

How to Decide: Regular or Honors Math?

The depth and level of understanding expected in Honors mathematics course is beyond the scope of the regular level course. Students are not only expected to master algebraic mechanics but also to understand the underlying theory and to apply the concepts to real-world situations in a meaningful ways. Good calculation skills are necessary, but by no means sufficient, to succeed in the course. Material from previous math courses may be briefly reviewed during the first two weeks of the course but are then treated as expected knowledge. Compare the two columns below and decide where your child is most likely to succeed. Students can, and do, fail Honors mathematics courses. With the inevitable budget cuts, students who sign up for an Honors level class will likely have to remain in that class for the entire year. Honors mathematics classes are challenging and are recommended for the highest achieving math students.

Regular Level

Honors

| | |
|--|--|
| My child likes math. | My child loves math. |
| My child is good at computation. | My child is a very persistent problem solver and loves word problems and puzzles. |
| My child is a good student. | My child is academically mature, well-organized, goal-directed, and efficient. |
| My child is a quick learner and does homework when reminded. | My child has an intrinsic motivation to learn and completes all assignments promptly. |
| I want my child in an honors math class. | My child wants to be in an honors math class and is committed to meeting the high expectations of the class. |
| I expect my child to get A's in math class. | I understand that given the difficulty of honors math, my child's grades may be lower than in the past. |
| I expect a teacher to go over concepts repeatedly until the majority of the class understands. | I expect that after a concept is taught it is up to the student to get individual help as needed. |
| I expect a test to contain problems exactly like those that have been practiced in class. | I expect a test to contain problems that require students to extend their thinking beyond problems practiced in class. |
| I expect students to have the use of a calculator for most quizzes, tests, and homework. | I expect that problems should be done without a calculator whenever feasible. |
| I think my child should try an Honors mathematics class. | I know that my child will commit to staying in the class for the duration of the year. |
| My child earned B's and C's in previous mathematics classes. | My child earned over 90% in previous mathematics classes. |