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LCS Mission Statement

The mission of Larchmont Charter School is to provide a socio-economically, culturally and racially diverse community of students with an exceptional public education. We foster creativity and academic excellence; our students learn with and from each other in an **experience-centered, inquiry-based learning** environment. With participation from our entire community, we strive to instill in each student a **dedication to improving the world we inhabit**.

Course Description

In Algebra, you will learn to use new models and methods to think about problems as well as solve them. You will develop powerful mathematical tools and learn new ways of thinking about and investigating situations. You will make connections, discover relationships, determine what strategies can be used to solve problems, and explain your thinking. Learning to think in these ways and communicate about your thinking is useful in math class, other subjects in school, and situations outside the classroom.

Working in teams, you will complete problems and activities that will help you discover mathematical ideas and develop solution methods. Your teacher will support all students as they work, but will not take away your opportunity to think and investigate for yourself. Each topic will be revisited many times and will connect to other topics. If something is not clear the first time, you will have more chances to build your understanding as the course continues. Homework will be an important opportunity to explore current lessons, and review previously-taught concepts.

We practice active learning in an experience-centered, inquiry-based learning environment:

Our math curriculum uses problem-based learning to help you create your own understanding of Algebra topics. This type of exploration allows for a deeper connection to the material. Our ultimate aim is for you to gain a solid foundation from which to succeed in Algebra and higher mathematics courses.

In meeting the challenges of this course, you will not be learning alone. You will cooperate with other students as a member of a study team. Being a part of a team means speaking up and interacting with other people. You will explain your ideas, listen to what others have to say, and ask questions to further your understanding. Each student has something to contribute while they work on the lessons in this course.

Demonstration of Understanding

In Algebra, there will be several ways for you to demonstrate your understanding of the course learning objectives, including individual and team tests, projects and portfolios, presentations, written assignments and classroom participation.

Information on Grading

The purpose of grades is to:

1. Document the progress of students in relationship to the objectives of the class.
2. Provide feedback to students, families and the teacher on the academic product and learning process.
3. Help teachers make decisions about teaching and learning in the classroom.

Your grade reflects how well you have demonstrated mastery of the course's learning objectives. Your grade offers feedback on how well you understand and apply the essential skills and content of the course. **Earning a C or lower on an assignment indicates that you have not yet mastered the content.**

If you have a question about your grade, your first step is to check PowerSchool, which all families have access to. Keep in mind, that teachers update their grades with varying frequencies. For example, most of the grading and assessment in this course occurs at the end of a chapter, as mastery takes time.

PowerSchool offers a snapshot in time of your grade, but this can change dramatically when a new assignment is entered into the grade book, especially those assignments weighted at 80%, especially when there are only a few assignments listed (like at the start of a term). A high score on a homework assignment (20% category) will not offset a poor grade on a test (80% category), because tests are weighted so much more.

Below is the weighted breakdown for the assignments typical for this class.

Summative Assignments: weighted at 80%

- Team Tests
- Individual/Unit Tests
- Portfolio Assignments
- Performance Tasks
- Projects
- Quizzes

Formative Assignments: weighted at 20%

- In-Class Tasks/Assignments
- Rough Drafts
- Longer-Term Homework Assignments
- Exit Tickets

Grading Scale

A+ = 98 - 100%
A = 93 - 97%
A- = 90 - 92%
B+ = 88 - 89%
B = 83 - 87%
B- = 80 - 82%

C+ = 78 - 79%
C = 73 - 77%
C- = 70 - 72%
D+ = 68 - 69%
D = 63 - 67%
D- = 60 - 62%
F = 59% and below

Homework Expectations

Homework is given daily to extend and reinforce learning begun during class. It is your opportunity to practice and develop your skills as a mathematician. It is expected that you are doing your homework completely, on the night it is assigned, with precision and on time. You will have homework EVERY NIGHT. That is every night, not just the day you have Algebra class. Please refer to the attached letter regarding homework for full details.

Please note, homework completion is a pre-requisite for earning a spot on a team for our Team Tests. You must complete 80% of the assignments in the chapter in order to participate on a team for the team test. Anything less than that, and you will take the team test by yourself.

Late Work

Long-term projects will not be accepted late unless a student has made prior arrangements with the teacher to request an extension. There is a procedure in place for requesting extensions on major assignments. Please see teacher for more information.

It is expected that students keep up with daily assignments when absent, as every student has a copy of the unit homework sheet and online access is provided to all materials. If you will be out, please see or email Danielle Lovell-Walsh (danielle.walsh@larchmontcharter.org) in the office to request independent study.

Classroom Behavioral Expectations

Respect is the number one rule in our Algebra class. Mutual respect for yourself, each other, your teachers, and your classroom creates a safe learning community where everyone is welcome and is free to grow, question and learn. Together with personal responsibility, respect ensures that everyone is given the opportunity to achieve to his or her fullest potential.

A Larchmont Charter School Algebra student is a life-long learner who:

Communicates:

- by participating in study team and class discussions
- by using academic language in speech, writing and justifications

Seeks to understand:

- by coming to class with an open mind and hungry for knowledge
- by asking questions and pursuing answers
- by reading and thinking critically and thoughtfully
- by trying multiple methods and checking solutions

Demonstrates respect:

- for the class community by practicing kindness and tolerance
- for self by focusing on learning

Takes responsibility:

- for one's learning by completing assignments on time and with precision
- for one's learning through self-advocacy

Perseveres:

- when problems cannot be solved readily by working with study team
- through challenges by reflecting, trying harder or differently, and then trying again until reaching a resolution

Text

College Preparatory Math (CPM) Core Connections Algebra: you are expected to have your textbook for in-class work. All students will also have access to an e-book.

Class Materials

- Spiral graph paper notebook; composition books are ok but a bit small, perforated-style notebooks will fall apart.
- 2 pocket poly (plastic) folder with brads/prongs
- Pack of 3 x 5 index cards to be collected in class
- Pencils, lots of pencils—assignments will not be accepted in pen. Wood pencils need a hand sharpener, lead pencils need extra lead!
- Red pens for error analysis
- Erasers, ruler and glue sticks
- Any other supplies that will keep you organized and happy (markers, colored pencils, stapler, highlighters, etc.)
MUST CONTAIN EVERYTHING in a pencil box/pouch that can come out of backpack and be brought to your table.
- Optional: Scientific calculator

August 21, 2017

Dear Students and Parents,

I want to take a moment to talk about the importance of doing homework.

Mathematics is a skill--much like learning to play the guitar or master a sport--that requires focused, frequent practice.

What I discovered in years past is that students were not practicing enough (one of the challenges of a block schedule), so we moved to a model where the students had homework EVERY night, not just for the night I saw them in class. I saw a huge improvement in their understanding of the material (for those who did the homework and followed directions). I asked for student feedback, we modified, adjusted and improved things as we went along.

This model was so successful the past two years that we will continue to implementing homework in the same manner this year, and I am asking for your assistance in this endeavor, both as students and parents. I will be assigning two homework assignments each class period: one to be completed on the day I see you in class (referred to as "Developing" homework), and one on the day I do not see you (referred to as "Extending" homework). You will have an A Day assignment and a B Day assignment (or vice-versa) every day Monday thru Friday.

The first assignment is specific practice to DEVELOP the skill or topic we are working on mastering in class, including videos, notes, summary and practice problems. This will help to strengthen and solidify the skills learned in class that day. The second night is the usual CPM textbook homework--the Review/Preview. This gives you a chance to review some of the topics you've already learned, and EXTEND your learning to topics we've not yet learned.

It is my expectation that you are doing a little each night. I would like you to complete each assignment for the night it is assigned, rather than trying to knock it all out at once early, or waiting until the last minute. Spaced, continual practice will help you to master the material better. I understand things come up, but most of the time, it is my expectation that you do each assignment on the night it is assigned.

In the past, some students have simply copied the work of their peers instead of practicing the homework themselves. Students who do this miss a critical opportunity to learn and to grow in mathematics. Please see the reverse of this sheet for my expectations for how you should be completing the homework, each and every time, in order to receive full credit.

Parents, please review this letter with your students and have a conversation about the expectations for homework. Please also expect that your student will have homework every night (with rare exception), and that we do not do homework in class.

Thank you for your support!

Kind Regards,

Cori Doherty

The top 10 things you can do to be successful in Algebra:

- 10) Listen to your peers and teacher.
- 9) Read and follow directions.
- 8) Keep the ratio of on task conversation to off task conversation at 80% on task/max 20% off task.
- 7) Stop working as an individual and start working as a team! That means everyone works on the same problem at the same time, talking about the problem together. No one goes ahead, no one falls behind.
- 6) Explain your reasoning and show your work. You learn better and more deeply when you talk about your work and justify your steps. If you can't do that, ask good questions and listen to the answers!
- 5) Do your team roles and take pride in doing them well.
- 4) Ask nicely, and say please!
- 3) Work hard and persevere! Believe in yourself and try a different way if you can't get it the first time. We are all math people! Math is all about problem solving, not memorizing "the way" to do a specific problem.
- 2) Turn in ALL assignments ON TIME.
- 1) DO YOUR HOMEWORK! Every class you will have two assignments, one assignment the day you have class with me, and one assignment for the next night. You are most successful in Math if you practice and practice often! **And** follow the steps below:

Step 1) Write the original problem.

You will not get full credit without the original problem. WHY ELSE? If you write the answer as 12, what does that mean? Who knows. It's a lot easier if you can see what question you were actually answering. A complete notebook is a more successful tool for studying.

Step 2) Work it out, and show all work.

If you're unsure how to solve the problem, get creative and try something! You get credit for attempting all problems. WHY ELSE? I can help you more successfully if I can see what you've done. You might even catch your own mistakes.

Step 3) Box your answer.

It's easier to check if you can find it. WHY ELSE? Algebra is linear--something good happens when you keep your work organized and it is easy to follow. You'll be more efficient and effective, too.

Step 4) Annotate and correct your homework during the Opening Ceremony in class.

This time is all about you and your needs! Take full advantage of the time you are given to make corrections and to understand as much as possible. Focus on the problems you didn't really understand. Compare your work to my work. Add anything in red pen that you don't have. Work smarter, not harder! Ask questions of your peers or teacher if you still don't get it. Follow up after class if you need to. It is critical that you understand what we're covering in class, and if you don't, that you get help. You will get out of this class exactly what you put in. WHY ELSE? Your brain grows when you work to correct mistakes. You're given the time and resources to do this--so turn off the conversation and turn on the learning!

Do everything you can to be successful! You can do it!

Syllabus acknowledgement and signature:

Please visit our class website: iamamathperson.weebly.com or google classroom (code is on first page of syllabus) to access the links for the parent signature survey, as well as the student homework assignment portion.

Your e-signature is your acknowledgement that you have received, read and understand the expectations of the course: Algebra 1, with Cori Doherty, as well as the expectations for student homework.

If you do not have access to these surveys, please sign below. Please also let me know what kind of internet access you or your child will have, as well as anything else I should know!

Print Student Name: _____ Signature and Date: _____

Print Parent Name: _____ Signature and Date: _____

Please tell me what kind of internet access your student will have available at home:

Students: anything I should know about you as your teacher? Parents, anything I should know about your student?