



PALISADES CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

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PCHS MATH PLACEMENT POLICY

Grade Nine Mathematics Course Placement Policy

The policy of the Palisades Charter High School ("PCHS" or the "Charter School") Board of Directors ("Board") is to place all incoming grade nine students into an appropriate mathematics course based on a fair, objective, and transparent protocol to ensure that all students have the opportunity to excel in mathematics and are properly prepared for college and their future careers. This policy also meets the Legislative intent of the Mathematics Placement Act of 2015.

Grade Nine (9) Mathematics Course Placement Process

In determining the mathematics course placement for entering grade nine students, the Charter School systematically takes multiple objective academic measures of student performance into consideration.

Initial Placement

PCHS counselors make an initial mathematics course placement during enrollment based on the following objective academic measures:

- Student transcripts from matriculating middle school;
- Current mathematics course from 8th-grade school;
- Eighth-grade semester grades; and
- Existing California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress ("CAASPP") test scores.

Final Placement

During the first week of school, all incoming students will complete a series of internal placement exams in Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and Math Analysis (Precalculus). These tests are research based and aligned to state-adopted content standards in mathematics to ensure proper grade nine mathematics course placement. Results from exams are distributed to students, parents and/or guardians, PCHS counselors, and the mathematics department.

The mathematics department reviews placement exam results in their PLCs to determine whether students meet the placement criteria (described below) for placement into particular courses and informs the counseling office of any recommended changes to the initial placement, if necessary. Any changes will be recommendations to move students **forward** on a math pathway.

PCHS department chairs will recommend course placement advancement to counseling upon review of the PLC in-class placement assessment review. PCHS counselors make a final mathematics course placement based on placement exam results, mathematics department recommendations, and the objective academic measures listed below. If a student's placement test scores do not confirm the initial placement, the counselors will contact the parents and/or guardians to recommend the proper course placement.



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Placement Criteria

Algebra I:

All students not enrolled in Algebra I or higher in grade eight (8) are placed into Algebra I. The curriculum is based on the California Algebra 1 content standards, which include evaluating expressions, solving equations and inequalities, and applying algebraic techniques in problem-solving situations. Due to the different naming conventions for grade eight (8) math courses, PCHS collaborates with feeder schools and districts to review specific curricula and standards addressed in each course.

- Students with a grade below “C” in both semesters in 8th grade will be placed into Algebra 1 Support class initially
- Students with a grade below “C” in the second semester in 8th grade will be placed into Algebra 1 Support class initially
- Students with a grade of “C” or higher in both or second semester in 8th grade will be placed into Algebra 1A class.

Algebra I with Support Class Description

Algebra I with Support is a course designed to help students who, for many possible reasons, need more support than it is possible to provide in their Algebra 1 course. This course gives students opportunities to access grade-level mathematics in age-appropriate contexts. Most importantly, it does NOT delay Algebra 1 content, and invites students to reason mathematically and communicate their thinking at the same level of rigor as the Algebra 1 course.

Students who struggle in Algebra 1 are more likely to struggle in subsequent math courses and experience more adverse outcomes. This class reviews and/or establishes skills, understandings, and mathematical connections to put students in a better position to be successful in Algebra 1. Furthermore, students who need extra preparation to succeed in Algebra 1 often also need support to develop positive beliefs about mathematics. Algebra I w/Support provides students opportunities to be and feel successful. A small number of high-leverage instructional routines focus on number sense, precision of language, and mathematical reasoning that all students can access. These routines are repeated so that students can see their “thinking like a mathematician” skills improve.

Additionally, Algebra I w/Support focuses on routines that build a positive classroom culture in which everyone is expected to share their thinking, all ideas are considered seriously, and there is collective responsibility for making sense of the ideas offered. This is not only good mathematical practice, it is also a way of showing students who have historically felt that they didn’t have good mathematical ideas that their thinking is valuable.

Geometry:

The Geometry curriculum is based on the California Common Core State Standards for Geometry, which include proving and applying basic theorems, computing perimeters, circumferences, areas, and volumes of geometric shapes, performing basic constructions, and using trigonometric functions to solve problems.



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To be placed into Geometry in grade nine (9), students enrolled in Algebra 1 in grade eight (8) must earn a final grade of "C" or higher in Algebra 1B for the spring semester AND meet **one** of the two following criteria:

- Meet or exceed standards on CAASPP grade eight mathematics test
- Internal Assessment proficiency level

If students request Honors Geometry, they must meet the Geometry criteria and sign up for the Honors course. Additionally, PCHS invites all students with a "B" or better in BOTH semesters of Algebra 1, and "exceed standard" in CAASPP, to be enrolled in Honors Geometry.

- Students with a grade below "C" in the **second** semester in Algebra I will be placed into Algebra I with Support in the fall.
- Students with a grade of "C" or higher in both or second semester Algebra I will be placed into Geometry or H Geometry class.

Algebra II:

The Algebra II curriculum is based on the California Common Core State Standards for Algebra II, which includes Modeling, Functions, Number and Quantity, Algebra, and Statistics and Probability.

To be placed into Algebra II in grade nine (9), students must have completed Algebra I with a C or better, must have completed and earned a final grade of "C" or higher in Algebra 1B and in Geometry B, AND meet **one** of the two following criteria:

- Meet or exceed standards on CAASPP grade eight mathematics test
- Demonstrate proficiency on the PCHS internal assessment
- Students not meeting these criteria will be placed in Geometry and offered additional support as needed.

If students request Honors Algebra 2, they must meet the Algebra criteria, sign up for the Honors course. PCHS strongly recommends that a student have earned an "A" in BOTH semesters of Algebra 1 and Geometry in order to be successful in Honors Algebra 2. Additionally, PCHS invites all students with a "B" or better in BOTH semesters of Geometry, and "exceeds standard" in CAASPP, to be enrolled in Honors Algebra II.

- Students with a grade below "C" in the **second** semester of Geometry will be placed into Geometry with Support in the fall.
- Students with a grade of "C" or higher in both or second semester of Geometry will be placed into Algebra 2 or H Algebra 2 class.

Advanced Math Skills/Math Analysis:

The Math Analysis curriculum is based on the California Common Core State Standards for Precalculus, which includes matrices, complex numbers, trigonometry, and the geometry of a plane.

Note: MDTP Precalculus Readiness is in the Year Three Field Test

To be placed into Math Analysis in grade nine (9), students must have completed Geometry and Algebra II, earning a final grade of "C" or higher in Geometry and Algebra II, AND meet **one** of the two following criteria:

- Demonstrate proficiency on the UCLA MDTP Precalculus Readiness Test
- Exceed standards on CAASPP grade eight Mathematics Test



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Honors Math Analysis, AP Statistics, and AP Calculus:

In special cases where there are requests for placement into Honors Math Analysis, AP Statistics, and AP Calculus from 8th grade, transcripts and other relevant information will be reviewed by the Counseling Office, Honors Math Analysis teachers, AP teachers, and the math department chairs.

Placement Checkpoint

The Charter School will provide at least one (1) placement checkpoint within the first month of the school year to ensure accurate placement and permit reevaluation of individual student progress. This could be an IAB or other standards-based assessment. All mathematics teachers responsible for teaching 9th-grade students will assess the mathematics placements for each 9th-grade student assigned to the teacher's mathematics class. The teacher's assessment will take into consideration factors which may include, but are not limited to, the student's classroom assignments, quizzes, tests, exams, and grades, classroom participation, and any comments provided by the student, the student's parent/legal guardian, and/or the student's other teachers regarding the student's mathematics placement. Based on the assessment, the teacher will then recommend that the student remain in the current mathematics placement or be transferred to another mathematics placement, in which case the teacher shall specify the mathematics course or level recommended for the student.

Annual Examination of Data

Each year, PCHS will examine aggregate student placement data to ensure that students who are qualified to progress in mathematics courses based on their performance on objective academic measures included in this policy are not held back in a disproportionate manner on the basis of their race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic background. The annual review summary of data and resulting placements will be reported to the governing board.

Recourse

The Charter School offers clear and timely recourse for each student and his or her parent or legal guardian who questions the student's placement, as follows:

A parent/legal guardian of any ninth (9th) grade student may submit a written request to the Charter School Executive Director, or his or her designee, that:

- Requests information regarding how the student's mathematics placement was determined. Within five (5) days of receipt, the Charter School Director or designee shall respond in writing to the parent/legal guardian's request by providing the information, including the objective academic measures that the Charter School relied upon in determining the student's mathematics placement.
- Requests that the student retakes the placement test, in which case the Executive Director or designee will attempt to facilitate the retest within two (2) weeks.
- Requests reconsideration of the student's mathematics placement based on objective academic measures. Within five (5) school days of receipt, the Charter School Executive Director or designee shall respond in writing to the parent/legal guardian's request.

The Executive Director or designee and the student's mathematics teacher must assess the objective academic measures provided by the parent in conjunction with the objective academic measures identified in this policy. Based on this assessment, the Executive Director or designee must determine whether the most appropriate mathematics placement for the student is the student's current placement or another placement, in which case the Executive Director shall specify the mathematics course or level recommended for the student.



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The Executive Director's or designee's response must provide the determination as well as the objective academic measures that the Executive Director or designee relied upon in making that determination.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Executive Director or designee requires additional time to respond to a parent/legal guardian's request, the Executive Director or designee will provide a written response indicating that additional time is needed. In no event shall the Executive Director's or designee's response time exceed one (1) month.

If, after reconsideration of the student's mathematics placement by the Executive Director or designee, the parent/legal guardian is dissatisfied with the student's mathematics placement, the parent/legal guardian may choose to sign a voluntary waiver requesting that the student be placed in another mathematics course against the professional recommendation of the Executive Director or designee, acknowledging and accepting responsibility for this placement.

Online Posting

The Charter School shall ensure that this mathematics placement policy is posted on its website.

Statutory Reference: This policy is adopted pursuant to the Mathematics Placement Act of 2015, enacted as Education Code Section 51224.7.

Pending: Adoption by the PCHS Board of Trustees on June 21, 2022