

9/18/19

Dear Advanced Math Student,

Welcome /Welcome back to Ad Math for the 2019-2020 school year. Please read the following to learn/review how the class operates.

Classroom practices

1. We have a lot of work to cover this year so it is important that we begin each lesson on time. Be seated and ready to begin when the class is called to order . You must sign out and in when using the bathroom. *In case of an emergency, we need to know where you are at all times.* If you are detained by a teacher/nurse/guidance counselor please come with a note explaining your lateness.

2. Homework is to be completed at home by you, the student.. It is not a group assignment unless stated. Homework is due in class at the start of the next class. If your homework is missing or incomplete, please let me know at the beginning of class. You will be given a write up. If the assignment is turned in at the beginning of the next class, you will not lose any credit. Homework more than 24 hours late will not be graded. Homework grades will be posted online at the end of each chapter/unit. Any student receiving three homework notices will be issued an after school detention. Since we go over assignments at the beginning of class, it is important to have it with you. The homework assignment will be posted on the room assignment board and on Google Classroom. If for some reason you are unable to complete a homework assignment, please bring a note explaining the reason signed by a parent or guardian. There is a time rule based on grade level. If you go over that time, it is permissible to stop but unfinished work must be signed by a parent. Always start homework by doing the newest concept first. If it takes longer than usual, do the odds or evens rather than skipping an entire page.

3. Long term assignments (STPs , projects) will be due at the start of class on the date assigned. Those handed in early will get extra credit. If you are absent on the due date, it should be sent in with a sibling or friend. If that is not possible, it will be due on the day you return. . If you are aware beforehand that you will not be in school on the due date, it should be submitted before that date. There will be 10% of the possible total deducted for each day that it is late. Projects, review packets, and definitions must be handed in to receive a grade. If a test or quiz has been missed, it is also your responsibility to see me and make an appointment to take the missed assessment. This can be done before 8AM. No make-up tests will be given during class time. If a test is not complete within three days of return, the grade will be zero.

5. When you are absent, it is your responsibility to get missed assignments. You will be allowed one day extension for each day absent to complete work. This applies only for illness and other unexpected absences. Long term assignments are due on the due date. Each student has a test folder where all tests and quizzes are kept. For fifth grade students, all returned tests or quizzes must be signed and returned. For other grades levels, any assessment with a grade below 85 must be signed. All tests and quizzes must be returned to the folder the next class period. Parents may examine these folders during Parent Teacher Conferences or by appointment.

7. Extra credit will be given for :
 - Mid- Chapter review and Chapter Review Tests – 8th Grade
 - Chapter checkpoints, Chapter Review Tests, and Challenge Pages – 7th

- Enrichment/Challenge pages – 5th, 6th
8. Students must remain seated at the end of class until they are dismissed.
 9. I expect you all to behave appropriately in my class at all times. I rarely issue behavior detentions but copying, cheating, disrespect, touching, bullying, and other disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Remember, being in this class is a privilege.
 10. Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. I usually check my email when I get home but not after 8PM. You can do this through Google Classroom. If you have any difficulty or need extra help, I am here early every morning. Come in and see me. Eighth graders may bring a classmate to help and work with.
 11. Your parent may reach me either by written note or by emailing me at (csmith@st-ann-school.org)

NEW STUDENT INFORMATION

Homework

Homework is essential for success in this program. Advanced math classes can expect to have homework assignments almost every night. This will usually include weekends. Assignments will be a combination of reading, definitions, and problems. Reading and practice exercises are assigned on a daily or short term basis. In addition, your child will have regular review packets that they will be assigned to be completed over a longer time period. The students need to learn how to schedule their time for long term assignments. It gives them the opportunity to plan ahead and make choices for their time at an early age. Definitions are given at the beginning of a chapter and will be quizzed after the chapter test is taken.

Parents and students who are new to the advanced math program may find a significant increase in the amount and variety of home assignments. Those who have been in the program will probably notice an increase in the difficulty level of assignments as each successive year unfolds.

If your child has no math homework more than one night at a time -except test night and the one night before- she/he has most likely forgotten about the assignment. There will be no written homework given the night before a test. This will allow for study time.

Homework is reviewed and corrected at the beginning of the next class. I am able to learn a great deal about how well the class understands new topics in this way. I believe that it is important for students to get timely feedback about their work. Therefore, I try to return assignments and tests as soon as possible.

I have explained my policy for assignments and absences. Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due at the beginning of the next math class. It is unfair to disturb other teachers by returning to their homeroom class for forgotten items. Therefore, for the first two weeks of school, I will allow the students who are new to honors math to hand forgotten work in before lunch. This is to accommodate the newness that accompanies the beginning of a school year especially for the fifth graders who are just being introduced to the program. After that time, missing, wrong assignments, and incomplete assignments will warrant a homework write up. If three of these notices are issued – from any combination of teachers – an afternoon detention will be assigned.

Homework grades will be posted at the end of each chapter or unit. The students are also aware that they must turn in long term assignments, projects, and definitions early if they know they are going to be absent on the due date.

If for some reason a student is unable to complete a homework assignment, they are to let me know immediately on entering the class. There is an exception for a student who is out sick. Any student who is out sick, and returns with a note to their homeroom teacher, will not be expected to hand in work on the day of their return. They will be given an extension depending on the length of absence. If they are out one day, they will have an extra 24 hours to complete all assignments. Anyone who is too ill to be in school is also too ill to do math homework. If there is a good reason (other than absence) why your child is unable to do homework, please let me know by sending a written note with him/her or an email directly to me – csmith@st-ann-school.org.

Homework is to be neat, clean and have a proper heading. As a parent, I know that there is a tendency to correct a child's work. We all want our son/daughter to hand in a perfect assignment. **It is important that you let your child complete his/her assignment on their own.** Assignments are given to practice what was done in class that day. Students can learn as much from their mistakes as from correct work. It helps me know if there are things that we need to go over again as a class. Homework grades are not proportional to the number of correct answers. However, failure to do homework will directly affect a student's grade in the negative direction. Remember parents, this is not your homework. You can best help your child by

1. making school assignments a top priority
2. providing the necessary supplies
3. creating a quiet environment for your child to work

If you provide your child with what he/she needs to succeed and they chose not to use it, it is not a reflection on you as a parent. It may be a sign that we want something for our child that they are not ready for.

Tests and Quizzes

Tests and quizzes are given on a regular basis. Tests are always announced. Students will be given ample notice that a test is scheduled. Quizzes may or may not be announced. Tests are generally given upon the completion of a chapter. If a chapter is especially long or difficult, a test may also be given mid-chapter. Students who do well on exams are usually eager to share their results with their parents. For this reason, in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade, it is only necessary for papers with grades below 85 to be signed. Those exams will be identified and should be returned the next class with a parent/guardian's signature. Students in fifth grade will have all tests and quizzes signed. These must be returned the next day. All assessments are kept in your child's folder in the math room. These may be examined at conference time or by appointment.

Honesty

Your child knows that there is a no tolerance policy in regard to cheating. Anyone caught cheating on a test, quiz, project, etc. will be given an automatic zero. Anyone facilitating

cheating will also be given a zero. I consider copying assignments the same as cheating and have told the students, if another class member asks to copy work, to say no and to let me know. Handing in any work that is not theirs is not acceptable. Work done by an older sibling, friend or well-meaning parent as well as information taken from books, encyclopedias, the internet etc. that is not identified with the source falls into this category.

Class Participation

Class participation is an important component of the program. It helps me know who understands concepts presented and who is paying attention. It also makes me aware when more practice is needed. Each child will be graded not by how many correct answers they give but rather by how often they are willing to take the risk of answering. I know that children participate in their own individual way when they feel comfortable. Some need to feel safe or sure of themselves first. I will try to be sensitive to these differences but will try to challenge them in this area as well.

The year has just begun but there will almost certainly be a summer assignment this year for all of the Advanced Math classes. I want you to be aware of all the factors before you sign on for the program.

Remember we all want what is best for your child. Success in Advanced Math is dependent on a combination of factors. Maturity is especially important. Another very significant factor is the child's desire to be in the program. Many parents feel that their child has the ability and I know that it does feel really good to say, "My child is in Advanced Math", however, some children are not ready for an accelerated program despite their intellectual level. If your child is unable to maintain a B average, his/her placement will be reevaluated. It may be in the **child's** best interest to have him/her placed in the grade level math class. There are some students who come to advanced or honors classes in later years or in high school and succeed but were not ready for the program in their younger years.

Finally, I do not give your children grades. Your children earn the mark they receive on their report cards by the work they produce. If your child has an 84.4 they have an 84.4. I do not round, drop the lowest grade, or give retests.

If you need to get in touch with me, **it is best to contact me in writing** either in a traditional note or by email (csmith@st-ann-school.org) I will get a note long before I get a voice mail message.

Catherine Smith

Advanced Math