



Mathematics Department

Welcome to Seattle Preparatory School! We are very glad that you have chosen to join us.

Seattle Prep offers four years of different mathematics courses ranging from Intermediate Algebra and Algebra 2/Trigonometry through Geometry to Precalculus and Calculus on either regular or Honors levels. The majority of incoming freshmen enroll in Intermediate Algebra to ensure that all students get strong foundation and preparation needed for success in upper level courses, which demand excellent algebraic skills. We are very committed to ensure that students do not suffer from gaps in their background or insufficient depth of knowledge before moving forward.

Our goal is to place students in the class in which they will be challenged at a level most appropriate for them. We use our general algebra placement test and the standardized high school placement test (HSPT) scores, as well as the middle school math grades and teacher recommendations to place students into either Intermediate Algebra, Geometry, or Honors Geometry. For students who are taking Geometry as 8th graders (or took it as 7th graders) we offer a geometry challenge exam to identify those who can be considered for placement into either Algebra 2/Trigonometry or Honors Algebra 2/Trigonometry.

The general algebra placement test assesses basic math skills (fundamentals and reasoning), algebra knowledge (skills, reasoning, and applications), as well as students' ability to solve free response word problems showing detailed work. The geometry exam has both multiple choice questions and proofs.

While many 8th graders are currently taking an Algebra or Geometry course, some of these classes do not cover material at the same depth, breadth that our courses do, or course progression is different from ours. So while these courses may provide a very solid foundation, some students will be placed in a course that is similar (or has the same title) as one they have taken. For that reason, a student's placement in his/her present school does not necessarily translate to the same placement at Seattle Prep. We understand that we are assessing students seven months into the school year and are aware that students will cover up to three months more material after the placement exam. This is factored into our decision. We do not offer re-tests on our placement tests later in the school year or after additional summer work. We make every intention to place students in the level that is most appropriate and years of data have shown us that our placement process for incoming freshmen is highly accurate. Furthermore, our teachers monitor their students' performance

in their classes very closely and at the start of the first semester further adjustments may be made to placements when appropriate.

Students placed into Intermediate Algebra will experience an in-depth Algebra course followed by the option in their sophomore year to take Geometry or Honors Geometry depending upon their performance as freshmen. Each student at Seattle Prep has the possibility of taking a Calculus class as a senior if that is the right path for them regardless of their freshman placement. Placement in Intermediate Algebra does not ultimately limit a student's options. Students who begin in Intermediate Algebra and progress into an Honors class by their sophomore or junior year may have the option to do summer work between junior and senior year and take Calculus as a senior. More information regarding freshmen math placements and the sequencing of our math courses can be found on the mathematics page of our website: <http://www.seaprep.org/academics/departments/mathematics>. As with all levels of mathematics, an appeal process will be in place for students who wish to be considered for a class other than what has been recommended.

Once again, welcome to Seattle Prep. We look forward having a great year next year.

Sincerely,
Márta Pásztor

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