

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to Precalculus! The Precalculus course at MHS is designed to further your studies of higher-level mathematics in order to give you the necessary background for Calculus. The topics that will be covered and the focus on problem solving throughout the course will help to prepare you for future pursuits that may include mathematically connected careers. Precalculus requires you to think constantly, critically, and with depth. You will be required to quickly recall and use the concepts and skills taught to you in previous math courses, with an emphasis on Algebra II.

The Precalculus course is very different from Algebra II. Where Algebra II tends to be very mechanical, and procedural; Precalculus is more application based. An emphasis will be placed upon analysis rather than just the memorization of facts. Thus good critical thinking skills are essential. In Algebra II part of the year was spent re-learning concepts previously taught to you in Algebra I. In the Precalculus course there will be very little re-teaching of previously learned concepts and skills. The curriculum is designed to extend and enhance your current mathematical knowledge of polynomial and rational functions and their graphs, and then to teach exponential and logarithmic functions and trigonometry.

In order to be successful in Precalculus, you may need to change the way you approach doing homework, how you prepare for class, the way you take notes and participate in class, and in the way you study for assessments. In class you will be introduced to new concepts and taught the skills needed to solve various types of problems. In class you will see some problem types modeled. It is expected that you will be able to apply those skills learned in class to solving similar but non-routine problems in your homework, on assignments, and on assessments.

You have an exciting and challenging year ahead. The following suggestions should help you achieve success in the Precalculus class. This information will be helpful throughout the year, so refer to it often.

Sincerely,

Ms. Rafferty

HERE ARE OUR RECIOMMENDATIONS TO HELP YOU BE SUCCESSFUL IN PRECALCULUS

Homework:

- Do Precalculus every day! Split the homework assignment into 2 nights
- Leave space next to each problem in order to make corrections or notations
- Always make an attempt on every problem assigned!
- Refer to notes, in-class examples, and your textbook if you are unsure of a problem
- Consider doing additional problems for extra practice

Class Notes:

- Take thorough, detailed notes – including all class examples
- Keep an organized binder that includes notes, handouts, homework and returned assignments and assessments

Class Participation:

- Come to class prepared every day with all necessary materials and the completed homework assignment.
- Correct homework during review
- Complete in-class problem sets and activities.
- Ask and answer questions!

Class Preparation:

- Complete all problems on the pre-requisite skills review packets
- Be sure you can recall and implement the previously learned skills necessary for the new concepts
- Think about reading the next section in your textbook prior to class
- Flag the homework problems that cause you difficulty

Extra Help:

- Stay after school at the first sign of difficulty, do not wait!
- Come prepared to ask specific questions
- Seek help from peers as well as the teacher

Studying:

- Do NOT wait until the day before an assessment to study
- Do 2-4 problems from a previous section each and every day – about 10-15 minutes at most
- Always try to do problems first without referring to notes or homework
- Refer to notes, in-class examples, and your textbook when you are unsure of a problem
- Get together with a peer to help prepare for assessments

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THE SHEET BELOW

Student's Name (PRINT)

Block _____

2012 – 2013 Precalculus CP -- Signature Sheet

I have read both the 2012-2013 Student Expectations and the Student Letter for the Precalculus CP course.

I am aware of the requirements and I understand the expectations for the class.

Student's Signature

Parent's Signature

Date