

Middle School Mathematics Program

At North Thurston Public Schools, our Vision is clear: **All students empowered and future-ready.**

Our Strategic Plan defines goals for student success that include continuous growth toward meeting/exceeding rigorous learning standards, developing all the skills necessary to solve relevant, real-world challenges, and to graduate prepared for success in whatever life pathway a student chooses. In the content area of mathematics, we aim for each child to be successful and to have the opportunity to learn and master the learning standards as they progress through our system.

At the middle school level, it is our goal that each child is placed in the most appropriate math course to meet their learning needs and ensure they are on the pathway to continued and future success. [The Washington State K-12 Learning Standards for Math](#) have shifted the content and approach to learning mathematics resulting in students beginning to learn Algebraic concepts much earlier. **Many of the topics previously introduced in high school are now taught in 6th, 7th and 8th grade.** In essence, all students are now experiencing more rigorous mathematics content earlier than before as they progress through middle school and into high school.

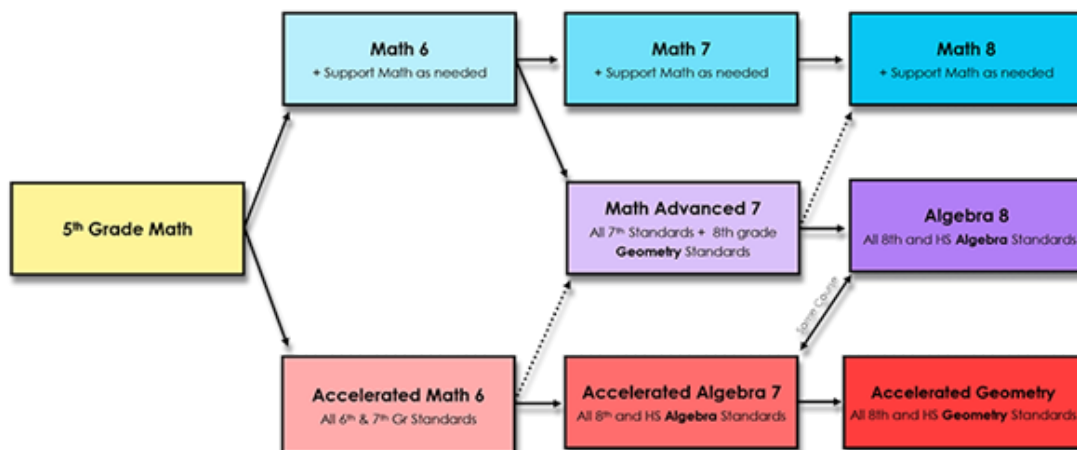
To ensure students have the greatest possible foundation and opportunity to learn and master standards essential for continued success in their learning progression, and recognizing that some students are able to learn more quickly while others may need additional support, North Thurston Public Schools has modified our courses and placement guidelines.

Math Placement Guidelines

Recommendation for placement in specific math courses is based on the following:

- Spring Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) scores
- Achievement of the Standards of Mathematical Practices as indicated by SBA and classroom measures
- Success in current math course
- Teacher recommendation based on classroom evidence and performance indicators
- Additional measures such as highly capable testing and district easyCBM or MAP benchmark assessments

NTPS Middle School Math Pathways



Math Acceleration in Middle School

High performing math students who qualify for acceleration will have multiple opportunities as they progress through middle and high school. At the middle school level, acceleration may begin in 6th grade if a student meets the placement criteria and is recommended for Accelerated 6 Math. If a student does not meet the requirements for acceleration as a 6th grader, they will have an opportunity, based on their 6th grade performance and teacher recommendation, to enroll in Math Advanced 7. Both the accelerated and advanced pathways will result in the student acquiring at least 1 high school math credit if they successfully meet the requirements and opt for the credit.

Accelerated Math Pathway: Students who qualify for early acceleration as a 6th grader, will be enrolled in Accelerated 6 Math. This is a compressed, accelerated course that engages students in ALL of the 6th & 7th grade standards. This is an extremely fast-paced placement recommended for students who have been identified as Highly Capable in math through the gifted assessment process or qualify for a “High Performance Placement” based on achievement on the 5th grade Smarter Balanced Assessment (requires exceptionally high achievement with an upper Level 4 score of 2620+), current math teacher recommendation, and a series of assessment, classroom performance, and district benchmark data. Students enrolled in this pathway through middle school can potentially receive credit for HS Algebra 1 (in 7th grade) and HS Geometry (in 8th grade) and then enroll in Algebra 2 as a 9th high school freshman. This essentially places students upon entry to high school at a level that is 2 years above a typical 9th grader.

Advanced Math Pathway: Students enrolled in the Math 6, which is the core 6th grade pathway, who demonstrate a readiness for more accelerated instruction by the end of their 6th grade year, will be enrolled in a compressed two-year Math Advanced 7 – Algebra 8 series that engages in all of the 7th and half of the 8th grade standards in the first year and the other half of the 8th grade and all of the HS Algebra 1 standards in the second year. This is a rigorous and fast-paced course pathway recommended for students based on their achievement on the 6th grade Smarter Balanced Assessment, course grades and performance indicators, and teacher recommendation. Students enrolled in this pathway can potentially receive HS Algebra 1 credit by the end of 8th grade and enroll in Geometry as a high school freshman, essentially placing the student upon entry to high school at a level that is 1 year above a typical 9th grader.

*It is important to note that students in either pathway are carefully screened with multiple measures to ensure their potential success and all of these advanced level students will have the opportunity and should plan to take four years of math in high school, including Advanced Placement level mathematics courses such as Calculus. Students not yet ready for acceleration during middle school may have opportunities for acceleration once in high school.