



Marsha DeGennaro &lt;mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org&gt;

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**[External Email] Support for advanced math in 5&6 grade - screening criteria to advance needed to be reasonable**

1 message

Haoxian Myra Zhang &lt;haoxianmyra@gmail.com&gt;

Mon, Oct 16, 2023 at 5:15 PM

To: lpiascyk@woodbridgeps.org, mmadonick@woodbridgeps.org, sdelprete@woodbridgeps.org, jdahya@woodbridgeps.org, bhopkins@woodbridgeps.org, jhughes@woodbridgeps.org, slawrence@woodbridgeps.org, mstrambler@woodbridgeps.org, ewilliamson@woodbridgeps.org

Cc: mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org, Hillary Drumm &lt;hiljor@gmail.com&gt;, Cindy Kruger &lt;cindywarnerkruger@gmail.com&gt;, "Music with Mrs. Turkosz" &lt;KTurkosz@gmail.com&gt;

Dear BOE chair and board members,

My name is Myra Zhang, a resident in Woodbridge for more than 15 years, and a mother of a Beecher graduate (2021), and two current students - a 6th grader, and a kindergartner.

I am writing this email to support the initiatives to teach the students advanced math in 5 & 6 grade that matches their talent and capabilities. My email would like to focus particularly on selecting criteria. I would like to use two examples of what I saw as too restricted criteria resulted in limiting our talented students to have the opportunities to take on advanced materials.

The Beecher graduates of 2021 have had great talents in math. Their 6th grade was the year when COVID hit and no advanced math class was provided in Beecher in regular school hours. In spite of it, more than a dozen of the students studied in a math club weekly to compete in the MathCount. Many of them scored impressive in this prestige competition with the top two Beecher students in the top 20 of the whole New Haven Chapter. To put this achievement into perspective, this competition is open to the best math students up to 8th grade from all the private and public middle schools in New Haven county (including Hopkins and Hamden Hall etc.). To be in the top 20 as a 6th grader competition with 8th graders top math students from all the private and public schools in New Haven was an extraordinary achievement and demonstration of talents in math. However, for the whole class of the 2021 Beecher graduate, none of them were qualified to skip pre-algebra in the middle school.

I am also wondering whether the criteria for this year's Pre-algebra qualification was too restricted. The current 6th graders are actually having an unprecedented number of qualified TAG students who were screened through objective tests with national compatible benchmarks - more than 35 in total and is twice the regular size of the TAG program. It is surprisingly to learn that for this group of talented students we are not having enough students qualify for pre-algebra class in 6th grade, could it be the qualification criteria being set too restricted?

Thanks in advance for all your consideration and your efforts to make sure all of our students are challenged to reach their potentials!

Best regards,

Myra Zhang