

# The Cottonwood School

## Mathematics Placement Policy

### Philosophy

All students can learn mathematics at high levels at The Cottonwood School through a rigorous curriculum, strong instructional support, and intervention when needed.

### Policy

This Policy of The Cottonwood School (“TCS” or the “Charter School”) Board of Directors (“Board”) has been adopted to establish a fair, objective, and transparent protocol for placement in mathematics courses for students entering 9th grade, in order to ensure the success of every student and to meet the Legislative intent of the California Mathematics Placement Act of 2015.

1. In determining the mathematics course placement for entering 9th grade students, TCS systematically takes multiple objective academic measures of student performance into consideration, including:
  - a. Statewide mathematics assessments, including interim and summative assessments through the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (“CAASPP”).
  - b. Star 360 math assessment score.
  - c. State standards-aligned assessments.
  - d. Classroom assignment and grades.
  - e. Final grade in mathematics on the student’s official, end of the year 8th grade report card.
  - f. Results from all placement checkpoints, including at least one (1) placement checkpoint within the first month of the school year as described in Section 2, below.
2. Charter School will provide at least one (1) placement checkpoint within the first month of the school year to ensure accurate placement and permit reevaluation of individual student progress. All mathematics teachers responsible for teaching 9th grade students will assess the mathematics placements for each 9th grade student assigned to the teacher’s mathematics class. The teacher’s assessment will take into consideration factors which may include, but are not limited to, the student’s classroom assignments, quizzes, tests, exams, grades, classroom participation, and any comments provided by the student, the student’s parent/legal guardian, and/or the student’s other teachers regarding the student’s mathematics placement. Based on the assessment, the teacher will then recommend that the student remain in the current mathematics placement or be transferred to another mathematics placement, in which case the teacher shall specify the mathematics course or level recommended for the student.
3. The Charter School Executive Director or designee shall examine aggregate student placement data annually to ensure that students who are qualified to progress in mathematics courses based on their performance on objective academic measures included in Section 1 of this Policy are not held back in a disproportionate manner on the basis of their race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic background. TCS shall annually report the aggregate results of this examination to the TCS Board.
4. Charter School offers clear and timely recourse for each student and the student’s parent or legal guardian who questions the student’s placement, as follows:
  - a. A parent/legal guardian of any 9th grade student may submit a written request to the Charter School Executive Director, or designee, that:
    - i. Requests information regarding how the student’s mathematics placement was determined. Within five (5) days of receipt of the written request, the Charter School Executive Director or designee shall respond in writing to the parent/legal guardian’s request by providing the information, including the objective academic measures that Charter School relied upon in determining the student’s mathematics placement.
    - ii. Requests that the student retake the placement test, in which case the Executive Director or designee will attempt to facilitate the retest within two (2) weeks.
    - iii. Requests that the student retake the 8th grade end of course final mathematics assessment, in which case the Executive Director or designee will attempt to facilitate the retest within two (2) weeks.

- iv. Requests reconsideration of the student's mathematics placement based on objective academic measures. Within five (5) school days of receipt of the written request, the Charter School Executive Director or designee shall respond in writing to the parent/legal guardian's request. The Executive Director or designee and the student's mathematics teacher must assess the objective academic measures provided by the parent in conjunction with the objective academic measures identified in Section 1 and 2 of this Policy. Based on this assessment, the Executive Director or designee must determine whether the most appropriate mathematics placement for the student is the student's current placement or another placement, in which case the Executive Director shall specify the mathematics course or level recommended for the student. The Executive Director's or designee's response must provide the determination as well as the objective academic measures that the Executive Director or designee relied upon in making that determination.
      - b. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Executive Director or designee requires additional time to respond to a parent/legal guardian's request, the Executive Director or designee will provide a written response indicating that additional time is needed. In no event shall the Executive Director's or designee's response time exceed one (1) month.
      - c. If, after reconsideration of the student's mathematics placement by the Executive Director or designee, the parent/legal guardian is dissatisfied with the student's mathematics placement, the parent/legal guardian may choose to sign a voluntary waiver requesting that the student be placed in another mathematics course against the professional recommendation of the Executive Director or designee, acknowledging and accepting responsibility for this placement.
5. Charter School shall ensure that this Mathematics Placement Policy is posted on its website.
6. This Policy is adopted pursuant to the Mathematics Placement Act of 2015, enacted as Education Code Section 51224.7.

## Appendix A

### Path A Site Based and Homestudy - Math Courses

Course Title	Course
<b>Pre-algebra</b>	<p>The focus of this course is to prepare students for Algebra 1 by providing students with experiences to increase their understanding of mathematical concepts and the related skills and processes.</p> <p><b>Course Placement Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student earned below a C in 8<sup>th</sup> grade math</li><li>• Star 360 test recommendation</li><li>• Standards-aligned assessment</li></ul>
<b>Algebra I</b> <i>(meets a-g*)</i>	<p>The primary goal in Algebra 1 is to help students transfer their concrete mathematical knowledge to more abstract algebraic generalizations. Students explore the topics that include recognizing and developing patterns using tables, graphs and equations. Students will apply mathematical properties to algebraic equations. Students will solve problems using equations, graphs and tables to investigate linear relationships. Throughout this course, students will develop learning strategies, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving techniques to prepare for subsequent math courses and college entrance exams.</p> <p><b>Course Placement Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student earned a C or better in 8<sup>th</sup> grade math</li><li>• Star 360 test recommendation</li><li>• Standards-aligned assessment</li></ul>
<b>Geometry</b> <i>(meets a-g*)</i>	<p>The course develops an understanding of the key concepts: constructions, transformations, parallel and perpendicular lines, right triangles, theorems involving proofs, trigonometry ratios, perimeter, area, volume, and circles. The students will use modeling to extend their understanding of the concepts through real world examples. Throughout this course, students will develop learning strategies, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving techniques to prepare for subsequent math courses and college entrance exams.</p> <p><b>Course Placement Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student earned a C or better in Algebra I or II</li><li>• Star 360 test recommendation</li><li>• Standards-aligned assessment</li></ul>
<b>Algebra II</b> <i>(meets a-g*)</i>	<p>Topics covered will include equations and inequalities, coordinates and graphs, general functions, polynomial and rational functions, exponential and logarithmic functions. Trigonometric functions of angles and of real numbers, analytic trigonometry, systems of equations and inequalities, sequences and series. Throughout this course, students will develop learning strategies, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving techniques to prepare for subsequent math courses and college entrance exams.</p> <p><b>Course Placement Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student earned a C or better in Geometry or Algebra I</li><li>• Star 360 test recommendation</li><li>• Standards-aligned assessment</li></ul>

\*a-g are the UC admission requirements.

## Path B -Homestudy only Math Courses

Course Title	Course
<b>Pre-algebra</b>	<p>The focus of this course is to prepare students for Algebra 1 by providing students with experiences to increase their understanding of mathematical concepts and related skills and processes.</p> <p><b>Course Placement Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student earned below a C in 8<sup>th</sup> grade math</li> <li>• Star 360 test recommendation</li> <li>• Standards-aligned assessment</li> </ul>
<b>Integrated Mathematics I</b> <i>(meets a-g*)</i>	<p>The focus of Mathematics I is to formalize and extend students' understanding of linear functions and their applications. Students build on their prior experiences with data, developing more formal means of assessing how a model fits data. Mathematics I uses properties and theorems involving congruent figures to deepen and extend understanding of geometric knowledge from prior grades.</p> <p><b>Course Placement Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student earned a C or better in 8<sup>th</sup> grade math</li> <li>• Star 360 test recommendation</li> <li>• Standards-aligned assessment</li> </ul>
<b>Integrated Mathematics II</b> <i>(meets a-g*)</i>	<p>The focus of Mathematics II is on quadratic expressions, equations, and functions, and comparing their characteristics and behavior to those of linear and exponential relationships. The need for extending the set of rational numbers arises and real and complex numbers are introduced. The link between probability and data is explored through conditional probability and counting methods, including their use in making and evaluating decisions. The study of similarity leads to an understanding of right triangle trigonometry and connects to quadratics through Pythagorean relationships. Circles, with their quadratic algebraic representations, round out the course.</p> <p><b>Course Placement Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student earned a C or better in Integrated Mathematics I</li> <li>• Star 360 test recommendation</li> <li>• Standards-aligned assessment</li> </ul>
<b>Integrated Mathematics III</b> <i>(meets a-g*)</i>	<p>The standards in the Mathematics III course come from the following conceptual categories: Modeling, Functions, Number and Quantity, Algebra, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Students expand their repertoire of functions to include polynomial, rational, and radical functions. They expand their study of right triangle trigonometry to include general triangles. And, finally, students bring together all their experience with functions and geometry to create models and solve contextual problems.</p> <p><b>Course Placement Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student earned a C or better in Integrated Mathematics II</li> <li>• Star 360 test recommendation</li> <li>• Standards-aligned assessment</li> </ul>

\*a-g are the UC admission requirements.