

Math, Business, and Computer Science CURRICULUM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Who makes the recommendations and on what is the recommendation based?

A. Recommendations for courses are made by a student's current math teacher based on student assessment scores in both current and previous math courses, student classroom behaviors, motivation, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, homework habits, as well as student interest.

Q. Why are there different levels of math?

A. Students develop at their own pace. Therefore, individuals require instruction at their pace that will help them master and then apply foundational math concepts and skills. Without a strong understanding of these foundational concepts and skills and a demonstrable ability to apply such understanding, all subsequent math concepts will be challenging. Consequently, students who are placed in accelerated/honors math before mastering foundational skills **may experience unnecessary frustration and anxiety**.

Q. But my student is a hard worker. Why weren't they recommended for honors math?

A. In honors math, students need to work effectively, think critically and creatively, and be able to adapt quickly in order to solve problems. With a pace that comprehensively covers all concepts in great depth and is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, honors math will challenge a student's ability to persevere and master the essential skills that will result in academic success. A student must be able to develop a deep conceptual understanding in a fast-paced environment and apply this understanding to solve problems. Thus, we place students into a course level that will allow them to develop a solid, foundational understanding AND the skills required to critically and creatively apply this understanding to unique situations.

Q. I am contemplating overriding the teacher recommendation. Is there anything I should consider before making this decision?

A. Before deciding to override a recommendation, please consider the fact that our teachers made thoughtful recommendations based on your student's current performance. We encourage parents to consider their child's preferences, understanding of current math concepts, and their ability to keep up with a pace that may be too fast for them AT THIS TIME. Students who override into accelerated/honors courses **may experience unnecessary frustration and anxiety** if the course is not the right fit for them. Please look at course recommendations, teacher recommendations, and midyear scores. Proper placement is important for succeeding in a course. Please reach out to your student's math teacher or the 6-12 math coordinator about questions related to your student's readiness. **More information on overrides and the override process can be obtained through the school counseling department.**

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Q. What happens if I override the recommendation and then my student is struggling?

A. Students will not be allowed to drop from a higher-level course due to poor grades until the first quarter is complete. Any student wishing to drop from a higher-level course may be denied even in cases where the student struggles because changes are contingent upon space available in the course and may require a **significant reconfiguration** of the entire student schedule. **More information on overrides and the override process can be obtained through the school counseling department.**

Q. If my student is enrolled in an accelerated level class does that mean they can't take an AP Math or Computer Science course later?

A. It is possible that a student who excels in the accelerated level classes may be recommended for an AP Math course as a senior. AP Computer Science course may be taken as long as the student meets the requirements outlined in the Program of Studies

Q. How many math courses can my student take at once?

A. Students may take a math course as an elective in the same year that they have another math course (doubling up is allowed) as long as they receive a recommendation from their current teacher and coordinator approval. Please consider the other courses students are taking when making this request. However, in an effort to allow all students to experience a well-rounded education and to balance course opportunities for all, one student may NOT take three math courses in one year.

Q. Are there any additional requirements for AP courses?

A. AP courses may require additional work over vacations during the school year.