe to express ideas and to communicate information

PLACEMENT IN ALGEBRA 1 AND INTEGRATED 2

These math classes are fast-paced and require diligent effort on a consistent basis. In the first and second trimesters, students' continued placement in these courses will be based on the criteria below. During the 3rd trimester, students not meeting the specified criteria may be required to repeat the course the following year.

Completion of Homework Assignments & Test Scores:

If a student isn't completing his/her homework assignments and/or scores below a C- on two tests, then the student, parent, and teacher will meet during Fall conferences to determine whether or not continued placement in the class is appropriate. At this time, strategies for improving performance will be brainstormed as well. If this student continues to not complete his/her homework or scores below a C- on any future test, he/she may be moved to less advanced class. If a conference becomes necessary please make every effort to attend.

COURSES OFFERED

Math students are grouped according to ability and based on teacher recommendation, results of the Placement test, and CA State Testing scores. Students advance through the courses according to individual need and ability.

- **Foundations (Remedial Math):**

In this course, students will study the following topics: Algebra and Decimals, Number Relationships and Fractions, Fractions and Their Operations, Positive and Negative Numbers, Solving Equations, Ratios and Proportions, Percents, Plane Geometry, Space Geometry, Data Analysis and Statistics, and Probability and Discrete Mathematics. This course will also use the online *Skills Tutor* program.

- **Course 2 (On Grade Level 7th Graders):**

In this course, students will study the following topics: Operations with Numbers, Operations in Algebra, Operations with Integers, Algebra and Equations Solving, Rational Numbers and Percents, Operations with Rational Numbers, Proportional Reasoning, Geometry Concepts, Real Numbers and Solving Inequalities, Geometry and Measurement, and Linear Equations and Functions.

- **Algebra Readiness (An 8th grade class designed as a bridge from Course 2 to Algebra) :**

In this course, students will study the following topics: Variables, Expressions, and Integers; Solving Equations; Multi-step Equations and Inequalities; Factors, Fractions, and Exponents; Rational Numbers and Equations; Ratio, Proportion, and probability; Percents; Linear Functions; Real Numbers and Right Triangles; Measurement, Area, and Volume; Data Analysis and Probability; Polynomials and Nonlinear Functions; Angle Relationships and Transformations.

- **Algebra 1 (Advanced Course for 7th Graders, On Grade Level 8th Graders):**

In this course, students will study the following topics: Connections to Algebra, Properties of Real Numbers; Solving Linear Equations; Graphing Linear Equations and Functions; Writing Linear Equations; Solving and Graphing Linear Inequalities; Systems of Linear Equations and Inequalities; Exponents and Exponential Functions; Quadratic Equations and Functions; Polynomials and Factoring; Rational Expressions and Equations; and Radicals and More Connections to Geometry.

- **Integrated 2 (Advanced Course for 8th Graders):**

This course uses McDougal Littell: Integrated Mathematics 2. In this course, students will study the following topics: Sampling and Reasoning; Models of Variation and Growth; Linear Systems and Matrices; Quadratic Functions and Graphs; Coordinate Geometry and Quadrilaterals; Counting Strategies, Probability, and Binomials; Logic and Proof; similar and Congruent Triangles; Polynomial and Rational Functions; and Coordinates and Figures in Space.

ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

Assessment/Evaluation Tools:

Olympus math students will be assessed and evaluated in a variety of ways in order to promote the success of individuals with different learning strengths. Following is a list of some of the many assessment/evaluation tools used by Olympus Mathematics instructors to foster growth toward high expectations, maintain and reinforce skills, and check for understanding.

- Class Participation
- Notebooks
- Tests/Quizzes
- Homework/Homework Checks

Grading Percentages:

Students grades are weighted as follows towards each trimester's final grade—

- Homework/Class work 30%
- Assessments 65%
- Notes Notebook 5%

Grading Scale:

A+	100	C+	77-79
A	93-99	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	88-89	D+	68-69
B	83-87	D	63-67
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
		F	59 and below

Extra Support:

There are a variety of ways that your student can get extra support in math including:

- Online Math Department Resources: access through the school website
*PowerSchool to monitor grades *Teacher websites
- Online student textbook with tutorials and resources
- GBHS tutors: a list is available on GBHS's website
- Math Lab Monday through Thursday until 3 p.m. (see your teacher's schedule): this is an opportunity for your child to get extra support with concepts he/she may be struggling with. It is not designed for one-on-one tutoring

HOMWORK POLICY

Homework will usually be assigned Monday through Friday. All homework must be completed in either a spiral notebook or in the students' Practice Workbook and is due the following day unless otherwise noted. Please see your child's homework grading rubric for more specific information on homework points and criteria.

Correcting Homework:

Teachers will check HW for effort & completeness only. Students will self-correct homework daily in class and have the opportunity to ask questions about problems they have missed or concepts that are still unclear. Students are expected to correct their errors on all homework assignments—this includes having the correct answer and showing the work to support it.

Homework Checks (this is how teachers check HW for accuracy):

- Students will use their Homework Notebook and/or Practice Workbook for this evaluation and it may contain one problem from each night's homework.
- Students may not use their books.
- Students will be given approximately 10 minutes to complete the Check.
- If your child is absent, he/she will be allowed to make up missed HW Checks—please refer teacher's make-up policy for timeline.

Late Assignments:

Students will earn one point for late homework assignments that are completed (with all necessary work) by the day of that chapter's test. An asterisk (*) on a progress report means that your child is missing that assignment. If the assignment is turned in by the day of that chapter's test, then a 1 will be recorded. If turned in after the chapter test then a 0 will be recorded. Even though your child will not receive points (if turned in after the chapter test), he/she will maintain eligibility for extra-credit.

Absent Work:

Students are responsible for knowing what they missed and for completing missed work according to their teacher's make-up policy!! Students are allowed 1 day for each day missed to make up an assignment.

Please Remember:

Our District's Homework Policy states that Jr. High students may be assigned an average of one hour of homework per solid subject each night. However, all students work at different paces and this is only a guideline – especially as we will be asking your child to complete more open-ended activities that are designed to stimulate higher level thinking! Remember that homework makes up 30% of a student's grade and math concepts build on each other. Therefore, it's very important for students to keep up with their homework. Better to address concerns promptly than to put out fires later!

It's Not Late Passes:

Students may be issued (depending upon the teacher) two ***It's Not Late*** passes (INL's) per trimester. These passes allow student one extra day to complete a homework assignment. INL's are only good for the trimester in which they are issued and may be turned in for 1 extra-credit point if not used.

POSSIBLE EXTRA CREDIT OPTIONS

There are very few *extra* activities teachers may offer for students to earn extra-credit and raise their grades. They are:

- Extension/extra-practice assignments (online Skills Tutor)
- Extra-credit questions on homework, quizzes, and tests
- Unused INL's (if applicable)

Students who have any missing assignments—shown by a “ * ” on progress reports are not eligible for extra credit. Extra Credit will be worth a maximum of ½ letter grade and will be added at the end of each trimester.

MATH MATERIALS

Textbook Information:

At the beginning of the year, students are assigned a textbook to keep at home. The current condition of each book is detailed on Olympus' data base. Students will be held accountable (fined at the end of the year) for any new damage.

Supplies:

- ★ Planner/agenda
- ★ Pencils (lots of them! 0.7 lead mechanical pencils are highly recommended)
- ★ Pens (for correcting work, and may be used for note-taking)
- ★ White board pens! (please have about 4 at all times)
- ★ 2 spiral notebooks – one for HW, one for Notes
- ★ 3-ring binder or folder (for handouts and graded work)
- ★ Straightedge/ruler (keep in binder for when needed)
- ★ Graph paper notebook (required for Algebra, Algebra Readiness, and Integrated 2 - you may leave this at home until needed)
- ★ Protractor (Integrated 2 and Course 2 only. You may leave this at home until needed)
- ★ Scientific calculator (for all classes except Foundations)
- ★ Colored pencils - **optional** (may help in note-taking)

Welcome Packet Agreement

Directions: Please fill out the information below and have your child return just this portion (the top part should go on your fridge!) to his/her teacher on the date specified below: (Please Print)

Return by: _____

Name: _____

Class/Period: _____

Teacher: _____

My child and I have read and discussed the Welcome Packet. We understand that the policies and procedures described in the packet are necessary for a successful learning environment and agree to do all that we can to help achieve that goal.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date