



NINTH GRADE ACADEMIC AGREEMENT

Enrolled on the First Day of School

Welcome to ninth grade and high school 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, ninth grade students will be placed in the following classes:

Ninth Grade Courses

Literature & Composition

Math (*see information below*)

Physical Education (every other day) with Health (every other day)

Ancient World History and Geography

Spanish class (*see information below*)

Biology or AP Biology (*see information below*)

Freshmen Seminar (new students)

Elective – one full year or two semester courses (returning students)

New students who would like to register for Band will be placed in Wind Ensemble Online

MATH

New students: All incoming ninth grade students will be given a math placement exam. The math placement exam will determine if the student will be placed in Algebra I, Algebra II, or Algebra III. To be on track to graduate from MSA, new students ideally should begin in Algebra II. However, please see pages 5-6 regarding the math program and other options available to advance and graduate from MSA if the student is beginning in Algebra I. 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 Algebra II, the next course the student will take is Algebra III.

SPANISH

New students: All incoming ninth grade students with previous Spanish experience will take a placement test to determine a starting level and follow the flow chart from there. For students who have no previous Spanish courses, the student will be placed in HS Spanish I in 9th grade.

Returning students: Students returning to MSA for ninth grade who successfully completed their Spanish course will be placed in the next course on the progression chart.

SCIENCE

New students: New ninth grade students have the option to register for AP Biology if there is room in the class and the incoming ninth grade student meets the following criteria:

- Have A- or better grades on their middle school transcript (this includes all classes listed on the transcript)

Student was admitted and registration was turned in by August 15.

Returning students: Returning ninth grade students have the option to register for AP Biology in January of their 8th grade year. No exceptions will be given for students who did not follow the registration process.



Grading

Students who receive a **final grade of an F** for the following classes are required to retake the course in 10th grade: PE, Health, Literature & Composition, Biology or AP Biology, Ancient World History

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 9 th grade must retake the course in 10 th grade
Algebra I	9	D- or better to progress to Algebra II	F ⇒ Repeat Algebra I
Algebra II	9	D- or better to progress to Algebra III	F ⇒ Repeat Algebra II
Algebra III	9	C- or better to progress to Pre-calculus	D+ - F ⇒ Repeat Algebra III
Pre-calculus	9	B- or better to progress to Calculus or AP Calculus AB	C+ - F ⇒ Repeat Pre-calculus
HS Spanish I	9	D- or better to progress to Spanish II	F ⇒ Repeat HS Spanish I
Spanish II	9	D- or better to progress to Spanish III	F ⇒ Repeat Spanish II
Spanish III	9	C- or better to progress to Spanish IV	D+ - F ⇒ Repeat Spanish III
Spanish IV	9	B- or better to progress to Spanish V	C+ - F ⇒ Repeat Spanish IV

Ninth Grade Student and Parent Expectations

NINTH 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 ninth grade student is approximately 2-3 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. High school late work receives partial or no credit.
- Be respectful to others. Students must take responsibility for their actions, their community, and to follow the MSA Student Handbook.

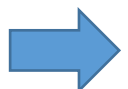
PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- **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.
- 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.

MSA Graduation Requirements

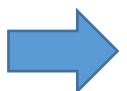
Students complete the Minnesota academic standards by taking a core course of study that equips them with the knowledge and skills they need for success in post-secondary education, highly skilled work, and civic life. In order to graduate, MSA students must complete the required MSA subject specific requirements as well as a minimum of 21.5 total credits to meet Minnesota state requirements.

See next page for MSA graduation requirements by subject area.



MSA Graduation Requirements

Subject	MN State Graduation Requirements	MSA Graduation Requirements
English	4 Credits	4 credits which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature and Composition World/British Literature
		Choose 2 from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Literature AP Literature & Composition Research Writing (1 semester)/Composition (1 semester)
Math	3 credits, including Algebra II, geometry, statistics and probability sufficient to satisfy the standards.	3 credits which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression through Calculus
Science	3 credits of Science, including a biology credit.	3 credits which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biology OR AP Biology Chemistry OR AP Chemistry Physics OR AP Physics
Social Studies	3½ credits of social studies , including U.S. history, geography, government and citizenship, world history and economics.	4 credits which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ancient World History and Geography Modern World History and Human Geography American History Political Science (semester)/ Introduction to Economics (semester)
Fine/ Visual Arts	1 credit	1 credit (1 year)
Foreign Language	Not Required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many colleges/universities look for at least 2 years of a foreign language. 	Progression through Spanish Flowchart based on placement level and grade of enrollment to MSA.
Health/ P.E.	Not required	1 credit (1 year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 semester each of Health and P.E.
Electives	7 elective credits	<i>See Course Guide at mnmsa.org/About MSA tab/course guide</i>



Typical MSA High School Course Progression

Can vary based on course placement level and year of enrollment at MSA.

	9th grade	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade
English	Literature & Composition	British & World Literature	American Literature Research Writing/Composition	
Math	Algebra III W/Geometry & Trig	Pre-Calculus	Calculus	
Science	Biology	Chemistry	Physics	
History	Ancient World History & Geography	Modern World History & Human Geography	American History Political Science/ Introduction to Economics	
Spanish	Spanish III	Spanish IV	Spanish V	
Phy Ed /Health	Physical Education/Health			
Fine/Visual Arts	1.000 credit of Fine/Visual Arts required by graduation.			
Elective Courses	Additional elective courses may be required in order to reach the 21.5 total credit graduation requirement.			

MSA math options for students who are not on track to graduate as seniors

1. PSEO courses

We can accept passing grades in PSEO courses in place of our core math courses. Most of the PSEO schools offer both Pre-calculus and Calculus as semester long courses. Some of them offer summer courses too. Students must test into the PSEO course in the first place from the college the student is enrolling. Many of the PSEO schools use the Accuplacer test, and no calculator is allowed. Students receiving a passing grade in a PSEO course do not have to take a course final with us to demonstrate mastery.

2. Online courses

We cannot accept online courses in place of our core math courses, this is a Board of Directors policy. Students can use online courses to help them master the topics of a math course, and then come in and take a course final (scoring 80% or higher) at the end of the summer to demonstrate mastery and move on to the next course. We can provide the student with a detailed list of topics covered in our course and the name of the textbook we use. The responsibility is on the student to do the learning.

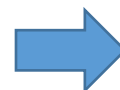
Here are some places that offer online courses:

Brigham Young University <http://is.byu.edu>

Minnesota Online High School <http://www.mnohs.org>

Northern Star Online <http://northernstaronline.org>

The Straighter Line <http://www.straighterline.com>



3. Learning centers and private tutoring

We cannot accept learning center or private tutor work in place of our core math courses, this is a Board of Directors policy. Students can use learning centers or private tutors to help them master the topics of a math course, and then come in and take a course final (scoring 80% or higher) at the end of the summer to demonstrate mastery and move on to the next course. We can provide the student with a detailed list of topics covered in our course and the name of the textbook we use, if a textbook is used in the course. It is the student's responsibility to do the learning.

4. Home district credit recovery

Students are allowed to take credit recovery courses in their home districts in place of our core courses, if they are not on track to graduate as a senior. Unfortunately, the districts often do not offer Algebra III with Geometry and trigonometry, Pre-Calculus or Calculus as credit recovery courses since they are not graduation requirements for other schools. All credit recovery courses must be pre-approved by MSA.

5. Students do not have to leave MSA once their senior year is finished. Students may remain in high school until age 21 in the state of Minnesota. Students may return to MSA after their senior year to take math courses.

6. Students who are not on track to graduate can transfer to another high school. We have had students do this in the past. They have often already met the other school's graduation requirements and can take electives for the final semester of their senior year.

Additional Information

Visit the MSA website at mnmsa.org to read about the following information:

- Grading Handbook at 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
- Student Handbook at mnmsa.org/Current Families/handbooks and guides

I have read the above ninth 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)