



Common Core Math at Gateway: Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT ARE THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS?

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are world-class standards that reflect the kind of rigor demonstrated in academically high-achieving nations. The CCSS were designed with college and career readiness in mind so that our students will be able to successfully compete in a global economy. Currently, 43 states have adopted the Common Core Standards.

HOW WILL SUPPORT FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS BE DIFFERENT?

The new standards ask students to deeply understand math and its processes — including problem solving, reasoning, and explaining your thinking. At Gateway, we are excited about these changes because they are aligned with our approach to teaching and learning. What's important to know is that teachers will be focusing on fewer concepts to allow students to gain a deeper, more meaningful understanding of each concept and to apply that understanding in real world situations---preparing our students to be college and career ready.

WHY IS THE GRADE 6–12 MATH COURSE SEQUENCE CHANGING?

All students should have learning experiences that make sense as they move from course to course to ensure that they will be college-ready by the end of high school. The new course sequence in mathematics does this by focusing deeply on fewer concepts, allowing students to gain a strong foundational understanding in each course. At Gateway, similar to all schools within SFUSD, we will offer a new course sequence (that is, the order in which students are taking their math classes) so that students can build upon their conceptual understanding from year to year. Rather than taking a different approach each year, each new standard that is introduced will come as an extension of the previous years' learning.

WHAT WILL THE NEW COURSE SEQUENCE LOOK LIKE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL?

In middle school all students will take math classes that include algebra in every grade level, with increased depth as the grades progress. The courses are called CCSS Math 6, 7, and 8. This new course sequence ensures a solid foundation that prepares students for college mathematics.

The content in the old Algebra 1 course under the previous California standards is now divided between the CCSSMath 8 course and the CCSS Algebra 1 course. Beginning in 2014-15, all 8th graders at Gateway Middle School will take CCSS Math 8, and the following year (2015-16) all 9th graders at Gateway High School will take CCSS Algebra 1 in 9th grade. Both CCSS Math 8 and CCSS Algebra 1 are more rigorous than the previous Algebra 1 course. These courses also include content previously taught in more advanced high school courses, as well as content not previously taught in middle and high school math, such as statistics.

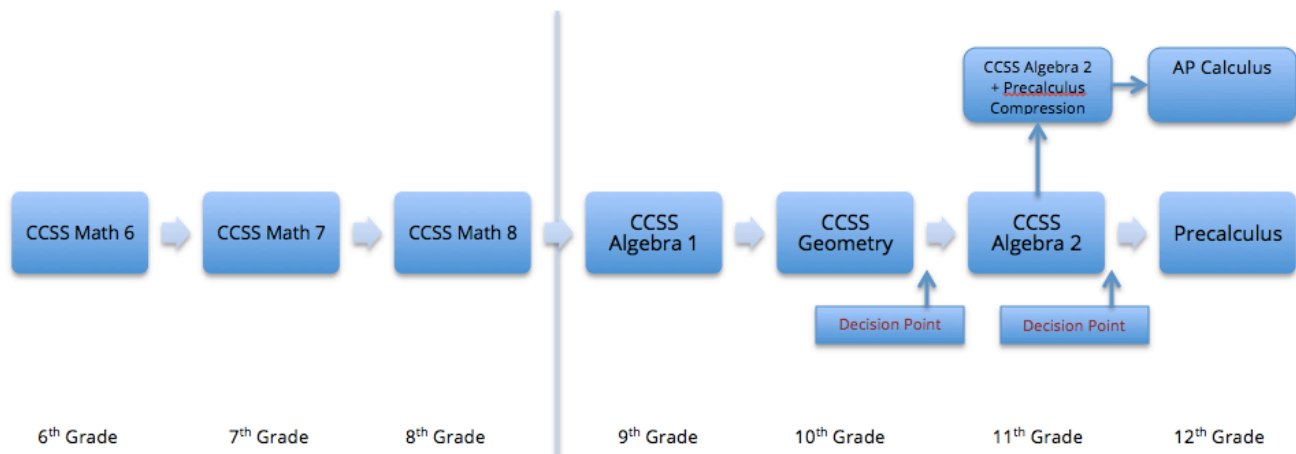
WHAT WILL THE NEW COURSE SEQUENCE LOOK LIKE IN HIGH SCHOOL?

With a solid foundation from CCSS-M in grades 6–8, all students will be more prepared for college mathematics, including successfully meeting the University of California “c” requirement and Gateway’s graduation requirements. Beginning in 2014-15, all students will take CCSS Algebra 1 in 9th grade and CCSS Geometry in 10th grade. In 11th grade students (with assistance from their families) will be able to choose from two course offerings: Algebra 2 or a compressed Algebra 2 and Precalculus course. The compressed course option would allow students to take AP Calculus in their senior year.



WHAT WILL THE NEW COURSE SEQUENCE AND CHOICES LOOK LIKE FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL?

This is the course sequence for Gateway Public Schools which is very similar to the course sequence adopted by the SFUSD Board of Education for all SFUSD middle and high schools.



This course sequence ensures a solid middle-grades foundation that not only supports all students to successfully meet the UC “c” requirement, but also prepares them for college mathematics. One core sequence provides focus and coherence as schools and teachers implement the CCSS-M and supports equity by creating a path for all students to experience rigorous mathematics.

WHAT IF MY CHILD IS READY FOR MORE ADVANCED MATH THAN WHAT IS OFFERED?

Being advanced no longer means skipping a course or jumping ahead. All of the courses in the CCSS are necessary and are designed to build over a student’s math career. If students choose to pursue taking AP Calculus, they will take an accelerated math course in 11th grade. The California Math Framework, adopted by the State of California in November 2013, states very clearly that CCSS Math 8 is more rigorous than the old Algebra 1 course. All students in the new sequence will be challenged with more advanced mathematics content and higher expectations around conceptual thinking and communicating.

HOW ARE WE PREPARING TEACHERS FOR THIS CHANGE?

The transition to the Common Core State Standards in Math (CCSS-M) began at Gateway Middle and Gateway High a few years ago. Gateway’s instructional leaders and Math teachers have been collaborating at each school as well as across schools to plan curriculum, to identify resources to align with CCSS-M and to implement changes to math instruction.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For more information on how the 8th and 9th grade Common Core Math Course are different, please see Gateway’s “Common Core 8th and 9th Grade Math Course FAQ.”

For information on Common Core Math in SFUSD, please see <http://www.sfusdmath.org>