



Thursday, January 31st, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It is with pleasure that I write that I am teaching your son or daughter mathematics this semester. My name is Mark Couturier and I would like to take a few moments of your time to highlight a few items regarding your child's class.

Class notes

For the most part, class notes are shared with students online through Google Drive and my personal website (see link below). You are more than welcome to email me a request to be included in the Google Drive sharing of notes. <http://www.habfanforever.com/MPM1D> You will also find the course outline on this webpage.

Teaching Style – NPVL, Mastery-Based Learning & Evidence Triangulation

Students will be engaged to solve problems in class using NPVL (Non-Permanent Vertical Learning); a group based problem solving technique that promotes learning through struggle by removing the stigma of mistakes while reducing math anxiety. This strategy provides ample opportunity to provide supportive (diagnostic) feedback prior to assessments and evaluations.

In the last two years, we introduced Mastery-Based Learning to most of our classes, an idea recently popularized by Sal Khan (founder of KhanAcademy). This strategy places agency on students who may not be satisfied with prior assessments and evaluations such that, if they are willing to take initiative, may make arrangements with their teacher to demonstrate their understanding of specific expectations on their own terms such that their mark can improve (supporting the idea that marks are not fixed and that learning is a self-directed life-long process).

Technology in class

Students are urged to have a scientific calculator which they should use for quizzes, tests and exams. Students are encouraged to use other forms of technology such as cell phones in a constructive and effective manner. The current APP of choice that we use in class is DESMOS, a free online graphing calculator. If this is not an option, students will be provided with a mini-iPad or Chromebook when necessary. Students have the option to bring their textbook home for additional practice.

For information about the progression of the class, please note that I Tweet at @tansinecosine.

Spiralling

Please note that this year we will be trying a new spiralling strategy in the delivery of the curriculum. This style of teaching makes better connections to various strands rather than simply studying a singular strand at a time and then revisiting it only at the end of the semester. This strategy is aimed at constantly engaging students in all strands throughout the term. The Teaching Schedule for this strategy can be found using the following link: <http://www.habfanforever.com/MPM1D2019TeachingSchedule.pdf>

Homework

Homework is an essential part of “doing math”. Please review the handout of homework for the entire semester and ensure that your child is attempting as many of these questions as possible. Students are urged to highlight questions in which they struggle so that it can be discussed in class or during extra math help sessions. Most homework will be linked to the link above (Teacher Schedule).

Extra Help

The math department at St. Peter Catholic High School donates their lunch time to help students in need. This voluntary service is offered at lunch on Monday and Tuesday in Mr. Bond’s room (272) and Wednesday and Thursday in Mr. Herbert’s room (274).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at school using the email below.

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