San Francisco Board of Education adopts math placement policy

June 15, 2016 (San Francisco) – Following the California Mathematics Placement Act (SB 359), the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) has adopted a policy for placing incoming ninth-grade students in math courses.

The new policy will establish a process for reviewing measures related to students’ achievement in Grade 8 math, including their class grades and state test scores. The policy will also establish one checkpoint within the first month of the school year to ensure students have been accurately placed. It will also require that aggregate student data be analyzed annually to ensure students are not held back in math on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic background.

The newly adopted policy permits SFUSD to comply fully with the requirements of the California Math Placement Act and ensures that students are placed in Grade 9 math in a way that is appropriate. This new policy accompanies last year’s policy about the SFUSD Math Course Sequence and will support all our students to succeed in a rigorous, Common Core math education.

As a result of the math placement policy, students who have completed Common Core Math 8 (eighth grade) with a grade D or better and who have scored above the Not Met Standards level on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) assessment will be placed in Algebra 1 (ninth grade).

Additionally, students who completed Math 8 with an F and scored at the Not Met Standard on the CCSS assessment will be placed in Algebra 1 and be offered the opportunity for support to bolster their ability to succeed in Algebra 1.

Students who have taken coursework covering all subject matter taught in CCSS Math 8 and CCSS Algebra 1 and received a grade of C or higher in both courses will be eligible to take CCSS Geometry in ninth grade if they pass the Math Validation Test (MVT).

The SFUSD Math Course Sequence and the Common Core State Standards

SFUSD’s high school math sequence describes requirements and options for high school students that support all students to complete courses to be eligible for UC/CSU admission.
Due to SFUSD’s adoption of Common Core State Standards, the ninth grade Common Core Algebra 1 course is a substantial departure from the course previously taught as Algebra 1. Many topics previously covered in eighth-grade algebra are now covered in ninth grade. Topics such as geometry, data analysis and mathematical modeling are now included in both Common Core Math 8 and Common Core Algebra 1.