

To: Rising 8th Graders currently enrolled in Advanced Algebra
From: Mr. Berry, Math/CS Division Manager

Spring 2006

The Algebra 2 – Trigonometry program at TJ is unlike other Fairfax County programs. In addition to Advanced Algebra topics, we include data analysis and trigonometry as well. There is extensive use of the graphing calculator and frequent use of the computer, as well as a strong emphasis on modeling (application) problems not found in most courses. You have not completed the Trigonometry or Data Analysis portions of our course. You have two options: (1) study this material on your own during the summer and take a placement test on Monday, August 25 proving your mastery (you must earn an 84% in order to prove mastery); if you do not pass the placement test or do not want to study on your own this summer, you may (2) enroll in our Algebra 2 – Trigonometry program for the second semester. You will receive one-semester of credit. This option gives you the opportunity to enroll in a one-semester elective during the fall. In either case, when you register, you must register for the second semester of Algebra 2 – Trigonometry. When a student passes the placement test, his/her counselor is notified that a schedule change is required and the student will then be enrolled in Precalculus.

If you elect to attempt the placement test, you must complete the attached form and return it to me no later than May 31. Attached to this memo is the listing of class assignments for the Trigonometry portion of our Algebra 2 – Trigonometry course, as well as a vector packet and samples of trigonometric modeling problems. The Data Analysis I and II packets can be downloaded from the TJ website (go to Academics: Math/CS and look for course documents and placement test information.) As you will see in the packet, the graphing calculator is used as an integral part of the math curriculum. 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 should be able to verify trigonometric statements. This requires knowledge of trigonometric identities, 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 calculator in our Algebra 2 – Trigonometry classes is the TI-83+ or equivalent.

It is school policy not to loan textbooks. The book we use is Algebra 2: An Integrated Approach by Larson, Kanold and Stiff, published by D. C. Heath (a subsidiary of McDougall Littell), c 1995. The ISBN number is 0-669-383317-1. The class assignments are related to this text but any good Trigonometry text will have the same topics, perhaps more extensively. Because only two chapters are dedicated to the trigonometry material in our text, the teachers heavily supplement the text.

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 84% on the exam. You will not earn a math credit.
- ❖ You must return your Test Registration form to Mr. Berry no later than May 31. The address is

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