

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the High School Pathways for Mathematics**

This document is intended to provide answers to the most commonly asked questions related to the high school pathways for mathematics. With the transition to the Tennessee Academic Standards for Mathematics and the TNReady assessment providing options for both pathways, there has been an increase in interest, particularly in the integrated pathway.

- **Why are there two pathways?**

The Tennessee Academic Standards for Mathematics are grouped by conceptual category – not by course – to allow for two approaches. The traditional approach consists of three courses: Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. The integrated approach also consists of three courses: Core Math<sup>1</sup> I, Core Math II, Core Math III. The Standards were written with this flexibility in mind so states and districts could implement the pathway best suited to their goals for mathematics education. Tennessee will continue to allow districts to choose which pathway to use.

- **What is the same between the two pathways?**

All three courses in both pathways include the same content standards. Across the three courses, students in the traditional pathway will study the same content as students in the integrated pathway. In other words, they have the same entry and exit point. Additionally, there is attention to the Standards for Mathematical Practice and an emphasis on mathematical modeling in both pathways.

- **What is different about the two pathways<sup>2</sup>?**

The difference in the two pathways is how the standards are organized into the three courses. For example, in the traditional pathway, the geometry conceptual category is its own course. In the integrated pathway, there are geometry standards present in all three courses. The integrated pathway intends for connections across all conceptual categories to be made, as standards from all conceptual categories are present in each of the three courses. By doing so, the coherence of studying mathematics across the various domains in K-8 is preserved.

- **Which courses will be assessed?**

TNReady will assess all three high school courses in each pathway. In the traditional pathway, it will assess Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. In the integrated pathway, it will assess Core Math I, Core Math II, and Core Math III.

- **Will there be assessments for both pathways?**

Yes, TNReady will have assessment options for both pathways.

- **Which courses will students with an IEP take in the integrated pathway?**

If a district chooses the integrated pathway, students with an IEP will take Core Math IA/IB and Core Math IIA/IIB to satisfy graduation requirements.

- **What happens when students transfer?**

If a student has earned credit in Algebra I and transfers to a district on the integrated pathway, that student should be placed in Core Math II. The Algebra I credit will act as the Core Math I credit. If a student transfers in the middle of the year from one pathway to the other, the student should be placed in the appropriate course. For example, if a student transfers from Algebra II in the middle of the year, he should be placed in Core Math III. Teachers will support these students just as they do when any student transfers and there are differences in pacing, pathways, curricular materials, etc.

- **Which teachers are qualified to teach in the integrated pathway?**

The qualifications necessary to teach courses in the integrated pathway are the same as those on the traditional pathway.

- **If a district wants to transition to the integrated pathway, can it phase in or make the transition all at once?**

Districts can choose to transition in a way that best suits them. Some districts may wish to phase in the integrated pathway so that students who started on the traditional pathway can finish. Other districts may choose to make the transition all at once so that the change is clean and more coherent. Districts can choose the pathway they feel best supports their goals for mathematics and can make a transition at any time.

- **Are there be textbooks for the integrated pathway?**

Yes, there are five textbooks on the state approved list for integrated mathematics. Additionally, districts may seek other resources to support implementation of the pathway that reflect the shifts in focus, coherence, and rigor called for by the Tennessee Academic Standards for Mathematics.

- **Can students be accelerated in the integrated pathway?**

Yes, students may take Core Math I in middle school for credit, similar to taking Algebra I in middle school for credit. These students will take the appropriate summative assessment.

Some students “double up” in high school by taking Geometry and Algebra II concurrently, for example. In the integrated pathway, students could also “double up” by taking two periods of Core Math II in one semester and two periods of Core Math III the next semester, for example.

Districts with semester block schedules can also allow students to take two high school math courses in the same academic year.

- **Will post-secondary institutions recognize the integrated pathway?**

Yes, the content across the three courses in both pathways is the same. Tennessee universities will recognize a Tennessee high school diploma that represents the three courses in either pathway, plus an additional fourth course. Recognition by universities outside of Tennessee is highly likely, given that both pathways include the same content and some states have implemented the integrated pathway statewide.

- **Will the NCAA recognize the integrated pathway?**

Yes, the department has already contacted the NCAA to ensure that courses in the integrated pathway are recognized.

- **Where can I get more information?**

Districts who would like more information about the high school pathways are encouraged to reach out to their [CORE office](#) or contact Melissa Haun, [Melissa.Haun@tn.gov](mailto:Melissa.Haun@tn.gov), Coordinator of Mathematics Content and at the department. <sup>1</sup>

Core Math is the name of the integrated courses that were approved by the TN State Board of Education in October, 2013. Districts can refer to these courses by another name such as Math I or Integrated Math I if they wish.

<sup>2</sup> The graphics below are intended to illustrate how the standards in each conceptual category are arranged in each pathway.

**Traditional Pathway**

Course	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II
Conceptual Category	Number and Quantity		Number and Quantity
	Algebra		Algebra
	Functions		Functions
		Geometry	*
	Statistics and Probability		Statistics and Probability

**Integrated Pathway**

Integrated Math I	Integrated Math II	Integrated Math III
Number and Quantity	Number and Quantity	Number and Quantity
Algebra	Algebra	Algebra
Functions	Functions	Functions
Geometry	Geometry	Geometry
Statistics and Probability	Statistics and Probability	Statistics and Probability

\*G-GPE.A.2 is in Algebra II.