

## Algebra 1 Honors Parent Information

Welcome! Attached is information you might find helpful for what to expect for next year and what can be done to have a successful year.

### Basic Course Information

- 1) This course is a high school Honors course. The material taught in this course is not significantly different than what is currently being taught in a regular Algebra course. However, students are expected to understand the material at a deeper level and the assessments are somewhat more challenging than the regular Algebra assessments. The 7<sup>th</sup> Honors course was the exact same as the 8<sup>th</sup> regular course. The 7H course is the course that all regular 8<sup>th</sup> grade students take, regardless of ability.
- 2) This course allows for high school credit. Grades do appear on high school transcripts and will factor into a student's high school GPA.
- 3) Grades are given at each semester, not quarter. There will be one grade for the first semester and a second grade for the second semester.
- 4) Grades are weighted as follows:  
65% Assessments (50% Tests, 15% quizzes)  
20% Final Exam  
15% Classwork (Homework, in-class work, etc.)
- 5) Students are not allowed retakes on any test, but they may do a correction on one quiz per semester.
- 6) The SpringBoard resource by CollegeBoard is used for this class. It is a consumable like last year. This resource is divided into 6 units. Each unit is divided into activities (40 total), which are then divided into lessons (2 to 5 per activity). Generally we do one lesson per day. As a result, students are either taking an assessment or learning new material each day.
- 7) Grades tend to be dissimilar to those in 6H and 7H. Of the roughly 130 students in Algebra 1H during 1<sup>st</sup> semester, roughly 40% had A's, 40% had B's and 20% had C's. Tests can be lengthy and students must finish within a set amount of time. On many tests, each question is different than all of the other questions on the test.

### Recommended Skills

- 1) Participation in class – much of the SpringBoard lessons involve taking a concept and developing the concept and related skill. It is not a 'drill and kill' resource where students do the same type of problem repeatedly. Therefore, for students to understand the material at a deeper level to be ready for assessments, it is best that they are actively involved in the development of the concepts and skills.
- 2) Advocacy for oneself – students can find more practice problems in the resource at any time and they can ask me for more practice at any time. Students who do this are much more successful than students do not.

3) Good usage of study hall time – when students are struggling or absent, they can come see me during study hall for help. There is little or no time in class for one-on-one attention due to the length of these lessons, therefore study hall time is the best option for assistance.

4) Responsibility for absences – when students are absent and miss a lesson, they can access my website at any time to see what they have missed. When students return, it is best that they are ready to show me any completed homework due the day they were absent.

Also, when students are absent for a test, it is best that they are ready to take the assessment when they return. Students who wait longer tend to perform at a lower level, since it has been longer since they have learned the content.

5) Resilience – students may struggle at some point in the course, that is fine. However, how they respond to this struggle is extremely important. Several students started the year poorly and made adjustments to how they participated in class or began to advocate for themselves and improved greatly.

6) Preparedness for class – students should come prepared to class everyday with their calculators and textbooks, among other things. Time spent outside the classroom retrieving missing materials does not have a positive effect on a student's performance. Students who take care of their supplies (calculators and textbooks) tend to perform better in class.

7) Responsibility on assignments and study guides – students who come to class with homework completed and study guides completed tend to do well.

8) Balancing Algebra 1H and other responsibilities – some students get overwhelmed with this class and other things they are involved in. These could include other classes, HG clubs/sports, or outside activities. Planning ahead of time for busy time periods is important.

### **Things that can be done for a successful year**

1) Please contact me! Do not hesitate! Questions about how your child uses class time are especially welcome!

2) Extra practice is beneficial – every activity in the book as 1-2 pages of extra practice at the end. I can check a student's work if they would like to see if they are doing the problems correctly.

3) Monitoring of grades – students who check grades frequently tend to do better

4) Review important material from last year – topics in algebra (exponent rules, functions, expression and equations) are extremely important. Topics in geometry have little or no relevance. Completing the summer packet with high quality (work shown) is recommended. If your child doesn't know how to do a problem, he/she should reach out to a classmate (or even to me over the summer!) for help, rather than just skip it.

5) Use resources wisely – the practice pages in the book are there for a reason! Important tips are given in class for how to do the problems in the easiest manner. Resources are available online if you look. Much of the content in this course might look different, but it is extremely similar to the algebra taught over the past 30-40 years.