

To: Students currently enrolled in Algebra 2 – Trigonometry who wish to place out of Precalculus
From: Mr. Berry, Math/CS Division Manager

Spring 2006

The Precalculus program at TJ is unlike other Fairfax County programs. The curriculum reflects the changing technologies and places and emphasis on discrete as well as continuous data and functions. There are no textbooks currently on the market that have all the topics and techniques that we teach, so our program is heavily supplemented.

If you elect to attempt the placement test, you must complete the attached form and return it to me no later than May 31. At that time, I will give you an assignment guide and copies of our Data Analysis, Limits and Continuity, and Derivatives packets. The graphing calculator is used as an integral part of the Precalculus curriculum, but it is still necessary for you to master basic non-calculator skills. For example, all students should be able to solve trigonometric equations analytically as well as graphically. This requires knowledge of special angles. All students must be able to write the equation of a given graph. Students must be able to graph a function given the graph of its derivative, etc. Therefore, the test has both calculator and non-calculator portions. It is expected that you will bring a calculator to the test (one will not be provided). The most commonly used calculators in our Precalculus classes are the TI-83+ or TI-89 or equivalent. You will not be allowed to use a TI-89 for the placement test.

It is school policy not to loan textbooks. The book we use is Precalculus Graphing and Data Analysis 2nd edition by Sullivan/Sullivan publisher Prentice Hall. The ISBN number is 0-13-026927-1. The class assignments are related to this text. It is often possible to find copies of this text in used book stores or on-line.

. In order to attempt placement, a student must

1. have an A in Algebra 1 and Geometry
2. have a 97% average in Algebra 2 - Trigonometry

Each year approximately 50 students apply to take the test; 30 - 35 take the test; and, approximately one-half pass the test (minimum score required: 90%). The test allows placement, not credit.

Please note the very important following items:

- ❖ The placement test is given only once. It is scheduled for Monday, August 28 from 9 a.m. to noon. The test site is room 243.
- ❖ You will earn placement into Precalculus if you achieve an 90% on the exam. You will not earn a math credit. You will then be moved into a BC Calculus class.
- ❖ You must return your Test Request form no later than May 31. The address is

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