



Academic Expectations and Guide to Success at MSA

Grade 12

Welcome to grade twelve at the Math and Science Academy! Please read the following academic information and sign 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, ALL grade eleven students will be placed in the following classes:

Grade 12 Courses

All grade twelve students are expected to be registered for the following courses or their equivalency:

American Literature, AP Literature & Composition, or Composition (S1), Research Writing (S2)
Math (see information below)
Political Science (S1) and Introduction to Economics (S2)
Spanish class (if Spanish V was not completed in grade 11; see information below)
Science (if three credits of science were not completed; Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
Electives – two-three periods of electives

MATH

New students: All incoming twelfth grade students will be given a math placement exam. The math placement exam will determine if the student will be placed in Calculus. Please see the math information included in this guide for twelfth grade. There are other options available to advance and graduate from MSA if the student is beginning in Pre-calculus. 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 Pre-calculus, the next course the student will take is Calculus or AP Calculus AB.

SPANISH

New students: All incoming twelfth 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 High School Spanish I in 12th grade.

Returning students: Students returning to MSA for twelfth grade who successfully completed their Spanish course will be placed in the next course on the progression chart, or if Spanish V was successfully completed in grade 11, then the student will not need a Spanish class.

SCIENCE

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

- Approval from the AP teacher
- Student was admitted and registration was turned in by August 15

Returning students: Returning students have the option to register for AP science courses in December of their 11th grade year. No exceptions will be given for students who did not follow the registration process.

Grading

MSA has two semesters; Semester 1 and Semester 2. Students receive grades for Semester 1, Semester 2, and the Final. Semester 1 grades are finalized and posted on Skyward Family Access the Thursday after the semester end. Semester 2 and Final grades are finalized and posted the Thursday after the last day of school.

Students who receive a **final grade of an F** for the following classes will not graduate (see next page for math and Spanish requirements):
English requirement and Political Science/Introduction to Economics

Math Grade Expectations

Below are the math expectations and progression for ninth grade students:

Course	Grade level	Must receive the following grade to progress to next class	Student who receive the below grades for the course in 12 th grade must pass to graduate from MSA
Calculus	12	D- or better to graduate	
AP Calculus AB	12	D- or better to graduate	

Spanish Grade Expectations

Below are the Spanish expectations and progression for ninth grade students:

Course	Grade level	Must receive the following grade to progress to next class	Student who receive the below grades for the course in 12 th grade must pass to graduate
Spanish II-V, HS Spanish I	12	D- or better to graduate	

MSA Graduation Requirements

Students complete the Minnesota academic standards by taking a core course of student that equips them with the knowledge and skills they need for success in post-secondary education, highly skilled work, and civic life. MSA students must complete the required subject specific requirements as well as a minimum of 21.5 credits to meet Minnesota state requirements. Please reference the graduation requirements located at mnmsa.org, Current Families tab, Counseling Department, Graduation Requirements.

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

There are several math options to students who are not on track to graduate:

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 final with MSA to demonstrate mastery.

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 Integrated Math III, Pre-calculus, or Calculus as credit recovery courses since they are not graduation requirements from other schools. All credit recovery courses must be pre-approved by MSA.

Other math options

1. Learning centers and private tutoring. MSA 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.
2. Students do not have to leave MSA once their senior year is finished. Students may remain in high school until the age of 21 in the state of Minnesota. Students may return to MSA after their senior year to take math courses.
3. 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 their final semester of their senior year.

Student and Parent/Guardian Expectations

All students are expected to:

- 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 **MIDDLE SCHOOL student** is approximately **1½ - 2 hours**.
These are estimates that may vary between students for different subjects

- Expected amount of daily homework for a **HIGH SCHOOL student** is approximately **2 - 3 hours**.
These estimates may vary significantly for high school students who enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) courses.
- Write assignments in some sort of an organizer.
 - Teachers often instruct students at the beginning of every class to write assignments down.
- Check teacher websites and Google Classroom.
- 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.
 - Check the MSA test and community calendar. Problem solve when having trouble with homework.
 - Students should try this progression of steps: Look at their notes, look at the class website, contact the teacher in a timely manner, check in with the teacher during teacher office hours (before or after school), or contact a classmate for help.
- 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:
 - In middle school, late work receives point reductions/deductions.
 - In high school classes, teachers have discretion on whether to give credit on late work.
- Be respectful to others.
 - Students must take responsibility for their actions, for their community, and must follow the MSA Student Handbook.

All Parents/Guardians 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.
 - That can be a lot for a younger student to understand, and they need reminders to reinforce the message at home.
- 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 many 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.

Additional Information

Visit the MSA website at mnmsa.org/Current Families/Handbooks and Guides to read about the following information:

- MSA Course Guide to see the progression from grade to grade
- Student Handbook

By signing below the parent/guardian and student acknowledge they have read the above Academic Expectations and Guide to Success at MSA:

Parent/guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

Student signature: _____

Date: _____