



MS Math

September 14, 2007

Dear Parents,

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to the returning and new families. Structurally, we will be doing things a little differently in mathematics this year. We will continue to study pre-algebra and algebra at a level appropriate to the ability of each student. I am placing greater emphasis, concurrently, on all the other strands of mathematics that are more typical of a middle school mathematics curriculum. I will address this at greater length during Back to School night.

This week all classes have been reviewing or learning the multiplication, division and reduction of fractions. It scales well for the simple fractions for the fifth graders to the complex rational expressions the advanced eighth graders are encountering. The first unit in each of our problem books are review based. We are working in small (2 or 3) collaborative groups this year and so far the result has been very encouraging. Our emphasis is on the process, the nature of the problem itself and the various ways we could approach them in order to come up with the solution. The quality of inter-group discussion is already high. In addition to this cyclical problem based approach to the curriculum, I will be structuring a small portion of each class to individual specific math skills to better reinforce these skills directly. The Weekly Packet is still there to provide a longer term narrative structure to the mathematics we are learning. All in all, I envision a comprehensive program to deepen and further our student's mathematical abilities and comprehension.

Please email me at [tgritzan@ringmountain.org](mailto:tgritzan@ringmountain.org) should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Thorsten Gritzan