

Haldane Middle School Acceleration

Balancing Equity and Excellence

1. Defining acceleration
2. Middle School Philosophy
3. Changes to our present model

What is acceleration?

- Students are exposed to content before such skills and concepts are mandated by state standards.
- Curriculum moves at a perceived rapid pace, demanding motivation and commitment by the student.

Our end goal is the same

- Opportunities for students to enroll in Regents Algebra and Living Environment in 8th grade

How do Regents courses fit within a middle school philosophy?

- Rigor and challenge are middle school values

- “Understanding that students have differences in learning rates for different subject areas in different kinds of materials at different stages of development is crucial to school patterns of curriculum and instruction.”
-Van Tassel-Baska, 2000

- Preparation for high school coursework is a middle school responsibility

- Course selection in high school is important

When should acceleration be offered to students?

After 7th?

After 5th?

After 6th?



Why change the historical delivery of acceleration at Haldane?

- Developmentally Responsive

- Socially Equitable

Perhaps, most importantly...

A curricular realignment that prepares students for algebra by the end of 7th grade makes acceleration unnecessary.

This doesn't mean...

- ...that anyone loses.
- Our most motivated and strong students need to be engaged in appropriately rigorous coursework, while those that struggle need the same.

Of course...this begs the question...What work needs to be done?

- Extensive staff development with our 5-8 math teachers
- A focus on curricular realignment with a focus on Common Core and algebra readiness
- A review and update of our textbook
- Discussions around pedagogy and work around differentiation
- Infusing enrichment opportunities for our most motivated students into our schedule

Short-Term Resolution with a Long-Term Vision



Present 7th Grade Cohort

- Those not presently in acceleration but have demonstrated motivation and mastery of 7th grade content will have opportunity to enroll in Integrated Algebra next year.
- Math “lab” will accommodate the loss in accelerated curriculum this year.

So...what are the critical foundations
for algebra and why is it even
important?

- “All school districts should ensure that all prepared students should have access to an authentic algebra course--and should prepare more students than at present to enroll in such a course by Grade 8.” -National Mathematics Advisory Panel, 2008.
- “A strong grounding in high school mathematics through Algebra II or higher correlates powerfully with access to college, graduation from college and earning in the top quartile of income from employment.” -National Mathematics Advisory Panel, 2008
- “Early access to algebra has a sustained positive effect on students, leading to more exposure to advanced mathematics curriculum and, in turn, higher mathematics performance by the end of high school.” -Smith, 1996