

NoteDareSchool

To: 6th Grade Parents
From: Mrs. Harkness
Date: 8/18/2009
Re: 6th Grade Math

Congratulations! Your child has made the big move to Junior High. My name is Mrs. Charlotte Harkness, and I will be your student's general math teacher. I will work very hard to help him or her be successful in Junior High math, and you can help too. By now, the basic number facts (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) should "roll off their tongue". They should be able to accurately add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. They should also know how to estimate, round, and manipulate very small and very large numbers. We will review these basic skills during the first part of 6th grade math. As I have shared with the students, once they can prove to me that they **do not need** a calculator, they can use their calculator! Sixth grade general math includes a lot of pre-algebra. If a student is strong in the basics, he should be very successful and comfortable with pre-algebra, problem-solving, measurement, and statistics.

Materials: The students will need the following supplies for math this year: a basic calculator, a ruler (cm/in), protractor, pencils or erasable pens, a red pen or pencil, a highlighter, and a small 3-ring binder or spiral notebook. We will be using a new mathematics program that is aligned with the current State and Diocesan Standards. When we begin each topic, there will be a corresponding *Parent Letter* posted on my website. Students will learn new math vocabulary, take notes, complete projects, and organize their binder or notebook for all of their math work.

Participation/Preparation – Each student will be required to maintain a math notebook or folder. This notebook will contain their written assignments, vocabulary, reading and class notes, handouts, chapter quizzes and tests, assignment calendars, etc. To encourage good note taking and consistent completion of assignments, I will allow the students to use their notebooks on quizzes and tests. The notes and vocabulary for each chapter will be part of their final quarter grade. Students will also be assigned activities and partner lessons in the classroom. In addition, each student will begin each week with 10 participation/preparation points. Students will lose points if they come unprepared for class (i.e. incomplete or missing homework, missing supplies, etc.), are tardy for class, or are disruptive. Participation/preparation will be worth 15% of the final quarter grade.

Homework: I believe homework is important because it is a valuable tool in helping students to make the most of their experience in school. The homework that I assign is designed to help reinforce what has been taught in class, prepare the students for upcoming lessons, and help the students develop self-discipline, responsibility, and positive study habits. I expect students to do their best on each assignment, and I expect math homework to be neat, complete, and written in pencil, or blue or black ink. Each assignment will have the student's name, date, and page number at the top. All assignments are to be turned in on time. **LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR FULL CREDIT.** Projects will be accepted late; however, the grade will be reduced ten percent per day that the project is late. In the event of an absence, it is the responsibility of the student to find out what assignments were missed. This work must be completed within one week unless special arrangements are made. Homework passes may be earned and used in lieu of most assignments during the year. Homework and classwork will be worth 40% of the final quarter grade.

Tests and Quizzes: I will give frequent quizzes and tests. There will be many "Homework Quizzes" after we finish a lesson, as well as timed tests and topic tests. Tests and quizzes will be worth 45% of the final quarter grade.

How Can Parents Help?

Mathematics is not a spectator sport! Students are expected to read. Encourage your child to read the textbook, work through the examples, and take notes. Check with your children to see that they have the supplies they need. See if your child is doing math homework every night. Encourage determination and perseverance! If your child is having a problem, ask your child to tell you what he or she knows about the idea. Encourage your child to seek help whenever necessary. Success in 6th grade math will result from following good study habits – note taking, showing complete solutions, seeking help when needed, class participation, and completing the nightly homework.

I am excited about working with each of our 6th graders this year—helping them to make the transition to next year's *Pre-Algebra* and beyond!

Please read, enjoy, and keep for future reference the attached information. I know that as both a teacher and parent of teenagers, I often found this information very helpful. Throughout my 35 years of teaching, I have seen the importance of parent involvement in a student's education. You truly are the most important people in your child's life, and I firmly believe that your child receives the best education possible when you and I work together as a team. Please do not hesitate to contact me when you are having a challenge, need clarification, or just would welcome a listening ear.