

Improving Mathematics Achievement

What Parents and Families Can Do

Why is math important for your child?

Today's students must master advanced skills in mathematics, science, and technology to stay on track for college and promising careers. Mathematics teaches ways of thinking that are essential to work and civic life.

College

- Students who take algebra and geometry go on to college at much higher rates than those who do not (83 percent vs. 36 percent).
- Most four-year colleges require three to four years each of high school math and science for admission.

Employment

- Almost 90 percent of all new jobs require math skills beyond the high school level.
- Entry-level automobile workers must use advanced mathematics formulas to wire a car's electrical circuits.

Civic Participation

- Strong math skills are needed for understanding graphs, charts, and opinion polls in a newspaper, for calculating house and car payments, and for choosing a long-distance telephone service.

Mastering challenging mathematics is not just a classroom skill – it's a life skill!

What can you do to help your child be successful in math?

- Help your child develop an early appreciation for the importance and fun of math.
- Support your child's math skills to ensure his or her success in college preparatory math classes.
 - Meet with your child's teacher.
 - Visit your child's math class.
 - Review with your child his or her math homework.
 - Show your child how you use math every day.
- Take advantage of programs (such as after-school or before-school tutoring) that provide your child with individualized attention and extra math help.
- Work with others parents to organize a family math night.

What should you expect from your child's math class?

- Instruction that helps students master both basic math facts and complicated problem-solving.
- Opportunities for students to work together solving real-world problems, testing solutions and communicating ideas.
- A teacher with a strong background in mathematics who is comfortable teaching it.
- A teacher who asks questions that encourage students to explore several correct methods of solution and to develop problem-solving techniques.