

Seycove Secondary
Math Department Update
November 18, 2008

1. Our main change this year is the new Math 8 curriculum. The order and method of teaching has changed. For example, we start with the Pythagorean Theorem using geoboards and grids to understand the main ideas. The new program is concept-based which seems to work well for most students. We have also eliminated the Introductory Math 8 course and brought these students into the normal Math 8 classrooms.
2. Last year the PAC provided money for scientific calculators and other classroom supplies. This has helped tremendously, particularly in the non-principle courses, where students arrive without the necessary tools. We've been able to eliminate excuses and focus more on the learning.
3. There are a number of students in grade 8 who will be challenging the Math 9 end-of-year exam. If they achieve 86 percent or greater on the Math 9 test, they have the opportunity to move directly to Math 10. This path is recommended for the brighter elementary students as it allows the students to stay with their peer group in grade 8.
4. Within the next week, we have teams from UBC visiting some of the Math 11 classes to work with our students. We have also been contacted by SFU for similar interactions.
5. Math Competitions -- There are separate contests for each grade plus cross-grade challenges like the Canadian Open Mathematics Competition being held tomorrow. Seycove excels in Math. We had one student obtain a perfect score on the Math 12 provincial exam last year and two students obtain perfect scores on the Math 10 provincial exam.
6. We would like to use more technology in the classroom. For example, there are appropriate student-friendly clips to reinforce learning. One of my favourite examples is Darth Vader teaching the Pythagorean Theorem on YouTube. Math education is moving towards tablet computer teaching where the teacher generates template notes which the students fill in during the lecture component of the class. Template notes are particularly helpful for the highest and lowest students. They save time and help make pictures and graphs more accurate.