

Math Department Frequently Asked Questions

1. What can my student do to improve their grade?

Students can re-do assignments, they can retake Essential Mastery Tests (EMT's) and quizzes, and they should make sure that all future assignments are completed on time.

2. Why does my student's grade keep dropping suddenly to an F?

While an F could be due to missing assignments, typically, when a student's grade drops suddenly to an F, it is because they are being flagged for Teal Time because they did not pass an EMT. At the beginning of each term, student's grades are very volatile so homework and quizzes will also drop a grade to an F. As soon as a student passes the EMT, the grade should return quickly to an appropriate level.

3. What is an EMT and why is 80% required?

An EMT is an Essential Mastery Test that measures how well the student has learned the essentials (basics) of each unit. We require each student to know at least 80% of the basics so that they will be successful in the next unit.

4. Can my student retake an EMT if they got less than 80%?

Yes, students must retake EMT's scoring lower than 80% to pass math. They must complete all homework for that unit and must correct their original test before re-taking a new version of the test.

5. What is the point of having daily and mastery quizzes?

As teachers, our job is to make sure that students understand the important topics. We do this by assessing regularly and checking for understanding. Some teachers use quizzes which students can correct for a better score. Other teachers use mastery quizzes which students can use to gauge their "mastery" of a content piece. (If a mastery quiz needs to be retaken, the student's homework must be completed before a retake before/after school or during TEAL time.) Quizzes are not a punishment; they are a way to check for understanding and alert the teacher when a student does not understand the material. When a student does not pass, this is a signal to us, as teachers and students, that a topic is not understood. These are tools used by teachers to make sure that our teaching is effective for our students.

6. What is the grade breakdown?

Assignments- 30%

Quizzes- 20%

EMT's-25%

Term Final Exam- 15%

Participation-10%

7. How can my child be more successful in the classroom?

The 8 new Math Practice Standards are a big part of the New Utah State Core. In essence, students are required to listen and learn from each other as they apply and justify their math skills in real world situations. This may be a new experience for some students as they try to reason through the math and learn a new concept. Rules and formulas are still a part of the math development, but we try to build a foundation and relationship to the math and its meaning rather than memorization of a formula.

8. What is the re-do policy for homework?

- 7th Grade and Ms Cocke: Students are not required to re-do assignments. They may choose to re-do their assignments for a better score. The only assignments that can be re-done are those that were completed on time.

- Mr. Mann and 9th grade: Students must get 80% on their homework to turn in the assignments. Students must re-do assignments until they get at least 80%. If an assignment is late the student must get 100% to turn in (because they had more time to do the assignment). Points are docked for late assignments and assignments turned in after the EMT. No credit is given for assignments turned in after the term ends.

9. My student's homework keeps getting marked as Not Done. They've done most of it. Shouldn't that count?

No student is expected to understand everything perfectly on every assignment. We do expect students to try each problem. In that way we can find where students are hitting their misconceptions about the math.

10. How can my student get new copies of assignments they've lost?

Each teacher has a website where they post assignments that can be printed. These can be accessed through the Vista Heights website or through vhmsmath.weebly.com. Some teachers even post notes from class so the student can still learn the material if they are absent.

11. Can my student get a textbook?

Students should ask their teacher for a copy of the textbook. We also have an online version of the textbook (see #12 for login instructions).

12. How does my student access the online textbook?

The website for the online textbook is: <http://connected.mcgraw-hill.com>

The login for the book is: mathvhms

The password is: mathv160

13. What are additional resources available to find help?

The math website vhmsmath.weebly.com has a list of online resources that can help your student be more successful. Each teacher also has their website and links.

14. When are the teachers available for help?

All teachers at VHMS are here for students before school at 7:45 and stay after school until 4 on most days. (Many come in early.) Sometimes meetings may interfere, so please check with your student's teacher for times.

15. My student is really struggling in honors. What can I do?

The honors class will move at a very quick pace and at a much higher level. A mastery of prior concepts is essential and class time cannot be taken to review content not in the current core. **Teachers are happy to help review content and learn material, but that would have to be before or after school.**

16. Can I volunteer in the classroom?

Teachers can always use your help, please ask your teacher how best to help.

7th Grade

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9th Grade

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8th Grade

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“There is no direct route to understanding. Mistakes and confusion are part of this process. We must recognize that partially grasped ideas and periods of confusion are a natural part of the process of developing understanding.”

--PhD. Jo Boaler (Teacher/Educator, Stanford University)