**Waterloo Junior High School 8th Grade Algebra I Syllabus**



**2019-2020**

**Teacher:** Mrs. Niemietz

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**Website:** mrsniemietz.weebly.com

**Room:** 221

**Textbook**

A textbook will not be followed traditionally in math this year. As a result, students will be given material during class to assist with homework, and it will be compiled in their math binder. My website is an additional source for assistance with videos posted for each objective learned plus Google Classroom will have informative posts as well.

**Course Objectives**

The fundamental purpose of this course is to formalize and extend the mathematics that our students have learned in previous grades. This is a more ambitious version of Algebra I than has generally been offered, as outlined in the new Illinois State Common Core Standards. Each unit will deepen and extend student understanding of linear and exponential relationships by exploring models presented in graphical, tabular, and symbolic form. Students will engage in a variety of methods for analyzing, solving, and using linear, exponential, and quadratic functions. The \*Mathematical Practice Standards will apply throughout to ensure that students experience mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations.

\*Mathematical Practice Standards:

* Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
* Reason abstractly and quantitatively
* Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
* Model with mathematics
* Use appropriate tools strategically
* Attend to precision
* Look for and make use of structure
* Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

**Classroom Rules**

Classroom rules include:

* Be respectful (to me, your peers, and yourself).
* Be in your seat and ready to work when the bell rings (prepare materials for class, sharpen pencils, get homework out).
* Bring expected materials (binder, homework, paper, pencil, eraser, agenda – if materials are not brought to class it will result in a tardy).
* Be on task at all times and participate (when given time in class to work – use it!).
* Technology should only be used when given permission and used appropriately. (Privileges will be taken away otherwise.)

In addition to these rules, the school handbook will be strictly followed and will apply in the classroom.

**Consequences for Behavior Issues in Classroom**

* Verbal Warning
* Verbal Warning Level 2 – student must fill out Behavior Reflection Form
* Parent/Guardian Contact
* Principal/Assistant Principal visit
* Detention(s) after school
* Suspension

**Tardy Policy**

Students must bring all expected materials to class, which includes a pencil, blue math binder, calculator, and homework. If a student must go back to his or her locker for materials, he or she will receive a tardy. Students must be in their seat and ready to work when the bell rings. Students who do not follow this procedure will be issued a tardy. After school detention and a parent contact will be made with the third to the sixth tardy per semester. The seventh tardy results in level 2 consequences (multiple detentions, loss of privileges, suspension).

**Binder**

Each student will be required to keep a three-ring binder for math class. Binders have been organized into eight sections for our units of study. The students and I will create a binder that reflects the students’ work and is easily understandable. For example, in class we will develop a Table of Contents for each unit as well as number each page. It is ultimately each student’s responsibility to keep his or her binders organized. This will help for studying purposes and as a reference when questions arise.

**Homework**

Math **must** be practiced to learn the basics and to build a good foundation for lessons in the future. Homework will be meaningful to the content and assigned frequently, but it will not always be graded. Homework is similar to practicing for a sport – there is no win or loss recorded when practicing. Therefore, in most cases, guides and/or answer keys to the homework will be posted on Google Classroom so that students can use them to accompany their process of learning. When graded, homework will be due at the **beginning** of the hour on the day that it is due. Homework is a vital part of being successful in math class. Therefore, homework is unacceptable if: nowork is shown (when required), little effort is presented, handwriting is not legible, no name appears on the paper, or the paper is not presentable. In any of the instances listed, the student will earn a zero or can choose to use a ZAP (see below). Homework is posted daily and can be found at <http://wjhsgrade8.weebly.com/> or via my website.

**Classwork - Notes, Activities, and Participation**

Students will be required to take notes and actively participate in the activities each day. Since students have access to guides and/or answers from homework, various grades will be recorded during class based on the skills that were acquired by completing the homework. Also, students will be working collaboratively with other students in order to discover the math content and skills. Everyone, regardless of their level of understanding, has something to contribute to the discussions. Writing the materials for your notes and participating in discussions/activities will help the information become more concrete. Successful students take advantage of class time to learn and grow from their peers and teacher! ☺

**ZAP – Zeros Aren’t Permitted**

Students are required to turn in assignments on time, every time. If homework is not completed well and turned in at the appropriate time students will be given a zero. However, a student may choose to have the zero ZAPPED. The students must fill out a ZAP Slip via iPad, complete the assignment by the next school day, and turn it in with “ZAP” written on the assignment. The completed ZAPPED assignment will have a 10% penalty per day late. Students are eligible for four (4) ZAP’s per semester. After four ZAP’s or zeros, a parent or guardian will be contacted. Overall, your grade is a reflection of your effort on homework. No effort = Low grades…that is a true consequence!

**Quizzes/Tests**

Formal quizzes and a test will be given to be sure that all students understand concepts throughout each unit. Students are allowed to retake up to four (4) quizzes per semester. Quiz retakes are completed during study hall, and it’s the student’s responsibility to request for a retake by having their agenda signed and filling out the Quiz Retake form via iPad. All quiz retakes must be completed before the test for the corresponding unit. Ultimately, the goal to improve the skills from the quiz before the student completes the test. **There are no test retakes**.

**Semester Exams**

Exams will be at the end of the 2nd and 4th quarters and will be cumulative.

**Grading Scale (no rounding)**

The 8th grade follows the district grade scale as follows:

A 90 – 100

B 80 – 89

C 70 – 79

D 60 – 69

F Below 60

\* Students in Algebra will follow academic semesters (like the WHS) rather than the typical quarterly grading.

**Grading Content**

* Classwork/Homework: 30%
  + Participation in activities completed during class
  + In-class skills checks
    - includes Cumulative Reviews
  + Homework collected for accuracy
* Quizzes: 30%
  + Target quizzes – will be announced
  + Retakes available
* Tests: 40%
  + One per unit – will be announced
* Semester Exams
  + One per semester

**Make-Up Work**

If students are granted an excused absence, students will be responsible for obtaining all make-up work. This includes, but is not limited to notes, homework, activities, and/or quizzes/tests. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain the missing work. If a student knows that he/she will have a planned absence, including field trips for another class or sporting events, it is the student’s responsibility to get make up work **before** the planned absence. A student has the same amount of days to complete homework, as they were absent. For example, if a student missed two days of school then the student has two days to make up the work and turn it in to the teacher. Ultimately, the responsibility lies with the student.

**Agenda**

If a student knows that they need assistance or to take a quiz during study hall, their agenda must be signed during their math hour in order to visit me during study hall. I am more than happy to help!

**Calculators**

It is highly recommended that students in Algebra purchase a graphing calculator to use on activities, homework, and formal assessments, when necessary.  Graphing calculators are essential as we transition into a higher level of math in which we model the data, run tests, and develop strategies for solving problems.  The high school does require that students purchase a graphing calculator for use at school and home within the first week of school.  Therefore, it will be beneficial to purchase a graphing calculator this year in order to learn the functionality of a new calculator.  I have fifteen calculators (TI-84 Plus c) available for students to use, but they will be shared with the other members of the class.  Below is a list of recommendations to assist with the purchase of a new calculator, but if you currently own a calculator it is not necessary to purchase an additional or different one.  

Calculator Recommendations:

Texas Instrument brand graphing calculators:  TI-83, TI-84, TI-84 Plus, or TI-84 Plus CE

**Other Technology**

Our classroom will have various electronic devices such as iPads, Chromebooks, SMART Board, document camera, and more! Students will be allowed to use the electronic devices as a part of the classroom routine and learning environment. However, the technology is a privilege not a right. If the technology is abused, student(s) will not be able to use the technology for a given time period.

In addition, most assignments for students to complete at home will require computers/iPads and Internet access. If students are unable to complete these assignments outside of the school day, it is important that students use study hall or time before school to use technology available at WJHS in order to complete the assignment.

**Additional Help & Resources**

Students may need to see me for extra help. I am willing to help students in the morning, after school, during lunch, or during study hall. Students who come in must show an attempt of doing the problems. Also, students must bring their binders in order to ask questions. This is an opportunity for me to show students how they can use their notes/activities at home as well. **Please do not hesitate to ask for help!** My website offers videos for the curriculum standards so that students can watch the videos at their own pace. In addition, Google Classroom provides guides and answer keys for completing homework and studying for quizzes and tests.

**Communication**

This year I plan to send emails via Skyward. These messages will be used primarily to remind students and parents/guardians of upcoming assessments. This communication will only be provided for the first semester of the year. It is important that the students become independent learners as we transition to high school!

**Parents as Partners**

Family involvement is an essential element for a student’s success in mathematics. Be positive, supportive, and provide a space and time for homework. Your help is invaluable when you ask questions and listen to explanations. You may also help by encouraging your child to take advantage of the online material on my website and Google Classroom when difficulties arise!

**Bottom Line**

Students who are actively engaged in class, ask questions, and work hard will be successful in my class! Completing homework to the best of your ability and participating in class are key components to doing well on quizzes, tests, and exams. I have high expectations for all students!

**You should expect me to:**

* arrive to class prepared and organized.
* evaluate you fairly and honestly.
* provide a safe environment that allows you to grow socially and mathematically!
* be excited about mathematics and to share my excitement with you!

**I expect students to:**



* adhere to the classroom rules.
* demonstrate quality character traits.
* be an active, enthusiastic participant in class.
* ask lots of questions!
* arrive prepared and turn in homework on time.
* make mistakes and learn from them.
* break free from their limitations – focus on the process of growth
* have fun!

**As a parent/guardian and student, we have reviewed the 8th grade Algebra syllabus and understand the content.**

Student’s Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian’s Name (print)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian’s Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments (optional): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Due: Friday, August 23, 2019**

**Thanks!**

