

STARGATE SCHOOL

14530 WASHINGTON STREET | THORNTON, CO 80023

OFFICE: 303.450.3936 | FAX: 303.450.3941 | INFO@STARGATESCHOOL.ORG

October 3, 2018

Dear Parents,

I am Stargate's Secondary Math Department Chair and MATHCOUNTS coach. I invite your student to participate in this year's MATHCOUNTS competitions. Stargate has a rich tradition of high participation and success in this valuable program.

MATHCOUNTS is a national organization whose mission is to "inspire excellence, confidence and curiosity in U.S. middle school students through fun and challenging math problems." To participate in MATHCOUNTS, 6th – 8th grade students meet on a regular basis to work individually and together on math problems supplied by the MATHCOUNTS organization and participate in formal math competitions.

I invite interested Middle School students to participate in MATHCOUNTS. Beginning **November 15th**, I will meet after school in my classroom (room #161) from **3:35 to 4:30 every Thursday** school is in session with any 6th – 8th grade students who want to participate in the MATHCOUNTS competitions. During the practices students will work on MATHCOUNTS problems and we will discuss problem-solving strategies and math concepts that may be new to them. Students will be able to take home additional problem worksheets for extra practice if they want to do so. Students in the Middle School MATHCOUNTS Academic Enrichment class who want to compete are not required to come to the after-school meetings, but I encourage them to come if they can so we can present the strongest team possible. The more they practice the better they will get!

Please note that the after-school practices are meant to be practices for our competition team only. Participants must commit to competing in the District Prelims competition on Saturday, January 12th and following competitions if they qualify, plus pay a \$20 participation fee.

If your student would like to participate in the competitions but is not in the MATHCOUNTS Academic Enrichment class and is unable to attend the after-school practices because of involvement in Stargate's sports programs or other activities, please let me know. Select students will be allowed to compete if they agree to work the problem worksheets on their own at home.

The MATHCOUNTS competition schedule is as follows:

- District Prelims – Saturday morning, January 12th
- District Finals – Saturday morning, February 2nd
- North Metro Chapter Competition – Saturday morning, February 23rd
- State Competition – Saturday, March TBD (possibly March 23rd)

Competitions last about three hours (not including the awards ceremony) and consist of multiple rounds where students compete individually and in 4-person teams. These rounds consist of timed paper tests of varying number of problems. Calculators are permitted during some rounds, but not others. The top 10 individuals then compete in a fast-paced, one-on-one Countdown Round competition to determine the overall individual winner.



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All of our students who want to compete may do so at the District Prelims competition. However, the number of students Stargate can send to each successive competition is limited. We can send only 16 students to the District Finals and our top 4-person team plus 6 additional individuals to the Chapter competition. The top winners of the Chapter competition qualify to go on to the State competition, for which Stargate had 9 students qualify last year. The top 4 students at the State competition receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Nationals in Orlando, FL on May 11-14. I will send out more detailed information the first week of January about our first competition.

We are fortunate that Stargate pays the entire cost of our team's chapter and national MATHCOUNTS membership dues and most of our district dues. However, because of the large number of participants we have, we must charge each student a \$20 participation fee to help cover the cost of our district dues. The \$20 fee also includes a team t-shirt for every competitor.

If your student wants to join our competition team please complete the attached form and have them return it to me by Friday, October 26th, so we can meet the payment and t-shirt order deadline. I will submit to the front office the names of students who return forms to me. The office will add the \$20 participation fee to your Stargate account (www.payforit.net). Please do not have your student bring money or a check. Note: Students must commit to be available for all competitions to join the competition team. (Parents, please check competition dates for potential conflicts with other activities your student is participating in.)

Please contact me at ken.haney@stargateschool.org if you have any questions. The attached form can also be found in the documents section on my school web page. You can find out more about MATHCOUNTS from their website: <http://www.mathcounts.org>. Motivated students should start watching the MathCounts Minis videos now to learn important problem-solving strategies, found at: <http://mathcounts.org/resources/video-library/mathcounts-minis>.

I look forward to another great year of MATHCOUNTS!

Sincerely,

Ken Haney
Secondary Math Department Chair
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