

August 22, 2011

Dear Parents and Students of PreAP Precalculus,

Welcome to another new year filled with new possibilities, new challenges to conquer, and new expectations to rise above.

My name is Kevin Korpi, and I have the distinct pleasure of being your son or daughter's PreAP Precalculus teacher this year. Some of you may already know me as your son/daughter's UIL math coach or Math Club sponsor. For others of you, this year is our first opportunity to work together. In either case, I look forward to partnering with you throughout the year to help your child have a rich and enjoyable learning experience in PreAP Precalculus.

As this is an upper-level course, I will likely address most concerns about your child's progress to him/her directly. This course is a fast-paced, rigorous course that requires sustained levels of quality effort and concentration, and mastery requires much practice. The concepts we learn are abstract and interwoven. The skills we encounter are entirely new and foreign. By this point, I expect students to manage their time effectively, seek out help when they need it, and be responsible for completing their assignments and turning them in on time. Since my goal is to challenge all students in the course, it is likely that every student will be confused, or feel slightly overwhelmed, at least once this year; I hope that by working through such moments together, we can better prepare these students for the challenges of AP and college-level math classes. If those moments are more than isolated occurrences, or if you have any concern about your child's progress, please feel free to contact me at any time.

I expect the best from each and every student, and in return, the students can expect my best efforts, providing the instruction, support, and encouragement for any diligent student to meet those expectations. A student's success in this course is a joint effort among me, you the parents, and of course, the student. I earnestly believe that students 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 students the rest of their lives and will help them be successful in many of their future endeavors.

As Lewis Carroll (a mathematician!) wrote in "Through the Looking Glass," "*it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that*" This year we want to get somewhere else, so we *will* run fast, we *will* work hard, but we *will* also have a lot of fun.



An important component of your student's success in mathematics is your involvement and knowledge of what is going on in class. To that end, my website is dedicated. (www.korpiworld.com) I encourage you to check it regularly. If you have questions or concerns or just want to know how your student is progressing, please check your child's grades online or contact me at kkorpi@nbisd.org. If you need to talk with me, call 830-627-6093 during school hours and leave a message. I will return your call.

In an effort to keep both parents and students apprised of the goings-on in class, I will post weekly “Monday Mail” newsletters to e-mail accounts. Each week you will find a description of the topics to be studied in class that week including upcoming quizzes and exams. Additionally, you will be drawn further into reading about the life of a contributing mathematician, an interesting math fact, and a little mathematical tomfoolery as well. You can access the Monday Mail page through www.korpiworld.com or directly at <http://www.korpiworld.com/Monday%20Mail.htm>.

I tutor regularly in room 903 before school during tutorials, at lunchtime, and after school, except Tuesdays, my duty day. Report cards are sent home each six weeks. Progress reports are sent home at the mid-point of each six-week period. Check the calendar posted on the district website (www.nbisd.org) for specific dates or to set up an online gradebook account. If you do not receive two grade reports each six weeks, talk with your student or your student’s counselor.

Graphing calculators are used extensively in Precalculus; the TI model 83 & 84 are used and demonstrated in class. The TI-89, equipped with a computer algebra system (CAS) is also permitted. I recommend that your student have their own graphing calculator for use at home (TI-83 or 84), but I do have a limited number of TI-83s available for use in the classroom only.

The course syllabus and the expectations I have for all students in PreAP Precalculus is available online (www.korpiworld.com). Some of these expectations are different from those in lower-level courses, so even if you and I have worked together in the past, please review the sheet and discuss these expectations with your son/daughter. Your student may also download and print a “**Survival Guide to PreAP Precalculus**,” listing strategies for studying and learning that I have found work well for students in the course. It is available on my website. Please contact me with any questions or concerns that arise from your discussion. I want to be sure that we are all on the same page regarding these expectations.

Thank you for taking the time to review this letter. I look forward to seeing you during parent night.

Sincerely,

Mr. Kevin Korpi
Mathematics Teacher

Parent Signature

Parent signature (optional)

Student **printed name**

Student Signature

***"It is clear that the chief end of mathematical study must be to make the students think."**—John Wesley Young*