



Cedar Middle School Math Placement and Acceleration Policy

All Middle School Students entering DSST: Cedar are all initially enrolled in their grade-level math class (Math 6, Math 7, Math 1H). We believe that integrated skill levels in 6th-8th grade math provide optimal opportunities for ALL students to learn and grow, and we **do not track math classes in our middle school**. This means we do not roster students to different math classes based on achievement or proficiency. We do this because all middle school students at Cedar, regardless of ability level, will take **Math 1 Honors** (the 9th grade math course) as an 8th grader.

Most of the skills that are tested on the PSAT are actually rooted in foundational knowledge that is encompassed by middle school math standards. To ensure that these skills are solidified for students as they enter high school, we do not often accelerate students to the next grade level, as this can create academic gaps in their learning and understanding of math even when they can access higher-level material.

Our middle school math department reviews Fall and Spring iReady assessment data for all students. For the rare instance when a student performs at an exceptional level as indicated by their iReady diagnostic, the teaching team will meet to determine if acceleration (moving to the next grade level class) is prudent. This acceleration opportunity will also be determined by other factors including executive skills, work completion, grades and staff/family recommendation.

This acceleration opportunity will be revisited twice during the school year:

- If, during the beginning of the year iReady assessment round (or mid-year should a student enroll with us after the first assessment round), a student qualifies for acceleration based on their performance, the school will reach out to students and families to discuss options and next steps.
- For students who end the year and score within an iReady and skill threshold where we would recommend possible acceleration for the next year, families will also be notified.

Final decisions about placement for a student to qualify for acceleration will be made in collaboration with students, teachers, and families, but only after they have shown proficiency on the iReady Diagnostic.

Additionally, our middle school math department believes in adjusting our curriculum and approach to teaching each year based on the students in our classes. For a year where we have a number of students who are demonstrating accelerated skills in math, we will adjust the grade-level curriculum to accommodate this rather than move a large quantity of students to the next grade.

All of our students take accelerated math (Math 1H) in 8th Grade. We believe that this affords all students the opportunity for challenge, and sets them up for success in high school - giving them the opportunity to retake and master Math 1 (the 9th grade level math), or accelerate to Math 2 (the 10th grade math level) upon entry to high school.