

How can I work with the school to make sure my child gets the most out of math?

Just like your child, schools need your support—especially in the middle school years. Since choice made in middle school determine high school courses that either increase or limit future education and career opportunities, your participation is critical.

Two people you should get to know are your child's math teacher and the school counselor. Working with you and your child, they can help you decide the math your child will take in the future. Talk with them often. Let them know that you want to participate in making decisions.

How do you begin? Ask questions. After all, you have a right to know.

Find out if your child is getting the same opportunities in math as everyone else. Ask if a plan is already in place for your child's future math classes. If so, ask to see it. State that you have high expectations. Make it clear that you want your child to take challenging math classes each year through high school.

You'll find that teachers and counselors will be happy to answer your questions. After all, you're in this together.

Questions to ask the teacher about math class:

- What math will be taught in this class?
- What textbook and other materials will you use this year?
- Will my child need a calculator, ruler, compass, or any other tools?
- How much homework can we expect?
- Is it okay if my child works with other students on homework?
- How should my child make up work after an absence?
- How do you determine grades?
- What graded work will be sent home?
- How often and when will you send home a formal report about my child?
- How do I schedule a parent-teacher conference?
- What, if any, standardized tests in math will my child take this year?
- What can I do to help you?

Questions to ask regarding the math program:

- What math classes are available?
- Do all students take the same math classes? If not, how are students placed in different classes?
- What's the next math class my child will take?
- Will this class prepare my child to take challenging math each year in high school?

- What math classes are offered in high school?
- What math classes will my child be ready to take in high school?
- How many students are in each math class?
- When are schedules made for the next year? How are families involved?
- What technology is available for students in math classes?
- What is the background and experience of the math teachers at our school?
- Does our school have a math club?

Questions to ask regarding tutoring, support, and enrichment for math:

- When and how will I know if my child's having trouble? What should I do then?
- Is there any tutoring available before, during, or after school? on weekends?
- Do you offer help on a one-to-one basis or in a group setting? When?
- Is peer-tutoring available? If so, how does it work?
- Can you recommend any tutors outside of school?
- Where can we find more problems to use for practice?
- Are there resources listed in the text book or anywhere else that would help?
- Is there a Homework Hotline we can use?
- Do you know any math websites we can visit?
- Does our school offer programs for catching-up or enrichment?
- Does our school participate in any math competitions or contests?
- Do nearby colleges or universities offer any enrichment programs?

Excerpt taken from:
 Figure This! Math Challenges for Families
<http://www.figurethis.org>