

**Explorer Middle School**  
**2008-2009**  
Ms. Latham's  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Course Description

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Welcome to the 2008-2009 school year! I am excited to be working with your child this year. I hold high expectations and goals for this year, but I will make these realistic and achievable. It is extremely important that your child feels successful and I will strive to stimulate and encourage all students to work to the best of their abilities so that they may reach their own level of excellence. It is very important that we work as a team and that your student has a clear understanding of what our expectations are for him/her. I have covered these expectations in class and I ask you to re-enforce them at home. Please take the time to review this plan with your child, sign the tear off section indicating that you have done so and have your child return it to class by **August 15<sup>th</sup>**. Please keep the information section for your own reference.

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**Course Outline & Expectations**

This course will follow the district and state content standards, as well as the students' individual goals. Students will be encouraged to work to the best of their ability through the use of note-taking, the mathematics textbook, Study Island, as well as various other resources. The following is a breakdown of how the students will be receiving points towards their grade throughout the year:

1. Every Monday - Thursday, there will be a daily warm-up that will be written on the board. It will either be a few review problems or a word problem. The warm ups will need to be written and answered in a spiral notebook, and will be handed in on Thursday for credit. Each day 5 points can be earned for the warm up. Full credit will be given for each day that the work is shown to solve the problem(s) and the answer. If the answer is incorrect, then full points can still be earned by showing the corrections on the paper as we go over it. If the original problem is incorrect, with work shown, and no corrections were made; then partial points would be earned.
  
2. Each quarter a folder of various types of review work will be handed out. They will include word problems, logical and deductive reasoning, and computation. Each quarter 12 pages will need to be completed at 10 points each (for a total of 120 points each quarter). To receive full points on the pages, work must be shown on that page or a paper attached in the folder showing the work. The folders are to remain in the classroom in the bins. And are not

to go home. They are to be worked on when work is finished early in class as well as certain days in which time will be set aside to work on them.

3. Each Friday, a quiz on material from that week and/or the week prior will be given. It will consist of roughly 10 questions and notes will be allowed to be used during the quiz.

\*\*If there is ever a substitute in the room and the substitute reports that the ENTIRE class had EXCELLENT behavior, then the lowest quiz score up to that point can be dropped for each student. This will occur each time I am absent.

4. Homework will be assigned every night Monday-Thursday. For students to receive full credit, the "homework hints" must be followed (see handout).

5. At the end of each unit, students will be given a test covering the learned material. The students may not use their notes during a test.

6. By completing activities on Study Island when instructed.

\*\* Grading for the class will be broken down by the following:

Class work/homework= 20%

Quizzes= 35%

Tests= 45%

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### **Assignment Planners**

Assignment planners are required and are to be brought everyday to school. The planners are a student's "life line" for assignments. You may also write notes to me in the planner (e.g.: student had difficulty with an assignment, something came up and student was unable to complete assignment, questions or concerns, etc.). It is the student's responsibility to use it to assist him/her in completing all given assignments. I ask that you monitor this document on a daily basis throughout the year.

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### **Classroom Rules and Procedures**

All school and district regulations are to be followed. (See Student Handbook)

All students are to use their assignment planner on a daily basis.

No food or drinks in the classroom except water bottles containing water. Students may bring a snack to eat outside during breaks. No gum is allowed at school.

Arrive on time. Any student who is not in his/her seat when the bell rings is considered

tardy. Please see the student handbook for more information regarding tardy policies. Be courteous of self, fellow classmates, your classroom, and the teachers. Respect the rights of others. No one shall behave in such a manner as to interrupt the ability of another to learn or teach. This also applies to substitute teachers who may take over the class.

Use appropriate language at all times and never use put-downs. No bullying!!!

Respect property. Take care of your property, the property of others, and the property of the school.

Be organized and prepared for class. Have pens, pencils, paper, binders, and required books in class each day.

Complete all assignments and turn them in on time.

Keep your hands and feet to yourself. Do not toss or throw anything around in the room.

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### **Homework/Late Work Policy**

It is essential that students turn in their work on time. However, I will accept late assignments, but the student will only receive partial credit (60% of original grade). Homework that is not turned in is replaced with a "Missing Homework Ticket." A student will fill out this ticket and turn it in instead of the assignment. On the ticket, the student must explain why the assignment was not completed on time.

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### **Absence Policy**

Work missed due to excused absences may be turned in late; however, this does not apply to projects that were assigned before the absence. Students will be given 3 days to complete make up work for each day they are absent or it will become a late assignment. It is the student's responsibility to check the homework boards for the missing assignments and worksheets. Furthermore, it is the student's responsibility to speak with me to make up a test/quiz and to get any other information he/she may need due to the absence.

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### **Supplies:**

2 single-subject spiral notebooks (1 for Math notes and 1 for Daily warm-ups)

Supply of college rule lined paper (8.5" x 11")

1 red ink pen for correcting

At least 2 sharpened or mechanical pencils

Box(es) of tissues to donate to the classroom

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Once again, I am excited to have the opportunity to work with your child this year. Please do not hesitate to call me before or after school at (602) 449-4200 ext. 4239. For those who prefer email, you may reach me at [slatham@pvschools.net](mailto:slatham@pvschools.net).

Sincerely,

Sarah Latham

**PLEASE READ THE ENTIRE MATH COURSE DESCRIPTION  
AND RETURN THIS SECTION FOR CREDIT BY AUGUST 15TH**

We have read and discussed your course description and policies, as well as the "homework

hints" handout regarding homework procedures with

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(Student Name)

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Student Signature

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Parent/Guardian Signature

Date