**8th Grade Math/Algebra I**

Dear Parents,

I look forward to working with your child in this graduating year at Visitation. This year your child possibly will test to get into high school and test for placement. Therefore, I would like to share some tips for a successful year. Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions or concerns at [cmuir@visitationschool.org](mailto:cmuir@visitationschool.org)

**Keys for Success**

HSPT: In January, students will take a high school entrance exam (likely, the HSPT or ISEE). Preparation for these exams is crucial. We will devote class time to the mathematics portions of those tests. In addition, I will provide students with study aids and worksheets for test preparation. Please understand today’s high schools are often very competitive, and success on these tests means a great deal.

GOOD NOTE TAKING: As most of us likely remember from our high school and college years, good note-taking skills are invaluable. Students are asked to take notes daily. A successful student’s notebook will be neat, organized and complete. Notebooks are graded as part of classwork each trimester. If absent, students are to get the notes from a classmate immediately upon their return. Notebooks are great study aids for tests.

HOMEWORK and CORRECTIONS: Homework will be given daily (excluding test days). Each homework assignment will consist of problems meant to reinforce understanding/skills of the day’s lesson. Homework is to follow the specific format given and is to be presented neatly. Necessary work is to be shown, and ALL problems are to be attempted.

Each day students are asked to check their homework for errors and are expected to correct those errors on a separate correction page. Corrections are to be worked on before students begin their homework assignment. This process helps students to gain a better understanding of math concepts and become more aware of their math weaknesses.

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE: Math tests in 8th grade are on a two-week cycle. allows for eight days of instruction and a review day prior to testing day. This is a shift from earlier grades that tested more often. Students are to turn-in their homework packet (including corrections) for the entire testing cycle PRIOR to the start of the test.

TEST PREPARATION: Students will know exactly which material will be on the test. This makes studying for math tests a manageable goal and an expected activity. Students can use (1) the odd numbered problems from textbook sections (they are rarely assigned for homework, and their answers are in the back of the book), (2) the assigned review, and (3) their notes to properly prepare for the test. Students should study until an acceptable level of mastery has been proven to themselves.

WILLINGNESS TO LEARN: There is likely no greater indicator of a student’s success than a student’s motivation to learn. Each day I attempt to prepare and implement lessons that will engage student learning. I use a variety of teaching strategies to that end. I value the discovery process and group collaboration, and I provide direct instruction models and opportunities to practice skills. If a student comes to class willing to learn, then I am more able to facilitate that student’s success.