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*Kevin Brentnall*  
Principal

*Joseph Mercora*  
Assistant Principal

*Lucrisha Addison-Harris*  
Dean of Students

October 2, 2014

Dear Parents/Guardians of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students,

The purpose of this letter is to provide further clarification regarding how the Math 8 classes will run this year. The Connected Math Project materials for eighth grade divide the curriculum into eight units. Within each unit there is a mix of eighth grade material and Algebra material. Our primary goal for all students is mastery of the eighth grade material. Once a student has shown fluency in eighth grade skills and concepts, opportunities will exist within the classroom to move into Algebra skills and concepts. Students that continue to struggle with grade-level work will have opportunity for practice and remediation.

A majority of the lessons will be similar for all students with some re-teaching of 8<sup>th</sup> grade content for struggling learners. However, students demonstrating mastery of grade 8 materials will get the algebra support they need as instruction progresses throughout each unit and throughout the year.

This plan to differentiate lessons within one classroom requires careful planning and measurement of student achievement. Teachers will use a variety of assessments such as quiz and test scores, classroom observation and homework evaluation to identify those students able to move on to Algebra content.

At the culmination of each unit, two versions of the unit test will be prepared. Both versions will include the same questions assessing basic grade level skills. For additional questions, the Math 8 version will contain higher order questions related to eighth grade material; the Algebra version will contain questions testing Algebra concepts and skills. Toward the end of each unit, students will be asked to choose which test they plan to take.

Please note that the opportunity to work with Algebra material exists separately for each unit. For example, a student may need to remain with grade level work for Unit 1, but be able to move on to Algebra work in Unit 2.

The first unit test, *Thinking with Mathematical Models*, is scheduled for the week of October 13<sup>th</sup>. Prior to this and each subsequent unit test, teachers will ask students to make a decision, so that appropriate copies can be prepared. We encourage you to decide **with your child** whether he/she takes the Math 8 version or the Algebra version of each test.

Toward the end of the school year, families will be requested to make a decision about the NYS Algebra 1 Regents exam. Successful completion of the class and this exam will result in one high school math credit. Classroom teachers will have more information regarding the exam and each child's specific progress toward Math 8 and Algebra 1 goals as the year progresses and will be happy to share this with you prior to making any decisions regarding the Algebra 1 Regents exam.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Kevin Brentnall  
Nyack Middle School  
Principal

Orande Daring  
Nyack Public Schools  
Department Chair for Mathematics

Please return this portion of the letter to your child's math teacher:

I have read the information regarding preparation for, and taking of, the NYS Algebra 1 Regents Exam.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature