Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools 7th Grade Math Program

In fall 2014, the district began using the 2014 edition of the *Big Ideas Math* program in sixth and seventh grade as part of an effort to support a smooth transition from elementary school to middle school. This textbook is aligned with the 2011 *Massachusetts Mathematics Frameworks* and is designed to provide a balanced approach between student-directed discovery and teacher-directed instruction. Each lesson begins with an inquiry-based activity and ends with direct instruction.

The 7th grade math program focuses on four critical areas: (1) understanding and applying proportional relationships; (2) understanding operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

The 7th grade math program is taught in two sections: *Math 7* and *Math 7 Flex*. Both sections use the *Big Ideas Math Accelerated* textbook. The main difference between the sections is the challenge level. Students in *Math 7 Flex* are expected to move more quickly from learning new math concepts to the application of math concepts and problem solving. Students are expected to take math concepts and problems to a deeper level of understanding. Students in *Math 7 Flex* are required to maintain a high level of performance on course assignments and assessments throughout the school year. The seventh grade math program is designed with the goal of supporting teachers to tailor instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

Initial section placement is based on multiple data points from each student’s elementary academic performance including MCAS, AIMSWEB, internal assessments, and teacher recommendations. It is important to note that *Math 7 Flex* is geared towards students excited about mathematics learning as demonstrated by:

- Fully participating in class activities and assignments
- Frequently and enthusiastically take on challenging work
- Fully participating in math conversations/debates
- Not being afraid to work slowly to fully understand a concept/problem
- Showing and explain their thinking

Initial placement is the first step in determining the right fit for students in seventh grade math. Over the course of the year, roughly every 6 weeks, 7th grade math teachers and the math/science coordinator K-8 review student progress and determine if a change is needed. The seventh grade math teachers teach both sections of the course. This makes it possible to integrate *Math 7 Flex* work into the *Math 7* course section. Students in *Math 7* have access to the *Flex* work and are encouraged to communicate with their teacher about their math goals.

The 7th grade Math courses are not the start of two different pathways, rather placement into either *Math 7* or *Math 7 Flex* neither restricts, nor guarantees, access to higher level math courses at the High School. All students entering 9th grade will have access to either the College Prep or Honors Level math courses at the High School.

You will receive information from the Office of Teaching and Learning about your child’s initial placement into seventh grade math in May. In the meantime please be in contact with your child’s teacher about their performance.