“Should I take honors?”

HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS
REGULAR VS. HONORS

Classes for which there are honors sections:
Geometry, Algebra 2, Precalculus

How is honors math different?
- More reading, working, studying outside of class
- Provides better preparation for AP & college courses
- More rigorous/challenging problems
- Faster pace, less repetition & less practice in class
- Richer discussion
- Expectation of students being self-directed, independent learners
- Projects may be used as summative assessments in addition to tests
- Younger students than in the regular class

Note to parents and guardians:

We want our students to be challenged. Challenged students are more engaged and learn more. We also want our honors courses to mirror the diversity of our schools, so we have an open-door policy—no test scores or GPAs are required to take an honors class. No matter if the student decides to take regular or honors, know that there are several resources, in addition to the teacher, available to help each student reach their potential. When making your decision, please keep in mind the following:

- **Does your child have the capability to handle at least one “push course?”** We encourage all students to select at least one course that will really push them. Through struggle, we grow. If the student enjoys math, has a good work-ethic, and wants to push themselves, honors would be a good choice.

- **In honors mathematics, we will often discourage drops until after the 1st IPR report.** If your child takes honors and struggles initially, it doesn’t necessarily mean they should drop to regular! We will ask that you give it time. Students need to learn grit and how to persevere when the going gets tough. It may be the first time they have to actually STUDY in math and that is okay. We hope this keeps students from “bailing” too soon—before they really see what they can accomplish!

- **Students do best when they are placed appropriately on day 1.** However, counselors will try to make adjustments when needed. Keep in mind that schedule changes after school starts are dependent on open seats in other classes which means some changes may not be possible.

- **Consider how many honors courses the student can reasonably handle based on their extra-curricular activities, work schedule, and family commitments.** An honors class WILL require out-of-class work. The student should plan on some type of math homework each class day.

- **Listen to your child’s current math teacher.** The student’s current math teacher knows their abilities and can make the best recommendation for them. That advice, combined with the information above, will help you and your child make the best decision.

- **We’d like to discourage the “let’s try it because I can always drop” mentality.** Staffing assignments are made well before school starts, so having accurate numbers for our class sizes is crucial to planning and budgeting. And, as previously mentioned, switches after school starts are not always possible.

*If you have any questions, talk to your child’s teacher or visit with the honors teachers at your high school’s Curriculum Night. They can help you make the best decision for your child.*