

*The study of mathematics cannot be replaced by any other activity that will train and develop man's purely logical faculties to the same level of rationality.—C.O. Oakley*

Dear Students (and Parents of Students) of PreAP Precalculus,

Welcome to another new year filled with new possibilities, new challenges to conquer, and new expectations to rise above. Your exceptional abilities, accomplishments, and acumen in mathematics have qualified you for this amazing college-level course. While this is not an Advanced Placement course, **it is a true PreAP course** (there is an Academic-level version of this course) that carries the status, weighted average, and thrill of learning more math at a greater depth, as well as the greater workload and faster pacing of such a course. By the end of the year, you will have learned and practiced enough to confidently take any subsequent math course at any level. This goal will be realized through a variety of methods with great emphasis on individual practice. You will indubitably succeed if you are an involved (rather than a passive) member of this class. Oh, by the way, you will be QUIZZED over the contents of this letter, so read and re-read carefully!!!

### I. WEBSITE/TEXTBOOK

My website, [www.korpiworld.com](http://www.korpiworld.com), is the primary source for you to get your in-class notes and homework worksheets. I have had several years' experience grading the AP Calculus tests, and this experience has given me great insight into the knowledge and skills that are needed to be successful for life after Precal. With this in mind, the notes and worksheets I have developed not only follow the state standards, but are also very closely aligned with the College Board curriculum for both AP Calculus AB and BC. Students wishing to have another resource for learning the material may check out a campus textbook, or visit websites like [www.ck12.org](http://www.ck12.org), [www.texasgateway.org](http://www.texasgateway.org), and/or [www.openstax.org](http://www.openstax.org) (each of these sites have free, online textbooks!) This is entirely optional, and students will not have to bring this book to class, nor will homework be assigned from it. While these textbooks contain all the information contained on the website, their scope and sequence are a bit different than what we will be covering in class.

### II. ATTENDANCE

Regular, daily attendance is critical for success in this class. I really look forward to seeing you each day. If you do, though, have a compelling and unavoidable circumstance for your absence, you are expected to get what was missed as soon as possible. Morning tutorials, study groups, and [www.korpiworld.com](http://www.korpiworld.com) are available options to ensure you catch up and catch up quickly (**my website has video lessons of EACH lesson, so there is no excuse to be behind when you return!**) And don't be tardy either.

### III. CLASSROOM

1. The main rule for this class is to **care**. Care about yourself. Care about your classmates. Care about learning and making the most of each new assignment and assessment. From caring comes respect and courtesy. Whatever takes place in the classroom will be for the purpose of helping you or your classmates progress further down the road to understanding and mastering the subject. Be an asset to yourself and others, not a liability. Private, irrelevant conversations during instruction time and off-task behavior does not help you or your grade and is very distracting to the rest of us, so avoid them at all costs.
2. Part of caring is surrendering completely to instruction and being actively engaged in the learning process. To help facilitate this, **cell phones will not be allowed during class**. Once the tardy bell rings, any cell phone that is out will be confiscated. These confiscated phones may be picked up in the classroom at the end of the day after a teacher-student conference. Repeat offenders will be referred to the office.
3. Come to class prepared to learn, because when the bell rings, it's "Game On!" Bring your pre-printed notes with you (or downloaded to your iPad), pen/pencil/stylus, and your TI **graphing calculator** (83 or 84 family). You may take notes in a composition book, spiral, or on your iPad on Notability (I'd encourage this). You will need real paper (lined or unlined) on which to take quizzes and to turn in your homework.

4. Be prepared to tackle the warm-up on the screen when you enter the classroom. Once the bell rings, I expect private conversations to cease and noses put to the grindstone. Occasionally, the warm-up will be a timed quiz. Time starts when the bell rings, so again, don't be tardy.

#### IV. HOMEWORK WORKSHEETS

1. Just like sports, music, and numerous essential skills, practice is essential to mastery in mathematics. It would not be a surprise if this class proves to be a struggle for you on some level at some point during the year. This is normal and not a bad thing at all. If there's no struggle, there's no progress. Much like sweating and working through frustrating performance plateaus in sports or physical training, you can work through the struggle in math by using the skills you already have, developing new skills I will teach you, and using the resources available to you (tutorials, website, textbook, study groups, tutors, online, etc.) Some of your practice will be in class, sometimes it might be done with your peers, often it will involve your calculator, but it will always involve your deliberate, concentrated efforts. **You have to learn to enjoy the grind!**
2. Homework worksheets are tailor-made to maximize your learning-to-effort ratio. I have personally selected each and every problem on each and every worksheet. I assure you, they are valuable and manageable. They will earn you points in two ways. First, each worksheet will be graded in terms of effort and completeness (not accuracy). You should work on the worksheets daily, although they will not be turned in until the lesson is complete (usually every three to five days). You will be graded on the following scale: a 100 will be earned if **all** problems attempted and **legitimate effort** to complete each problem (**this includes showing work on a multiple choice question!**) A 75 are for papers with 75% or more completed, **including papers with only one problem or one part of a problem omitted or not legitimately, earnestly attempted** (which involves more than just writing down the problem and/or drawing a picture). A 50 is for an assignment that is half complete, a 25 for one-fourth complete, and 0 is for work not turned in, OR **WORK THAT IS COPIED DIRECTLY FROM THE KEY/WITH OR WITHOUT WORK SHOWN.** The second way, and most important way is this. **THE KNOWLEDGE YOU ACQUIRE, SKILLS YOU DEVELOP, EFFICIENCY YOU EARN, AND THE CONFIDENCE YOU ATTAIN** in diligently and earnestly tackling them will help you do well on quizzes and tests.
3. Worksheets will be due every three to five days **on the day immediately following the conclusion of a lesson at the beginning of each class!!** THEY MUST BE DONE ON PAPER, AND A HARD, HAND-WRITTEN COPY MUST BE TURNED IN!! Late assignments are permitted as long as they are turned in BEFORE the unit test from which the assignment came. Assignments turned in AFTER the unit test will become a zero. Late assignments are worth a maximum grade of 70. With an excused absence, you have one extra class period for each class day of absence (weekends excluded) to make up missing work.
4. Solutions to the homework worksheets will be available online. These are not to copy! These are to check your work or to consult if you are stuck and cannot attend tutorials.
5. The amount of material we need to cover in PreAP Precalculus makes it impossible for me to take time to get extra help with problems not explained in class, consulting the in-class key for a hint, or watch the online videos of the lesson (link on [www.korpiworld.com](http://www.korpiworld.com)) OR in the shared Google folder.
6. This course emphasizes communication skills. With that in mind, writing and problem analysis will play a crucial role in your success. Many of the class activities, lessons, worksheets, quizzes, and tests will emphasize this important skill, such as "Justify" and "Explain the reason for your answer."
7. You will want your homework time to be very efficient. Here are some tips:
  - Do something every day from your worksheet. Do the problems similar to the ones discussed in class that day. Come into tutorials the next morning to get assistance before new topics are discussed.
  - Those of you who are very careful and neat, and thus slow and subject to bouts of homework paralysis, will have to settle for less than perfect here and there in order to get the job done without unnatural stress.

- Those of you who are careless, and thus fast, will have to slow down and show more work than you are used to showing on your assignments. **You have to effectively communicate your process as well as your product; method and correct notation are important, not nit-picky, parts of the subject.**
  - Another important resource is your fellow student. University research indicates that math students who worked regularly with a study group performed at a significantly higher level than those who did not. Study groups are an excellent way to get help and to reinforce what you know. You can waste a lot of time waiting for inspiration, when one suggestion from a study partner can get you going again. Try doing your homework worksheets with a good mix of people. But be warned: **Copying does not equal Collaboration. You may learn in groups, but you will take assessments on your own!**
8. Remember, doing homework daily is the rule, not the exception. Although worksheets are not **due** daily, you should **do** them daily. **There is no more single important activity you can do in this class to be successful than to treat your homework with the respect it deserves and work on it with due diligence.**

## V. GRADING

1. Quizzes and Worksheets make up 30% of your NINE-week's grade. Quizzes are helpful in convincing you to keep up and to help me determine if you are doing so or not. They will be of the announced and unannounced variety and will always be during the first 5 to 10 minutes of class. The quizzes will cover content from previous day's notes, worksheet, or formulas and theorems you are expected to know. They will be timed and neither notes nor worksheets will be allowed on quizzes. **If you are absent for a quiz, you have 2 days to make it up, outside of class, either before or after school.** This is YOUR responsibility, not the teacher's.
2. Tests are 70% of your NINE-weeks grade. We will have three per grading period (roughly every three weeks). These tests will be in two formats, consisting of both multiple-choice and free-response answers. Each worksheet is in this format as well, so you'll have plenty of practice working each type of question. I have even been known to pull test questions from homework worksheets old exams from year's past. Of course, these tests will be timed as well so that you can get comfortable working under time pressure. They must also be completed in one sitting. All students who score below a 70 on the original test are eligible to retest, after demonstrating to me that they have corrected and learned from their mistakes. All retests will be in the morning on the announced date and have a maximum score of 70. The retests will NOT be curved, nor will there be a Multiple Choice section—all questions will be short answer, but very similar to the original test. **A STUDENT WHO IS ABSENT FOR THE IN-CLASS EXAM WILL HAVE A MAKE-UP EXAM THAT WILL NOT INCLUDE A MULTIPLE CHOICE SECTION, BUT RATHER A SHORT-ANSWER PORTION INSTEAD THAT COVERS THE EXACT SAME CONCEPTS/IDEAS.** Copies of exams from previous years (found on [www.korpiworld.com](http://www.korpiworld.com)) are good sources for extra practice.

## VI. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Unicorn honor code embodies an ideal of character, conduct, and citizenship, and is an important part of our school's mission and core identity. This applies especially to academic honesty and integrity. Passing off someone else's work as your own represents intellectual fraud and theft, and violates the core values of our academic community. To be honorable, you should understand not only what counts as academic dishonesty, but also how to avoid engaging in these practices. You should:

- review each course syllabus for the professor's expectations regarding course work and class attendance.
- attribute all ideas taken from other sources; this shows respect for other scholars. Plagiarism can include portraying another's work or ideas as your own, buying a paper online and turning it in as if it were your own work, or not citing or improperly citing references on a reference page or within the text of a paper.

- not falsify or create data and resources or alter a graded work without the prior consent of your teacher. This includes making up a reference for a works cited page or making up statistics or facts for academic work.
- not allow another party to do your work/exam/quiz or submit the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from the course teacher. **Cheating also includes taking an exam/quiz for another person, looking on another person's exam/quiz for answers, using exams/quizzes from previous classes without permission, or bringing and using unauthorized notes or resources (i.e., electronic, written, or otherwise) during an exam/quiz.**
- not facilitate cheating, which can happen when you help another student complete a take-home exam/quiz/assignment, **give answers to an exam/quiz, talk about an exam/quiz with a student who has not taken it**, or collaborate with others on work that is supposed to be completed independently.
- be truthful about the submission of work, which includes the time of submission and the place of submission (e.g., e-mail, online, in a mailbox, to an office, etc.)

You should understand that penalties result from dishonest conduct, ranging from failure of the assignment to expulsion from the clubs/organizations such as NHS. Please speak with your teachers if you need clarification about any of these policies.

## VII. FINAL THOUGHTS

This will be a rigorous course, but you will succeed if you work hard and actively participate in class. I expect the best from each and every one of you, and in return, you can expect my best efforts, providing the instruction, support, and encouragement for any diligent one of you to meet my expectations. Your success in this course is a joint effort of me, your parents, and of course, you the student. I earnestly believe that those who are successful in mathematics can be successful in *any* subject or discipline. The habits of mind and the required daily discipline developed in learning math are skills that transcend math and the classroom. These are valuable skills that will stay with you the rest of your lives and will help you be successful in many of your future endeavors. You are exceptional, and I know you are destined to do great things.

I look forward to working with you this year,

~Kevin Korpi

## VIII. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **There are 3 PreAP Precalculus teachers, all of whom you may go to for help or make-up assignments except on their assigned duty day.**
  - Mr. Korpi, Room 903, Duty on Thursday
  - Mrs. Lincoln, Room 904
  - Mrs. Skrhak, Room 906
- Website: [www.korpiworld.com](http://www.korpiworld.com). **Monday Mails** are posted each Monday morning on this website.
- Email: [kkorpi@nbisd.org](mailto:kkorpi@nbisd.org) **(this is the BEST way to get in contact with me)**
- Phone: 830-627-6093
- Tutorials: Mon, Tue, Wed, and Fri beginning at 8:15 A.M.

*Do not falter. Do not shrink. Just think out your work and work out your think.—Nixon Waterman*