Math Course Selection Process

Frequently Asked Questions for 8th Grade Families about High School Math

Which math courses do 9th graders take in FUHSD?

Most freshmen take one of the following courses in 9th grade:
- Algebra I (with additional support if necessary)
- Geometry or Geometry Enriched
- Algebra II or Algebra II/Trig

Fremont Union High School District does not offer any pre-Algebra course options. However, we have a variety of interventions designed to support and accelerate learning for students who struggle with Algebra in 9th grade.

No matter what math class you take as a freshman, if you work hard and demonstrate that you understand course standards, you will have opportunities to accelerate your learning and reach our high level math courses before you graduate. Your 9th grade math teacher and your guidance counselor will be able to help you develop a plan for acceleration if you demonstrate the interest and capacity to do so.

How are expectations in high school courses different than in middle school?

In high school, unlike middle and elementary school, your grades have consequences. In middle school, if you did not do well in math in 7th grade, you still moved on to 8th grade math. In high school, if you do not pass a class that you need for graduation, you will have to repeat it and pass it in order to earn credit. You need to earn credit for at least Algebra I and Geometry in order to graduate. If you want to be eligible for a four year college, you will need to have passed at least Algebra II; and you probably will want to consider taking higher level courses too. The University of California and the California State University System (as well as most private colleges and universities) require that you pass a class with a “C” or better in order to have that class count in your application for admission.
How will my 9th grade math course placement be determined?

Sometime between February and April of your 8th grade year, you and your parents will be invited to a meeting to learn about the course selection process for your high school. At that time, you will be advised to consider a number of factors in making a request for your ninth grade math class.

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<th>Generally, 8th graders who successfully complete a course called:</th>
<th>Should plan on taking this course in 9th grade:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Algebra Readiness OR Algebra Fundamentals OR Introduction to Algebra OR Math 8</td>
<td>Algebra I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Algebra I</td>
<td>Geometry</td>
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<td>Geometry</td>
<td>Algebra II</td>
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However, if you are doing very well in your 8th grade course (getting an A or B), you may want to consider taking a more challenging course:

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<th>If you are doing very well in...</th>
<th>You might want to try.....</th>
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<tr>
<td>Algebra I</td>
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No matter which class you take in ninth grade, as long as you make sufficient progress in high school, you will meet requirements for graduation and college admissions.

When making your math course request for 9th grade you should consider the following:
- What is the next course in this sequence?
- How are you doing in your current math class? (Check your latest progress report.)
- What is the work load in the other classes and activities you want to take in 9th grade? (This will be described to you in high school orientation meetings.)
- If you choose to take a higher level class (i.e. Geometry Enriched instead of Geometry; or Algebra II/Trig instead of Algebra II) are you willing to put in the extra time and work that will be involved in being successful in these classes?

Once your high school has all course requests from both incoming ninth graders and current students, we use these to determine our course offerings and our staffing needs for the next school year.
What if I change my mind after requesting a math class?

In the spring of 8th grade you will take a diagnostic test that will give you information about your readiness for high school math courses. You will take this test in your 8th grade class.

Later in the spring, you will receive confirmation of the courses which you have requested for 9th grade. At this time, you will know more about how you are doing in your 8th grade class and may also have the results from the high school course readiness test. Using that information, you should consider once again whether you have selected to the right course for you.

If you are confident of your choice, you can expect to be assigned to that math class.

If for any reason, you wish to reconsider your original choice, you will have the opportunity to do so during the course verification process.

What happens to students who “over-reach” by requesting a class and then find that it is more difficult than they expected?

It is very important to make careful choices when requesting your ninth grade courses, because getting it wrong can make it difficult to find the classes you want after school starts.

If you do need to change your math class, there is a very real possibility that you will have to change your entire schedule and enter new classes with new teachers several weeks into the school year.

Occasionally, when students request a transfer to another math class after the start of the year, all math classes at the school are already full. Should this happen to you, you should work with your Guidance Counselor or Assistant Principal to consider what options are available to you. REMEMBER, you can avoid this by making careful choices during the course selection process!

Can I take a high school math course in the summer so that I can take a higher level class as a freshman?

This is possible, but YOU SHOULD NOT PLAN TO DO THIS WITHOUT FIRST NOTIFYING AN ADMINISTRATOR OR GUIDANCE COUNSELOR AT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL IN ADVANCE. There are many options for summer course work, and some are more aligned with what will be expected of you in high school than others.

Administrators and guidance counselors can advise you on various options and will require that you document your plans in writing before you take the summer course.

IF YOU TAKE A SUMMER COURSE WITHOUT NOTIFYING YOUR HIGH SCHOOL IN ADVANCE THERE MAY NOT BE A SPACE IN THE CLASS YOU WANT IN THE FALL.
Can I “self-study” and skip a class in high school?

You should think carefully about this before you decide to request an override or challenge a course because:

- Some colleges and universities require the completion of certain courses. The University of California, for example, REQUIRES that students take Geometry even if there is evidence that they could do the work without the course.
- Remember, if you request a higher level course and decide after the start of the year that it is too hard, another math class may not be open or available or may require a change to all your classes.

My middle school math courses have recently aligned to the Common Core Standards. Will my high school classes also be aligned to these standards?

All California schools are revising curriculum in relation to the Common Core in kindergarten through high school. The new standards will be incorporated into FUHSD’s current courses. The Common Core State Standards are designed to focus math instruction and build skills and habits progressively over a student’s school career so that they understand mathematics deeply and can use it to solve authentic, real-world problems.

Fremont Union High School District recognizes that the promise of the Common Core may not be realized until all students have experienced this curriculum throughout their elementary and middle school years. Students who are currently in middle school may not have had the benefit of experience with the Common Core except for a year or two. Therefore, we are making a gradual transition to these standards so that all students can be successful.