Math Town Hall Questions and Answers

April 28, 2021 and May 5, 2021

Question	Answer
Would you share the PPT or the recording later?	Yes, we will share the presentation in the Friday Superintendent Newsletter on 4/30/2021. We will not be sharing the presentation yet as we want to make sure that everyone has the context around the presentation and has a chance to listen to the teachers/presenters share information.
What accomodations and path are there for students below grade level math?	For students needing additional support, Crocker offers a Flex class where students can get additional support from subject-area teachers. Teachers are also able to differentiate in class to provide support on an individual or small-group basis.
Can parents request for their student to be placed in the accelerated track? Given I have 2 HS students I see the importance of completing Algebra 1 by the end of 8th grade. Most College majors require Calculus which cannot be achieved without accelerating.	We will be using multiple measures of assessments to determine if a sixth grader is ready for acceleration in the 7th grade. If they are assessed as not yet ready for acceleration, they can still be assessed in 7th grade for placement in the Summer Bridge program to be placed in HS Algebra 1 in 8th grade. If the students are still assessed to not be ready for acceleration in middle school, our feeder public high schools also provide opportunities for acceleration during their high school tenure. In short, there is an opportunity for acceleration in every year, in order to achieve Calculus (and perhaps beyond) by the end of their senior year in High School. Algebraic concepts are embedded in the Curriculum and Instructions in Common Core 6, 7, and 8. The Algebra course that used to be presented in 8th grade middle school is not necessarily the same High-School Algebra 1 curriculum as the one we are teaching in our accelerated track.
Could you describe the Summer Bridge Program, please?	Summer bridge is offered in the spring of each year after the school year is out. It is about 4-hours/day of concepts that have not yet been covered for students to make sure they are caught up and ready to move into an accelerated or compressed pathway.
Can you provide more detail on what measures will be used to place an incoming 7th grader in either common core or the new compressed path?	There are multiple measures that will be used to make this decision. These include student work samples, standardized tests, unit assessments, and student input. There are other measures that may be used, as well.
Any thought of starting compressed 7th grade math starting next year? It wouldn't harm any current students since you are planning to have it start up after common core 6th grade so all current 6th grade	Great question. Currently there are 5 chapters of 7th grade content that are covered in ACC 6. If we were to move to the compressed track next year, the students who are in ACC 6 this year would be repeating those 5 chapters next year. We could, however, trim out some of the 8th grade

students would qualify to test to place into it.	content that will be repeated in Algebra 1. This would afford us more time to explore some concepts in more depth.
Helpful to hear the benefits for 6th graders with the heterogeneous model. However for those who then jump to a 7th grade accelerated program, is there concern that having to compress essentially 2 years of academics into one year creates an even greater "memorize" vs. "engage" approach?	This is a consideration and something to definitely be mindful of. Our current curriculum does provide a pathway for a Compressed 7/8 course, as shared in the presentation. Some of the content that would be redundant between ACC7 and HS Algebra 1 is eliminated to create space to address concepts that are new in the Compressed 7/8 course.
Is there a way for my child to test out of compressed 6th and 7th grade math and enter into Algebra 1 in 6th grade. He has completed Algebra 1 through AoPS and wants to do more.	For any questions regarding testing out of the current or future math pathways at Crocker, please contact Principal Maria Brady at mbrady@hcsdk8.org or Director Matthew Lindner at mlindner@hcsdk8.org.
Does Crocker have manipulatives for students to use, especially those who are more visual-spatial? BTW, thank you for putting new program concepts together. Very encouraging!	You are welcome! Yes, Crocker students do have access to various manipulatives to help them solidify their mathematical understanding during class.
How will the teachers in 6th grade make sure the more advanced students are engaged with the material and not be bored? Are there/will there be ready-set "extra" materials prepared that will be provided to keep the students appropriately challenged?	The 6th grade teachers will differentiate lessons to meet the needs of students in the classes. Fortunately, our teachers have taught various grade levels, all the way up into high school, and can help students build upon concepts that they're ready to tackle earlier based on their understanding of the concepts. We know that some students may show greater strength in some areas of mathematics than in others. The 6th grade team is prepared to support the engagement of all students in a heterogeneously built class.
What does "proposed" mean? How and when will it be decided which path will be implemented for this coming year?	This is an adjustment from what is currently done at Crocker and will be shared with the Board of Trustees at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees on Wednesday, May 12th, 2021 at 6:00pm. The Board of Trustees will decide on whether to approve the adjustment to the course pathway offered at Crocker for mathematics.
If research shows that the heterogeneous approach results in more kids achieving at a higher level why is it only done for 1 year, why not for all of middle school?	There are some districts that have considered and done this exact thing. At this point in HCSD, we want to support all students in getting to High School Algebra 1 in 8th grade and this adjustment to the middle-school course sequence supports that.
How much time in 6th grade math is spent on writing? For students who love and accel at math but don't love or accel at writing, how do you maintain their love of math and numbers?	Writing in mathematics does not take up a large portion of the day but it is a critical way of communicating mathematical understanding. However, there are other ways that students communicate their depth of knowledge such as through oral presentations, diagrams, and detailing the

	step-by-step mathematical sequence they used to arrive at an answer. Each of these ways of communicating understanding, using the correct academic language, can be used at various times depending on the context and circumstances of the lesson.
What parental input on the different paths are taken before and at the board meeting for the decision, and how?	You are welcome to share any input with Director Matthew Lindner (mlindner@hcsdk8.org), Superintendent Dr. Louann Carlomagno (lcarlomagno@hcsdk8.org), or any of our Trustees before the meeting. There will also be public comment on this agenda item at the meeting on Wednesday, May 12th, 2021.
Does Crocker offer a math club and if so, how are they supported and pushed to do more complex problems and solve real world problems?	Math club existed for many years at Crocker prior to COVID-19 campus closures. Due to COVID protocols this year, math club did not happen. However, it has been a club in the past and it is planned that this will be a club for interested students again in the future. This will begin in Fall 2021 and includes opportunities to engage in math contests and competitions.
Does this mean current 5th graders won't be taking a Math placement test like they normally would for 6th grade?	Correct. Current 5th graders will not take a formal placement test for 6th grade. Instead, all students will enter 6th grade math and have placement for 7th determined throughout the year by the 6th grade teachers. Information on student math learning from 5th grade will be shared with 6th grade teachers to help them prepare for the incoming class.
Thanks for answering the above question. Also curious on the research -- is the benefit of heterogeneous math across ALL students or is it more skewed towards those at or below grade level or students who may be more advanced?	From what we've seen so far, the studies have shown that students at/below grade-level make up more ground than they would have and those that had strong math achievement initially did as well as their peers in traditional accelerated courses, meaning they did not show any decline due to being in heterogeneous classes.
How does homework compare for Common Core vs the Accelerated classes?	Homework is pretty similar in amounts, and sometimes the assignments are very similar or even the same.
Will students who are taking compressed 7/8 and then HS Algebra 1 not get a deeper understanding since those are more compacted?	Ensuring students have a strong foundation in 6th grade mathematics with opportunities to deepen and extend their learning will help set them up to tackle more challenging topics in a compressed 7/8 course and then HS Algebra 1 with depth as they'll have a stronger foundation upon which to anchor new learning in these courses.