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6-8 Grade Math Resource Recommendation

In 2018, the Board approved a 6th-8th grade math adoption that included Big Ideas Math as the core resource and CMP3 as the supplemental resource. At the time, the math team noted that the strengths of Big Ideas Math met the needs of our students, who required a more traditional program that stressed the importance of building strong foundational skills. After eight years of use, our math team identified that it was time to explore a new math resource that would better compliment the skills and knowledge students develop through the use of Bridges in Mathematics in K-5. Over the past eight years, we have seen our math scores on MAP and IAR increase every year, and we have also seen our students' quantitative reasoning abilities grow stronger. The number of students qualifying for advanced math courses have increased to the point that we typically have two sections of advanced math per grade level, and we have also increased the number of students taking Algebra or Geometry in 8th grade. We now host our own 8th grade Geometry class at Pleasantdale because we have been able to qualify between 15-20 students for the past few years.

Throughout this school year, the math team has worked with MCMI (Metro Chicago Math Initiative) to pilot and evaluate math resources. Pleasantdale committed to allocating \$14,450 of Title IIA grant funds for eight days of professional learning and collaborative coaching to support the pilots. Working with two MCMI coaches, the team selected two instructional resources to pilot, designed the pilots, trained on the resources, and observed and gave each other feedback on the resources, all culminating in a selection of a new core resource. In addition, MCMI assisted in collecting both student and teacher feedback for each resource selected. Through this process, the team selected Core Curriculum by MidSchoolMath and Amplify Desmos Math as the resources to pilot. Both resources contained opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving, a coherent scope and sequence at each grade level, and a foundation in building students' conceptual understanding. The timeline of the pilots is listed in the table below:

Action Item	Date
Narrowing Down Materials to Pilot	September 19th
Preparing for the Pilot	October 3rd
Training on MidSchoolMath	October 10th
Start MidSchoolMath pilot by:	October 21st/October 27th

MSM Collaboration Day 1 (6th/7th)	November 4th
MSM Collaboration Day 2 (8th)	November 6th
Complete MidSchoolMath pilot by:	December 1st
MidSchoolMath Reflection & Prep for Desmos w/ MCMI	December 5th 8:30-11:30, DESMOS Training 12:30 - 3:30 w/MCMI
Training on Amplify/Desmos	December 5th 8:30-11:30
Start Desmos pilot by:	January 6th
Desmos Collaboration Day 1	January 20
Desmos Collaboration Day 2	January 22
Complete Desmos pilot by:	February 12th
Final Reflection/Consensus Day:	Friday, February 13th w/MCMI

*Denotes meetings with MCMI staff

Resource Review Results

The math team’s review of the two pilot resources included an overview of the eight Standards for Mathematical Practice (Common Core Standards), the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics’ Mathematical Teaching Practices (2014), and the Bridges in Mathematics Core Principles (2025). These practices and principles helped to guide the teacher and student feedback in addition to the collaborative coaching sessions throughout both pilots.

The components of strong math instruction the team reviewed for each resource were:

1. Equity and Access
2. Conceptual Understanding
3. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
4. Student-Centered Learning
5. Collaboration and Communication
6. Growth Mindset and Persistence

While teachers and students alike found positives in both resources, Amplify Desmos emerged as the preferred resource for adoption. Teachers noted the **quality of instructional materials**, **ease of use**, support for **differentiated instruction**, **conceptual understanding**, and **opportunities for collaboration** as highlights of the program.

Students enjoyed the group work, minimal homework, and engaging videos from MidSchoolMath, but overall preferred Amplify Desmos. In the student feedback, they found it to be more **fun, engaging, interesting, easier to use** and **comprehend** than MidSchoolMath. They liked the **collaborative learning activities**, **ability to self-correct** and **get feedback**, and **pacing** of the program.

Therefore, our resource recommendation for 6th-8th grade is **Amplify Desmos Math**, and we recommend **a three-year adoption**. Our plan is to adopt digital access to the resource for three years starting in 2026-2027. For the first year, we will also purchase student consumable books. That way we have time to evaluate the need for a physical book in the first year and still have the option to continue purchasing consumables for the rest of the adoption period. We also will contract with MCMI for coaching in 2026-2027 to support the adoption. The costs are as follows:

Resource	Includes	Current Quoted Cost
Amplify Desmos	3 year resource adoption for all students grades 6-8; online teacher and student access; 1 year of student consumables, and one full in-person day of teacher professional development.	\$26,873.00