

Things you need to know for math class

HELEN COMPTON, TEACHER

I bring you greetings from the Mathematics and Computer Science Department! It is hard to realize the summer is over and school is back, but we are ready. The math teachers have lots for you to learn about this year, and we have some great problems in mind for you to do.

I am sure you have heard lots of rumors and stories about what it is like to study math here. I will try to tell you some essential facts. The math teachers love teaching and love doing math. Our goal is for you to grow **tremendously** as a mathematician during your stay at NCSSM. Here are some of those important math facts:

- The most important part of your learning is class time. Be there. Be ready.

- Every Monday through Thursday evening from 6 pm to 8 pm we have math tutorial. This is a great place to get help with math. There will be at least one teacher and

several student tutors in Watts 306—ready to help you figure out that question that has been giving you fits.

- The graph of $y=x$ is a line.

- You write a lot in math class.

The tests even have discussion questions. Get used to talking and writing about math. Certainly you use algebra and draw graphs, but explanation of assumptions and methods will very important.

Just why did you do that problem that way? Class discussion and group activities will help you be accurate and precise in your descriptions.

- Answers are important, but process is

equally as important. Keep up with how you got that answer, write enough down to be able to reproduce your methods, and pay attention to decisions you made along the way.

Many of our extended problems or group activities have "methods in their madness." We want you to learn along the way!

- Learn to work with other people. Often you will be asked to work on math with other people. It will be important to listen to what they

say and equally important to talk about what you are thinking about this problem. You have probably noticed that the classrooms are set

up for you to work together—either in small groups (like peas in a pod) or around big tables (like board members).

- Questions are for asking. Remember if you have a question, probably at least three other people have the same question. You can ask questions in class, at tutorial, after class, when working with classmates.

- Technology is a great tool for learning. Sometimes that graph or list of numbers from your calculator or from Mathcad give you insight into whether your idea for solving that problem is anywhere close to right. Have your calculator with you in class all the time. Use it, but don't forget that you provide the brain power.

- Math is not a spectator sport. We want you to participate, to question, to answer.

We are happy to see you and look forward to a fun year exploring how math can figure out when will the garbage dump be full or when the skydiver should open the parachute!



Tetris anyone? TI-83's are common tools at Science and Math.

Pres continued from Page 1



ernment Association (SGA) of NCSSM. I encourage you to meet your SGA representatives, and if interested, run for a position in SGA. The Student Government offers leadership positions on

campus for juniors as well as seniors. And if SGA is not your thing, there are many other activities.

The final component in the Science and Math equation (and probably the part you've heard the most about) is academics. Classes will start in a few days and you will undoubtedly struggle with the schedule and the new NCSSM learning style. Don't worry—it does take a while to get used to.

But in all the excitement and hard work, don't lose sight of what NCSSM really is. It's not just about taking advanced classes. It's not just about taking courses with 550 of the brightest students in North Carolina. It's an experience — it's what happens when those 550 kids get together — that makes NCSSM the great school that it is.

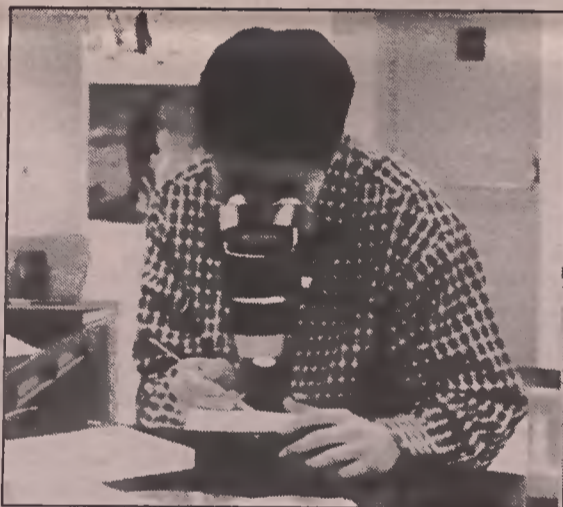
Roshan Baliga
President,
Student Government Association

Note To All Juniors:

Please pay special attention in your Fire Safety and Security Concurent Group Sessions. You will have to know this information for the rest of the year and it is for your safety.

Ken Home, Head of Security

Science experiences and experiments



Daniel Chun examines his flies during Fly Lab in Genetics (top left). Amanda Vickers and Colin Moore do a titration for a chemistry lab (top right). Carrie Burke and Teesha Boyd enjoy the company of a cat in Anatomy and Physiology (bottom left). Haritha Bodduluri measures the angle of the Gravitron for her State Fair Physics Lab.

