August 18th, 2017

Dear Parents,

I have the privilege of teaching your child Algebra 1 this school year. I wanted to let you know about an approach to teaching that I will be using this year in all my classes. It is called the “flipped” classroom. The basic concept behind a flipped classroom is that what was traditionally done in the classroom becomes homework and what was traditionally done at home (homework) is done in the classroom.

So what will this look like this year in my classroom?

The direct instruction or lecture portion of the class will become the homework. This will primarily be in the form of watching videos that have been produced either by myself or occasionally someone else. Students will also be asked to try 1-3 problems after watching most videos.

As students watch the video, they will take notes on vocabulary, main concepts, and some examples (how they go about watching, rewinding, and taking notes will depend on the student and what they need.) Encourage students to try different strategies until they find their “best fit.” When students come to class the next day we will briefly discuss what they heard in the videos and answer any questions they may have. The rest of the class time will be used for practicing the concepts from the video (homework in the traditional setting), working with manipulatives, and doing activities intended to enrich the curriculum. By moving the direct teach portion of the lesson to homework it frees up more time in the classroom so that I can interact more with my students and provide more individual help. There will still be assessment of student learning through quizzes and tests.

In addition, there will be some additional outside work such as reviewing for quizzes and tests, and occasionally finishing work that could not be completed in class.

Here are some of the benefits to flipped instruction:

1. It helps busy students. Many of our students are involved in activities outside of school and

often have a hard time getting all their homework done. Students will be able to watch videos and take notes ahead of time from their home computer, smart phone, laptops, I-Pads or school computers at

their convenience.

2. Parents do not have to worry that they can’t help their child with the math homework. In a

traditional model, if a student had questions about problems they were doing at home, they had

to wait until the next day to receive assistance. With this method, students are doing the work in the

classroom and are able to get their questions answered immediately.

3. Flipping the instruction helps struggling students. By doing the work in the classroom, I will be

able to monitor students more closely. I will be able to quickly identify students that have some

misunderstandings or need more individualized instruction.

4. Learning is student-centered, not teacher -centered. Focus is not on the teacher teaching the

content but on the student practicing and producing quality work.

5. There is more interaction between teacher-student and student-student. Since I won’t be

spending the class time on instruction, there is more time for me to answer student questions,

work with small groups, and guide the learning of each student individually. There will also be

more emphasis on students working collaboratively with other students to facilitate the learning.

They will be able to have more relevant math conversations and tutor each other.

I am really excited about the flipped class approach in my classes! If you wish to learn more about the flipped classroom, I can provide some links to articles and videos on the Internet. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me.

All Algebra 1 assignments will be posted on the Algebra 1 weebly at:

<http://dspmsmath.weebly.com/algebra-1.html>

Thank you,

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