



Inspiring Excellence

Upper Merion Area School District

435 Crossfield Road • King of Prussia, PA 19406 • 610-205-6400 • Fax 610-205-6433 • www.umasd.org

April 11, 2016

Dear 4th Grade Parent/Guardian/Caregiver,

In the Upper Merion Area School District we are proud to offer acceleration in mathematics in 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. Each year we use a process specific to each grade to identify additional students to accelerate in mathematics. This gives students four chances at acceleration throughout their Middle School experience. Students who are selected to accelerate are enrolled in the mathematics course of the next grade level. Starting this year, we will be using a new process to identify students in 4th grade who will be selected to accelerate in 5th grade. These students will take 6th grade mathematics during their 5th grade year.

The new criteria will use a combination of scores in six categories: (1) Numbers and Operations in Base Ten, (2) Numbers and Operations—Fractions, (3) Operations and Algebraic Thinking, (4) Measurement and Data, (5) Geometry, and (6) Open Response Problems. The first five categories have been defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education as the most critical categories for students to master mathematics. The sixth category, Open Response Problems, has been identified by our district as an essential piece of information to identify students who are excelling in mathematics. You may be familiar with these categories from the cover sheets accompanying the unit tests you receive at the end of each mathematics unit.

The table below is an example of what you will see at the end of the school year indicating your child's achievement in 4th grade mathematics in each of these categories. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has identified percentages for each of the categories. As a result, we are confident these weights are an accurate indication of how a student has achieved throughout the year. Each student will receive a score out of 100% using these categories. The overall score for each student will be used to determine if a student is selected to accelerate.

Student Name:	
The following procedure has been developed to determine the 5 th grade Mathematics placement in the Upper Merion Area School District.	
Categories	Student Score
Numbers and Operations in Base Ten (25%)	
Numbers and Operations—Fractions (25%)	
Operations and Algebraic Thinking (15%)	
Geometry (10%)	
Measurement and Data (20%)	
Open Response Problems (5%)	
Total Score (out of 100%)	

This is our first step in communicating this change. You will be receiving more information this Spring regarding this process and how decisions will be made. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly. Thank you for your continued support of our students.

Sincerely,

Sean W. Gardiner, Ed.D.
Director of STEM Education
Upper Merion Area School District
610.205.6422
sgardiner@umasd.org