

MATHEMATICS PLACEMENT POLICY

Access to mathematics courses that prepare students for college and career is essential for student success after high school. All students should have the opportunity to excel in mathematics, not just students who plan to enter the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). With fair, objective, and transparent placement policies in place, California's high school students will benefit from challenging mathematics courses that support their college and career goals.

Senate Bill 359 (Chapter 508, Statutes of 2015), known as the California Mathematics Placement Act of 2015, was signed by Governor Jerry Brown on October 5, 2015, and took effect on January 1, 2016.

The California Mathematics Placement Act of 2015 requires the governing boards or bodies of local educational agencies (LEAs) that serve pupils entering grade nine and that have not already done so to adopt "a fair, objective, and transparent mathematics placement policy" before the beginning of the 2016–17 school year. (LEAs are defined as county offices of education, school districts, state special schools, and charter schools.) The mathematics placement policy must be adopted in a regularly scheduled public meeting.

The mathematics placement policy for pupils entering grade nine includes the following requirements:

- 1. Systematically takes multiple objective academic measures of pupil performance into consideration for placement:**
 - Options for Youth will fulfill this requirement by systematically using a math pre-assessment that is aligned to Common Core state standards, previous math course completion (as indicated on the student's transcripts), California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress ("CAASPP") scores, and teacher recommendation(s) from 8th grade teachers (if available) and 9th grade teacher during the placement check point (if available), based on considerations such as classroom assignment and grades.
- 2. Includes at least one placement checkpoint within the first month of the school year to ensure accurate placement and to permit reevaluation of individual student progress:**
 - Options for Youth will fulfill this requirement by assessing new 9th grade students within the first 30 days of the school year to ensure accurate placement except as provided below. All teachers responsible for teaching 9th grade students will assess the mathematics placements for each 9th grade student assigned to the teacher. The teacher's assessment will take into consideration factors which may include, but are not limited to, the student's assignments, quizzes, tests, exams, grades, participation, and any comments provided by the student or the student's parent/legal guardian, and/or the student's other teachers regarding the student's mathematics placement. Based on the assessment, the teacher will then recommend that the student remain in the current mathematics placement or be transferred to another mathematics placement, in which case the teacher shall specify the mathematics course or level recommended for the student.
 - If a 9th grade student is not enrolled in a math class within the first week of the school year (either because the student enrolled after the first week of school and/or because the student will not begin 9th grade math until the following session e.g. semester, quarter, trimester, etc.), then Options for Youth will fulfill this requirement by assessing such a student within the first 30 days of the student's enrollment in a math course to ensure accurate placement. This is necessary to ensure that Options for Youth has

sufficient data to consider at the time of the placement checkpoint for the purpose of assessing a student's math placement.

3. Requires an annual examination of pupil placement data to ensure that students are not held back in a disproportionate manner on the basis of their race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic background and shall report the aggregate results of the report to its governing board or body:

- Options for Youth will fulfill this requirement by having an annual examination of pupil placement data to ensure students are not held back in a disproportionate manner based on race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic background. Options for Youth will then report the annual examination results to its governing board.

4. Offers clear and timely recourse for each pupil and his or her parent or legal guardian who questions the student's placement:

- Options for Youth will fulfill this requirement as follows:
 - a. A parent/legal guardian of any 9th grade student may submit a written request to Principal, or his or her designee, at the Options for Youth ("Charter School") attended by the student that:
 - i. Requests information regarding how the student's mathematics placement was determined. Within seven (7) days of receipt, the Charter School Principal or designee shall respond in writing to the parent/legal guardian's request by providing the information, including the objective academic measures that the Charter School relied upon in determining the student's mathematics placement.
 - ii. Requests that the student retake the math pre-assessment, in which case the Principal or designee will attempt to facilitate the retest within two (2) weeks.
 - iii. Requests reconsideration of the student's mathematics placement based on objective academic measures. Within seven (7) school days of receipt, the Charter School Principal or designee shall respond in writing to the parent/legal guardian's request. The Principal or designee and the student's mathematics teacher must assess the objective academic measures provided by the parent in conjunction with the objective academic measures identified in section 1 of this policy. Based on this assessment, the Principal or designee must determine whether the most appropriate mathematics placement for the student is the student's current placement or another placement, in which case the Principal shall specify the mathematics course or level recommended for the student. The Principal's or designee's response must provide the determination as well as the objective academic measures that the Principal or designee relied upon in making that determination.
 - b. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Principal or designee requires additional time to respond to a parent/legal guardian's request, the Principal or designee will provide a written response indicating that additional time is needed. In no event shall the Principal's or designee's response time exceed one (1) month.
 - c. If, after reconsideration of the student's mathematics placement by the Principal or designee, the parent/legal guardian is dissatisfied with the student's mathematics placement, the parent/legal guardian may choose to sign a voluntary waiver requesting that the student be placed in another mathematics course against the professional recommendation of the Principal or designee, acknowledging and accepting responsibility for this placement.

5. For non-unified school districts, addresses the consistency of placement policies between elementary and high school districts.

- N/A

The California Mathematics Placement Act of 2015 authorizes the governing boards or bodies of LEAs serving pupils who are transitioning between elementary school and middle or junior high school to develop and implement a mathematics placement policy that satisfies the requirements listed above. The governing board or body of an LEA shall ensure that its mathematics placement policy is posted on its Web site.

To view SB 359, visit the California Legislation Information Web site at http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB359.