



# EIGHTH GRADE ACADEMIC AGREEMENT

## Enrolled on the First Day of School

Welcome to eighth grade at the Math and Science Academy! Please read the following academic information and sign and return the agreement. Math and Science Academy has accelerated curricula, small class sizes, and is a rigorous, college-prep school. Regardless of a child's previous academic scores on tests or grades in school, ALL eighth grade students will be placed in the following classes:

### **Eighth Grade Courses**

English 8

Math (see information below)

Physical Education (every other day) with Art 8 (every other day)

Global Studies

Spanish class (see information below)

Physical Science

Enrichment course - students will be placed in one of the following courses:

- Band (For new students-band is an option on the new student registration, for returning students- a survey is sent out to all parents in early March); or
- Study Skills (Semester 1) for all new students and Engineering (S2)
- Returning students not registered for Band: One semester of Study Skills (teacher recommended) OR Young Adult Literature OR Art & Technology OR Poetry and one semester of Astronomy

### **MATH**

#### **New students:**

All incoming eighth grade students will be given a math placement exam. The math placement exam will determine if the student will be placed in Integrated Math I (to be on track to graduate), Integrated Math II, or Integrated Math III. MSA's math courses are advanced compared to other schools.

#### **Returning students:**

Returning students will follow the math progression courses and be placed accordingly. For example, if a student successfully completed Integrated I, the next course the student will take is Integrated II.

### **SPANISH**

#### **New students:**

All incoming eighth grade students with previous Spanish experience will take a placement test to determine a starting level and follow the flow chart from there.

- Students with little or no previous Spanish classes will be placed in High School Spanish I.
- Students who have not had previous Spanish classes and begin after the sixth week of school will not be placed in a Spanish class until ninth grade. New students who are not taking Spanish in 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be placed in Art & Technology or Poetry or Astronomy (Semester 1) and Art & Technology or Young Adult Literature or Poetry or Astronomy (Semester 2).

#### **Returning students:**

Students returning to MSA for eighth grade will be placed in the next course progression. Students who successfully completed Spanish 1B in 7<sup>th</sup> grade will progress to Spanish II as an eighth grader.

## Grading

Students who receive a **final grade of an F** for the following classes are required to retake the course in 9<sup>th</sup> grade: English 8, Physical Science, Global Studies

Below are the Math and Spanish grading expectations.

Course	Grade level	Must receive the following grade to progress to next class	Student who receive the below grades for the course in 8 <sup>th</sup> grade must retake the course in 9 <sup>th</sup> grade
Int Math I	8	D- or better to progress to Integrated Math II	F ⇨ Repeat Integrated Math I
Int Math II	8	C- or better to progress to Int Math III	D+, D, D-, or F ⇨ Repeat Int Math II
Int Math III	8	B- or better to progress to Pre-calculus	C+ - F ⇨ Repeat Int Math III
HS Spanish I	8	D- or better to progress to Spanish II	F ⇨ Repeat HS Spanish I
Spanish II	8	C- or better to progress to Spanish III	D+, D, D-, or F ⇨ Repeat Spanish II
Spanish III	8	B- or better to progress to Spanish IV	C+ - F ⇨ Repeat Spanish III

## Eighth Grade Student and Parent Expectations

EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Be challenged on a daily basis. Students should be committed to moving through materials at a demanding rate and have the ability to advocate for themselves as needed. Students will need to be able to manage their time wisely and be committed to spending a lot of time on their school work, both during school and out of school.
- Complete their assignments daily. **Expected amount of daily homework for a eighth grade student is approximately 1.5 – 2 hours.**
- Write assignments in some sort of organizer. Teachers often instruct students at the beginning of every class to write assignments down.
- Be prepared for tests. Students usually know about major tests one to two weeks before the test and need to make sure they study every night for at least 10-15 minutes until the night before the test, when they should study for a longer time.
- Problem solve when having trouble with homework. Students should try this progression of steps: Looking at their notes, looking at the class website, calling a friend, calling/emailing the teacher in a timely manner, checking in with the teacher during teacher office hours (before or after school).
- Manage their part in group projects. When completing group projects, students are expected to use in-class time wisely, communicate with their project partners outside of class (phone, email, messaging, etc.), and communicate any problems or concerns promptly with their teacher.
- Pace themselves when working on projects. Teachers usually chunk larger projects into smaller pieces, and students need to stay on top of those smaller pieces so they are not overwhelmed by the final due date.

- To prioritize school work over extra-curricular activities. Schoolwork should come first. Students are expected to complete their assignments, even if they have many activities in one evening.
- Turn in work on time. In middle school, late work receives a 50% grade reduction. In some high school classes, late work receives no credit.
- Be respectful to others. Students must take responsibility for their actions, their community, and to follow the MSA Student Handbook.

**PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:**

- **Be aware of the academic challenges at MSA.** If your student struggles with school, you will be expected to help your student with study skills and organization.
- Read the school announcements daily.
- Provide a place for your student to study.
- Read their student’s organizer daily and help their student create a daily schedule to get all of their homework completed in a timely manner. That can be a lot for a younger student to understand, and they need reminders to reinforce the message at home.
- Provide the resources to help students complete their assignments but not to do the work for the students. This includes picking up a computer and turning all forms in before the first day of school.
- Help students balance their activities with their schoolwork by not allowing students to be over-scheduled. Schoolwork should come first. Students are expected to complete their assignments, even if they have activities in one evening.
- Check Skyward Family Access and class websites as necessary and contact teachers if you have any questions. Parents may set up Skyward notifications if a student earns a grade below a certain level.
- Volunteer at MSA in whatever ways are possible.

**Additional Information**

Visit the MSA website at [mnmsa.org](http://mnmsa.org) to read about the following information:

- Grading Handbook at [mnmsa.org/Current Families/handbooks and guides](http://mnmsa.org/Current Families/handbooks and guides)
- MSA course book to see the progression from grade to grade - [mnmsa.org/About MSA or mnmsa.org/Current Families/handbooks and guides](http://mnmsa.org/About MSA or mnmsa.org/Current Families/handbooks and guides)
- Student Handbook at [mnmsa.org/Current Families/handbooks and guides](http://mnmsa.org/Current Families/handbooks and guides)

I have read the above eighth grade academic agreement regarding courses, grading, student and parent expectations, and additional information located on the MSA website:

Student’s Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please print)

Parent’s Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please print)