

Math π ath 2019

PRE-CAMP BRIEFING (last updated 1/31/2019)

Dear students enrolled in MathPath 2019 and parents/guardians of the students:

This Pre-Camp Briefing describes what you need to know to prepare for daily life at MathPath 2019 at Grand Valley State University (GVSU). If you still have questions, email Prof. Maurer, Executive Director, at smaurer1@swarthmore.edu, or April Verser, Camp Director, at april.mathpath@gmail.com. The telephone number of the program is 610-616-3211. This connects directly to the MathPath Skype account, wherever we are. During the off-season it is usually monitored by Prof. Maurer, during the session by April Verser.

The times given in this briefing are in Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) in the USA.

The MathPath 2019 opening session will take place on Monday, July 1, tentatively at 8:30am, **location TBD**. Please see the online campus map at:

<https://www.gvsu.edu/homepage/files/pdf/maps/allendalecampus.pdf>

Monday, July 1 is Orientation Day, and the opening session has several components that may be of interest to the families of our students. All visiting relatives/friends are invited to attend the morning session. We ask visitors to sit at the back, and we ask students to sit as far towards the front as they can. Orientation morning includes:

- Welcome, including information on the philosophy of MathPath and statistical data about the students
- Introduction of all the instructors and staff present
- Question and Answer opportunity about the organization and schedule of the program
- Kick-off Plenary (the first mathematics presentation to all students)
- Tour of the academic GVSU facilities we will use
- The first Problem of the Day (PoD)

Minor revisions of this briefing may be made from time to time; check the “last updated” date on the top of this page. Accepted students and their families will be informed promptly of significant changes via email.

We look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,
The MathPath Staff

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I. REQUIRED DOCUMENT SUBMISSIONS

There are several forms, including health and insurance forms, waiver and permission forms, and a behavioral standards document, which you must sign and send to us by May 31, 2019. See <http://www.mathpath.org/FormsCoverPage.htm>.

II. TRAVEL TO MATHPATH

Please see <http://www.mathpath.org/gettingthere.htm>. It provides specific date and time windows during which MathPathers are to arrive and depart, along with logistical information. We are very serious about the arrival and departure windows, especially the dates.

Travel by Car

If a MathPather is arriving/departing to/from campus with a parent/guardian and not using MathPath transportation to/from the airport and campus, we consider this to be arriving by car (such as a parent is renting a vehicle to drive to campus, or the family is using a taxi/ride-sharing service to arrive to campus, etc). Upon arrival, please proceed to the check-in area, which will be located in the front lobby of the residence hall.

Travel by Air

Below, we provide additional information about how we welcome students at the airport and about immigration procedures for those arriving from other countries. On the website listed above, you will find important information about Unaccompanied Minor (UM) status.

The MathPath airport is Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GRR), in Grand Rapids, MI, which is about 35 minutes away (via car) from GVSU.

MathPath Welcome Party for Air Arrivals

There will be counselors at the arrival gate areas inside security. One of them will meet every student at their gate area upon arrival. Counselors will be wearing MathPath T-shirts and hats. Arriving MathPathers should locate a counselor wearing a MathPath T-shirt and introduce themselves immediately after deplaning. If no counselor is immediately visible to an arriving MathPather, they should **stay in their gate area** until a MathPath counselor arrives. To facilitate recognition, we ask **all arriving MathPathers** to tie a **red bandana** around their neck/head as they leave the plane.

Unaccompanied Minors (UMs) will be handed over by airline staff directly to a designated receiver in the Welcome Party. The names and phone numbers of these designated receivers will be communicated to parents/guardians who have informed MathPath of UM status before the first day of June. This information will be required by the airline on the UM contract. *If you are traveling as a UM, and if you purchase UM service for your return in advance, be sure to get a receipt for both halves of your journey and give us this receipt on arrival at GVSU (or email it earlier).*

Do not worry if a flight is delayed or early. We will have current flight information for all students traveling by air (because you will have submitted it to us earlier) and we will be monitoring any changes.

If a counselor has not met a student within 5 minutes of their getting off the plane, that student should call the number of their designated receiver, or (as a backup) the MathPath number **610-616-3211**, and then follow instructions. As a precaution, all arriving students should have these numbers programmed into their phones and easily accessible as they leave the plane! In some cases several planes may be landing at once and the receivers may be temporarily busy at another gate. Students: *If there is no one to greet you immediately, DO NOT LEAVE YOUR GATE AREA unless instructed to do so by a MathPath staff member.*

The Welcome Party in the airport will assist arriving MathPath students with their baggage claim and navigation through the airport. Students will be transported from the airport to the campus by MathPath shuttles. Students should be prepared to wait in the airport under the supervision of a counselor, awaiting the return of one of our vehicles. The Welcome Party will provide some small games, but students may bring their own (easily accessible in their luggage), to pass time waiting in the airport.

All MathPathers arriving by air will be asked to call home from the airport on their cell phones immediately after the Welcome Party meets them. (Parents/guardians of international students will be informed by email or telephone after arrival to campus, if not sooner.)

Arrangement for Departures from MathPath by Air

Students will be taken to the airport, assisted with baggage check-in, and taken to the boarding gate by MathPath counselors. Those flying out as UMs will be handed over to the airline at the departure gate counter, as per airline protocol.

To facilitate departures, many students will leave for the airport together in a bus or large van. Since the bus or van must leave early enough for the person with the first departure to make their plane, please expect that students may have a longer-than-usual wait (several hours) at the airport prior to departure. To minimize wait time in the airport, book an earlier flight when possible. Students will never be unattended while waiting in the airport.

MathPath Staff will contact parents/guardians if any complications arise. If you do not receive a call from us, it means all is well.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Students should keep their boarding pass or ticket, personal ID, and any UM receipts, safely in an easily reachable place (such as the zippered side of a carry-on bag, or a travel-document pouch)! MathPath Staff will collect important documents for safe-keeping upon arrival to GVSU campus (such as UM paperwork, passports, or other official IDs), and return these documents to students before departure from the GVSU campus.

US Immigration

Many students living outside the US who are not US citizens will need a visa to enter the US, depending on their citizenship status. If they may need a visa, they will be sent a document titled “Information for International Students” upon admission to MathPath. PLEASE READ THIS DOCUMENT VERY CAREFULLY. This document explains what sort of visa will be necessary and what steps must be taken to obtain it. As that document explains, there are several items International Students should carry with them as they cross the border, because Immigration officers may ask for them. Start the process early, if you need a visa, as there are often long delays.

All students admitted to MathPath who are living abroad and who are not US citizens receive, after registration and payment, a Confirmation Letter they should offer to show to US Immigration officials. This letter should help speed the process through Customs.

III. CHECK-IN

Check-in will be in the main lobby of our residence hall; see the campus map:

<https://www.gvsu.edu/homepage/files/pdf/maps/allendalecampus.pdf>

It may be challenging to find nearby parking for easy unloading. We recommend that students coming by car pack in easily-transportable ways (such as rolling suitcases), and/or bring a dolly/small rolling cart to assist with unloading.

Students/families will find at least one member of the MathPath Senior Staff available at the check-in desk to officially check a student into the program, along with MathPath counselors. Students/families will provide cash or a check for spending money, if it has not been previously submitted. See later (section VI) for the recommended amount. In turn, students will be given their lanyard, with the following essential items: nametag, swipe card, and room key. The swipe card works as an access card to the residence hall.

IV. ROOM AND BOARD

Lodging. MathPath will have sole use of a large residence hall complex. Students will be housed on separate wings or floors by gender.

Students are intentionally assigned to single-occupancy rooms. Our experience at MathPath suggests strongly that the calm of a private room is an advantage after a packed day of intense mathematical activity and equally intense social and recreational time. Roommates can easily succumb to the temptation to talk with each other deep into the night, failing to get enough sleep and ending up groggy for the next day’s classes. Only under very special circumstances will requests for a roommate be entertained. If there are students who are friends and want to live close to each other, they can request to be in the same counselor group (and thus have nearby rooms) if they are close in age. Any such requests (for roommates or the same counselor) should be made to April Verser, at april.mathpath@gmail.com, by no later than May 31, 2019.

Meals. All students will eat all meals in the on-campus dining hall. Students will not be permitted to skip meals, and students will be escorted to and from every meal by a counselor or other staff member.

For religious, medical, or philosophical reasons, MathPathers adhere to a great many different diets. College dining halls are used to accommodating many different dietary restrictions. So long as we know each student's specific food restrictions in advance, the dining services at GVSU will be able to accommodate them. The health form has a place for stating special dietary needs. If a MathPather's medical food restrictions are severe or extreme, the sooner we know about them, the better. In some cases we may need to consult with the GVSU staff to determine how accommodations can be made.

V. PREPARING FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF MATHPATH

At MathPath students will be responsible for carrying out all their daily routines. They will have to do such things as

- Get themselves up in the morning
- Get themselves washed and dressed
- Be prepared to go to breakfast with their counselor group at the appointed time
- Pay attention to the time during meals, finishing in time for scheduled activities
- Complete all their homework, including handing in neat write-ups when required
- Bring their notebooks, handouts, and school supplies to class (which means, first of all, not losing them, and second, keeping them in good condition)
- Know where their classes are and get themselves there on time
- Make good choices to eat sufficient healthy and varied food from the wide selection in the buffet-style cafeteria (and not waste food)
- Get themselves prepared for bed
- Do their laundry
- Have their lanyard, key and swipe card on their person at all times
- Know when and where to meet for various events and be there on time
- Communicate with their parents/guardians regularly (as agreed upon by families in advance)
- Pack up to go home without forgetting or damaging things

Many MathPathers have never had to pay attention to all of the above on their own, and have not managed to do all of these things well in the past. Many students also seem to lack experience in managing their school supplies; they may not be used to carrying them around with them to different destinations throughout the day. Consider coming up with strategies to help students cope with these potentially new expectations before MathPath begins.

Counselors will help with some of these things. For instance, if a MathPather has not woken up by a certain time, the counselor will knock loudly on their door. But a counselor has many duties, and many different students to oversee. *At MathPath the responsibility to take care of oneself and one's things belongs to the student.* Please prepare all students for this

responsibility.

Suggestion: For a week or two before departure, ask each MathPather to do all of the above things for themselves. Have them take responsibility for day-beginning and day-ending routines. Have them do their own laundry. Have them plan where they will keep their school supplies and other important items. The start of MathPath is extremely busy with meeting new people and getting used to the pace of our classes and getting used to living away from home. The adjustment will be aided by preparing every student to be responsible for themselves before arrival.

VI. WHAT TO BRING AND WHAT NOT TO BRING

First Rule. Write the student's name on LITERALLY EVERYTHING. Clothes can get mixed in with other students' clothes doing laundry, or students leave their math notebooks or pencil bags in lecture halls and classrooms. If an item has a name on it, we can usually return it to its owner. However, if it does not, we will not be able to return the item. Write (or permanently affix) your name on every sort of thing you can before arriving at MathPath: clothing, school supplies, cell phone, wallet, purse, backpack, water bottle, tennis racket, etc. Use permanent marker that will not wash/rub off of each item easily, or etch onto hard surfaces if permanent marker is not feasible.

In choosing what to bring, one should always consider the

Weather. In general, summers in Allendale are warm to hot, dry and relatively sunny with moderate humidity. Average high in July is 83F, low 62F. Sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, and water are important for outings. Most classrooms will be air-conditioned but our residence hall will not be. We will provide box fans for all the student rooms. For details about local weather, see

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allendale_Charter_Township,_Michigan#Climate, and
<https://www.wunderground.com/history/monthly/us/mi/holland/KBIV/date/2018-7>

We recommend that you bring the following:

___ photo ID, preferably a recent school or government-issued ID (required by airlines)

CLOTHES /APPAREL

___ 8 pairs of sport socks

___ 9 underwear

___ 8 shirts or T-shirts

___ 3-4 pairs of shorts

___ 2-3 pairs of long pants

___ pajamas or whatever you sleep in (enough for a week)

___ 1 lightweight rain jacket, with hood if available (water repellent preferred)

- ___ 1 warm sweater/sweatshirt – for cool summer nights
- ___ 1 hat or sun visor
- ___ 1 pair of comfortable shoes/sneakers for daily use around campus
- ___ 1 pair of good quality walking/hiking shoes
- ___ 1 pair of cheap, light sandals, for bathroom and/or for use around campus
- ___ optional: 5 clothing hangers (if you are used to hanging up some of your clothes)

TOILETRIES

- ___ One large towel (for swimming and outdoor trips)
- ___ Two bars of soap, or liquid body wash – pack liquids in zip-lock plastic bag
- ___ One plastic soap dish (if bringing soap bars)
- ___ Shampoo/conditioner – pack in zip-lock plastic bag
- ___ Toothbrush, toothpaste, floss
- ___ Nail clipper
- ___ Comb or hairbrush
- ___ optional: Plastic cup for drinking/brushing teeth (or drink out of your water bottle)

SCHOOL SUPPLIES – Each day in each breakout you may need 10 sheets of paper for classwork and homework, so you need a lot of paper. Also, you will get a zillion handouts (but no books to buy). We suggest the following to keep everything organized:

- ___ (at least) Two notebooks, spiral unless you prefer something else
- ___ (at least) One pocket folder
- ___ One three-ring binder with at least a 2” ring
- ___ (at least) 100 full-size sheets of paper with three holes to fit the binder (for personal note-taking – any kind of paper is acceptable). This is enough paper to get you started. 500 pages should be a full supply, if you have room in your bag.
- ___ Three pens
- ___ (at least) 12 pencils
- ___ extra lead (for mechanical pencils) or manual pencil sharpener (for traditional pencils)
- ___ one large eraser
- ___ recommended – 50-100 clear plastic sheet protectors (in the binder – for handouts)

RECREATION (some are optional depending on your interests)

- ___ optional: 1 pair of running shoes or cross trainers (if you want to participate in frequent runs, or play a sport that requires good shoes, such as tennis, basketball, etc)
- ___ Good walking/hiking shoes (there will be opportunities to hike nearby)
- ___ Swimsuit
- ___ optional: Soccer shoes/cleats and shin guards – there will be scrimmages/games
- ___ optional: Tennis racket, baseball mitt, table tennis paddles, or other sports equipment
- ___ optional: Glove appropriate for softball (see Recreational Activities information below)
- ___ optional: Board games, chess sets, puzzles, Rubik’s Cubes (many MathPathers love mental puzzles and games, want to share them, or arrange competitions)
- ___ optional: Musical instruments and related equipment (we expect at least one piano will be available for those who wish to practice)

OTHER ITEMS

- ___ Refillable water bottle (this is *essential*)
- ___ Small alarm clock or alarm watch – you **won't** be able to use the alarm on your smartphone (see cell phones on the next page)
- ___ Cell phone and charger (see below)
- ___ Inexpensive sunglasses
- ___ Sunscreen lotion – pack the bottle inside 2 zip-lock bags to avoid oozing
- ___ Insect repellent – pack the bottle in 2 zip-lock bags
- ___ Laundry Bag (recommend one with pull string and made of nylon net) for soiled clothes
- ___ Bathroom/shower sandals

OPTIONAL OTHER ITEMS (including electronics – all optional)

- ___ Camera - you will NOT be able to use your phone as a camera on a daily basis (see section on electronics)
- ___ Calculator – no games on the calculator; see below. (One or two breakout courses use basic calculators, notably those on ancient trigonometry and spherical trigonometry, but you can manage without one – neither MathPath nor MHC will be held responsible if you lose it, so better to bring an inexpensive scientific calculator if you bring one at all. Graphing calculators are definitely not needed.)
- ___ Simple compass, straightedge/ruler and protractor if you are thinking of taking any hands-on geometry courses.
- ___ Basic mp3 player – if you regularly listen to music to sleep or while alone in your room, you will need to bring a **non-smart** .mp3 player that does not play video or have access to games or apps (such as an iPod Shuffle) – you will NOT be able to use your phone as an .mp3 player on a daily basis (see section about electronics).
- ___ Basic eReader – if you want to bring an eReader, it must be **non-smart** so that it does not play video or have access to games or apps (such as a Kindle Paperwhite or other basic Kindle).

Recreational Activities. We have several sports traditions at MathPath. One is regular soccer games, sometimes including a tournament league. Another is jogging, often early in the morning, led by a counselor or staff member. Table tennis, which is taken pretty seriously, often involves a big tournament towards the end of the program. We often also hold a chess tournament.

Some sports at MathPath are not well known to the general public. Want to learn Pickleball? Equipment/instruction will be provided! See http://www.usapa.org/whatis_pball/index.php

Finally, we have a tradition of a student vs. staff softball game on or around July 4. If you are a regular baseball or softball player, please **bring your glove** and please share it on game day!

Bedding and Linens. GVSU will provide 2 full sets of basic linens for each student. Included in each set will be a bottom sheet, top sheet, and pillowcase for the bed. one bath towel, and washcloth. GVSU will provide a pillow and lightweight blanket for each student. If students wish to wash their linens, they will need to do so with their own laundry (see section below).

Laundry. The above listed clothing should be enough clothes for a little more than a week.

Counselors will help students to do laundry once a week, including both their clothes and their linens. Laundry rooms are available in the residence halls free of charge, but students must be monitored by a counselor while using the machines. Laundry detergent will be provided free of charge by MathPath - if you have special dermatological needs in regards to detergent, please inform Camp Director April Verser by email at april.mathpath@gmail.com, or supply your own detergent. Students should know how to operate basic washing and drying machines before arrival to MathPath just in case.

Phones. GVSU, like most colleges, does not provide landlines to residence hall rooms. If you want to call your child, they must have a cell phone (or in special cases a different device for a different kind of communication), and such calls can be made only when the phone is in the possession of your child (see next).

Cell Phones. Nowadays most children and teenagers have cell phones in their possession. We value this on Arrivals Day and Departures Day, to help ensure contact between students, parents/guardians, and MathPath staff. We also allow the students to have cell phones with them on some group outings, where there may be a need to communicate information quickly. For these reasons we ask each MathPath student to have a cell phone (that works in the US) and know how to use it and not lose it. Please put some indelible identifying information on the cell phone exterior (you can try permanent marker, etching tools, or a label with extremely strong adhesive), and make sure that identifying information can also be found on the background and lock screens.

At the same time, we recognize the concerns shared by many parents/guardians about the temptations of inappropriate use. We therefore **do not allow students to carry their cell phones** except for the daily call home and special trips. At all other times, counselors collect and safely store the phones. Where there are special circumstances in which parents/guardians wish their kids to have their phones in their possession (for example where there may be a need for an urgent call on a life-threatening health issue) we may grant an exception upon receiving a written explanation and request from the parents/guardians.

More information about electronic device usage can be found in the section below (what NOT to bring).

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Do not bring any expensive items you do not absolutely need; the chance of losing them is too great, especially if they are small. You and your family will be responsible for any loss.

All high-tech electronics other than cell phones are not permitted without pre-authorization, and are strongly discouraged. Game machines or playing games on general electronic devices are absolutely not allowed. We consider it a disciplinary matter if a student is found to be playing electronic games during MathPath. For details, including what you **must report and request pre-authorization for**, see our *Personal Electronics Agreement Form* at <http://www.mathpath.org/FormsCoverPage.htm>.

Computers. MathPath has recently invested in a portable computer lab to be available for students to use in the evenings for homework, classwork, and email. We therefore will NOT allow students to keep personal computers in their possession except in special circumstances, such as to help with a disability. If a student plans to bring a computer for some special reason, it must first be authorized by MathPath Senior Staff, and the *Personal Electronics Agreement Form* linked above must be completed, listing the personal computer.

Weapons, Lighters, Matches. Students must NOT bring any weapons of any kind, including pocket knives or swiss-army tools. Martial arts weapons are also not permitted (such as numchucks or ninja stars). This also includes lighters, matches, candles, etc.

Cooking Devices. Students must not bring any electric cooking devices (such as microwaves, hot plates, etc). Students may have supervised access to small kitchenettes with microwaves in th'e residence halls.

Controlled Substances. If bringing **any** medicine (including over-the-counter items), students must declare it on the appropriate health forms. All other controlled substances are strictly banned.

PACKING

Most airlines except Southwest charge for your bags. We advise that you check one bag and board your flight with a small carry-on. The best way to accomplish this is to pack nothing except things in the previous lists. Like they say, Travel Light! Remember, many items cannot be carried onto the airplane cabin in a carry-on; for instance, liquids in containers over 3 ounces. See

<http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/prohibited-items>

SPENDING MONEY AND SECURITY DEPOSIT

RECOMMENDED SPENDING MONEY: \$250 USD FOR 4 WEEKS

This is for the following expenses, some approximate.

1. \$125 for various weekend activities, such as bike rides or bowling
2. \$50 for incidental expenses on the round-trip between home and MathPath
3. \$75 as a cash reserve for items such as purchase of an occasional souvenir during a trip, occasional extra drinks/snacks, etc.

SECURITY DEPOSIT: \$110 USD

Every year a few campers incur an extra charge from our host, usually lost room keys (this year \$85) but also at times for property damage repairs. We ask families to provide a deposit against such charges. In the majority of cases the deposit will be returned untouched at the end of camp along with any unused spending money.

Please provide the security deposit in the form of a check. If you don't have an American checking account, some sort of money order will do. You may also find it convenient to have your child bring the spending money as a check – please, a different check – we will accept cash as well for all or part of the spending money .

Spending money is safeguarded as follows: The MathPath Treasurer runs a camp “bank”. At check-in students deposit all money (cash or check) they don’t need immediately. Students should carry no more than \$10-20 on their person on a regular basis. Students will have access 1-3 times a week to this account, particularly before trips to interesting destinations where students tend to enjoy spending money. Students will choose to attend different weekend activities that may have different costs. These costs will be automatically deducted from the student’s account each week. Money remaining in the account at the end of the program will be returned to the student, in cash or check depending on the amount.

Access to this account gives many students more independence in spending money than they have had before. Before leaving, please discuss with your expectations for fiscal responsibility with your MathPather. Point out that if they spend most of their money on snacks and souvenirs, they won’t be able to use it for the Sunday activities and outings.

VII. COMMUNICATION

CONTACTING MATHPATH

Starting a few days before the program, and throughout the duration of camp, the MathPath phone number, **610-616-3211**, connects to April Verser, the senior staff member in charge of liaison with parents, guardians, friends, etc. April can also be reached via email at april.mathpath@gmail.com.

All serious concerns about students should be voiced to April, and she can forward concerns to the proper person during the program. We emphasize the word serious; do not fill April’s mailbox with minor matters that you can handle by talking to your child directly in the evening phone call. Also, please refrain from calling the MathPath number to leave messages for individual students, unless in an absolute emergency, or if you are unable to reach the student directly after several tries for at least two days.

April will have “office hours” during which she or her assistant can be reached directly on the phone line, and during which she will respond to emails. These hours will be announced closer to the start of MathPath, and may be updated during the course of the month. In case of an emergency outside of these office hours, please call the MathPath number and leave a voicemail, which will be listened to promptly, and action will be taken as deemed necessary by MathPath Senior Staff.

CONTACTING INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

Students should be reachable at the same email address they use at home, as they can connect

to their home email provider through the MathPath mobile lab, or GVSU computer labs.

As for reaching students on their cell phones, the best time to reach your child is 9:30pm EDT – after their counselor group meeting is over and before lights out at 10pm. Do not phone at other times without special arrangements; counselors will have possession of student phones at all other times.

Calling Home. Counselors will remind students to call (or contact) home every day in the first week, less frequently thereafter. Please impress upon your son or daughter the importance of keeping you up to date. Be sure to talk to them about your expectations before they leave home.

Expect the phone call home to come between 9:30-10pm EDT most evenings. Some evenings (such as the fourth of July), the phone call may be delayed due to camp activities. For families who are out of the country, or for whom this phone call will come at an inconvenient time, we can arrange a different call time, probably around the dinner hour. Your student will communicate the arrangements directly with you after conferring with their counselor and April Verser, Camp Director.

Homesickness. We keep an eye out and support students where we see a need. Experience has shown that the busy days and evenings at MathPath usually help counteract homesickness within a few days when it does occur. Note: Excessive communication with the family often contributes to more homesickness. Please keep your telephone calls brief, and try not to remind students of things they are “missing” at home (i.e. favorite foods/pets/activities).

SENDING MAIL TO STUDENTS

Address all letters and packages, whether sent by US Mail or package services, to:

Student Name
Kistler Living Center
c/o MathPath
10980 Residence Dr
Allendale, MI 49401

No Weekend Delivery. Like at most colleges, the GVSU mailroom is not open on Saturdays (nor of course on Sundays). *No mail, including no express, no overnight, no UPS and no FedEx, will reach us at the above address on Saturdays or Sundays, even if you pay for special weekend delivery.*

It is possible that we may be unable to receive mail from Friday noon through Tuesday morning. Therefore, *if you want to be sure something gets to us or your student over the weekend, you MUST plan for delivery for the previous Thursday at the latest.*

If you are mailing something special, urgent, or time-sensitive, we advise you to contact April Verser, Camp Director, in advance of its mailing, via email at april.mathpath@gmail.com.

Emergencies. (i.e. medication) We may be able to make special arrangements to ensure arrival of emergency mailings (via a local mailing service or office), but you **MUST** contact April Verser via email at april.mathpath@gmail.com, and work with us to mail according to our instructions.

Limited mail collection hours. Mail will not be delivered directly to our organization; rather, we must pick it up from the college mail room, often located far across campus. College mail rooms have limited summer hours, which limit the times in which we could pick up the mail, and which may not coordinate well with our schedule. We typically pick up the mail once per day, meaning that later deliveries will not be picked up until the following day. On Mondays, typically all staff and students are off campus on an excursion, making mail collection sometimes impossible on these days. If an item is delivered late on Friday, please expect that it may not arrive to its addressee until Tuesday. Most delivery/tracking services will report when the item reaches the campus mail room. Please understand our limitations at being able to collect mail, and do not be concerned if items do not reach students until the business day (for us, Tues-Fri) after they are reported to you as “delivered” by the courier.

Suggested last postmark dates for student mail:

Regular domestic mail –July 23

Domestic Priority –July 24

Domestic Express Mail –July 25

Regular mail from Canada – July 12

Regular mail from other countries – July 5

Courier (FedEx, DHL, etc.):

 Overnight domestic or Canada courier – July 25

 Express courier from other countries – July 24

VIII. VISITING MATHPATH

Parents/guardians, relatives, teachers, and friends are invited to attend the MathPath opening session on Monday, July 1, at 8:30 am (discussed in more detail on page 1 of this Briefing). They may also wish to attend the events on the final night, Saturday, July 27 (typically beginning at 7pm and ending around 10 pm). There is a closing ceremony, which includes the awarding of certificates to all students completing the program, and this is followed by a talent show, which can be a lot of fun for both participants and audience.

Parents/guardians often wish to stay several days at the beginning of the program. However, we discourage this. We do allow a visit of one or two days at the beginning or end of the program, and brief visits by you or authorized relatives/friends once or twice in the middle of our program, typically during our weekends; but please consider whether this is best for your

child. Parents may wonder if they can help fend off homesickness by visiting; however, we find that the mathematical environment and, most importantly, the opportunities to mingle with other students who are also mathematically gifted quickly engages them with their new environment. Students form strong relationships with their intellectual peers at MathPath, and we feel strongly that excessive visiting can erode the value of these interactions. Thus we allow only a limited number and limited length of visits.

If you wish to visit for more than one day, a list of lodging options near GVSU can be found at the site below:

<https://www.gvsu.edu/hotels/>

You may spend the days of your visit *observing* MathPath, that is, following your child's routine, but not interfering with it. Guests may attend plenaries (all-program lectures), sitting in the rear of the auditorium. With permission of the instructor, guests may also attend breakouts (small classes), again sitting in the rear or off to the side of the room. While visiting you may eat in the college dining hall. You will be able to pay the dining hall directly. The expected approximate prices are:

Breakfast	\$ 6.50
Lunch	\$ 9.00
Dinner	\$10.00

Protocol for Visits during the MathPath session. You (parents/guardians), or friends and relatives whom you list on a special form (see mathpath.org/FormsCoverPage.htm – “Student Handover Permission Form”), can request to visit your child during MathPath and take them off campus. Each such request must be made at least **48 hours in advance and must be approved**. Approval is never given (except in emergencies) to take students off campus during our academic program, and we discourage students leaving campus for/during our group weekend events. In particular, Saturday is an academic day at MathPath; *do not ask to take a student out of our activities before 5:30pm on Saturdays*. Mondays are devoted to all-program trips and we strongly discourage requests to remove a student from these events. It is best to limit off-campus requests to a few hours, such as dinner Saturday or Sunday night.

To ensure that the senior staff know the whereabouts of every student, there is a specific protocol for requesting any off campus trip for a student. You must make the request to April Verser, Camp Director. You may email her at april.mathpath@gmail.com or you can phone her at our usual number, 610-616-3211.

Assuming permission is granted, when you come to campus to take your child, you must see April or her assistant – *no one else is authorized to release your child*. You may be asked to present photo ID. They will confirm when and where you will meet them again upon your return. No one except April or her assistant can receive your child back on campus, unless *they* designate someone else.

Any people designated on the Student Handover Permission Form must follow the same

protocol as described. It is your responsibility (as the parent/guardian of the student) to inform those persons of this protocol.

IX. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The daily schedule for our workweek, which runs Tues–Sat, is shown at www.mathpath.org/day.htm

Our program has two main components, *plenaries* (presentations to the entire student body) and *breakouts* (week-long hands-on classes with 10 to 25 students). There are morning breakouts and afternoon breakouts, typically 6 different options in each time slot. Each week, each student is enrolled in one morning breakout and one afternoon breakout. Thus by the end of our 4 weeks together, each student has studied 8 different mathematical topics.

Attendance at plenaries and breakouts is *required*. Many of the best high school age summer math programs run like colleges and do not check attendance. But with our age group, 11-14, we exercise more control. Indeed, students can never go off by themselves, but must go places in counselor groups, class groups, or otherwise supervised groups.

Before each week, the faculty present a Show-and-Tell to describe the breakout courses for that week. Then students submit their preferences. Because we wish to keep courses relatively small, courses that are ranked #1 by too many students are lotteried, and thus not everyone gets their first choice. Typically, 90% of students do get both their morning and afternoon first choices each week, and it's very rare that anyone gets less than their second choice. But there are no guarantees.

Sometime before Arrivals Day, we post on our website a schedule of breakouts and a catalog of descriptions of them. These posts are not complete, nor guaranteed, because we like to retain some flexibility, say to offer a second version of a breakout in a later week if it was so popular in the earlier week that many students who wanted to take it were lotteried out. So always note the version number and date on these schedules when you consult them - we update them as we make more teaching decisions.

By all means, discuss the breakout choices with your children before they come to MathPath but do not ask us to pre-enroll them and do not instruct them that they must take certain courses. Your children don't have full information until they attend Show and Tell, and then it is their choice how to rank them. Also, pre-enrolling a student would allow that student to avoid all lotteries, and that would be an unfair advantage.

For answers to further questions about our program, see our website, especially the Q&A pages accessible from the left navbar. You might find particularly interesting the comparisons by former students of MathPath with other summer math programs, and comments by parents/guardians about MathPath itself.

Online Courses. Many MathPathogens learn extra math during the school year by taking online courses, especially from the Art of Problem Solving (AoPS). Can they continue this while at MathPath? The short answer is: sometimes. For the long answer again see the Q&A on our website; go to this page: http://www.mathpath.org/QA/MathPath.Experience_compete.htm

X. ACTIVITIES

The location of MathPath 2019 gives us a unique opportunity to explore West Michigan, and we plan to take full advantage of this in our weekend activities. Mondays will have full-camp outings, and Sundays activities will be varied, and the students will have many choices to choose from.

There will be a charge for Sunday activities like cycling, kayaking, or rock climbing, for example, to cover equipment or ticket costs. The charges will be announced along with the activities so that students have the opportunity to make wise financial decisions. The costs for the activities each student participates in will be automatically deducted from that student's individual spending account.

Counselors and Senior Staff will research different options from week to week, and propose several options to students during general announcement time. Students will sign up (generally binding) a few days before the activities. Activities will change from week to week depending on interest and availability. To find out what activities are offered for each weekend, parents/guardians should consult with their students. Please be sure that students are made aware of any activities that parents/guardians have not allowed permission for on the Recreational Activities Form (which can be found online at <http://www.mathpath.org/FormsCoverPage.htm>).

In the evenings, MathPath counselors will chaperone different indoor and outdoor activities, depending on availability on the campus. In the past, students at MathPath have been able to participate in activities such as origami, arts & crafts, tennis, soccer, basketball, pickleball, frisbee, Magic: The Gathering, chess, and other games/opportunities.

All participants in the MathPath program will receive a MathPath hat and shirt free of charge, and occasionally be expected to wear one or both of these items on field trips. All students who complete the MathPath program will receive a yearbook and a certificate of completion.

Continuing Favorite Activities from Home. Some of our campers are serious swimmers or pianists or whatever and practice daily. Can they continue this at MathPath? The short answer is: sometimes, probably with less intensity. For the long answer see the Q&A page on our website http://www.mathpath.org/QA/MathPath.Experience_compete.htm

XI. SAFETY PROTOCOL

The safety of all participants is the highest priority at MathPath. The following protocol will be in effect throughout the program:

1. Access to the dormitory buildings occupied by MathPath students will be by swipe access cards issued only to MathPath students and staff, and to GVSU Safety/Security Personnel. Student rooms will be accessed by keys issued to the student occupant only. The key will be tied on a lanyard that the students wear around their necks. Students will be told to keep their rooms locked at all times. Students will wear their lanyards at all times when they are outside their own rooms, except when swimming, playing field games, or engaged in such activities where wearing a lanyard might interfere with physical safety.
2. Each student will be assigned to a counselor, who will be specifically responsible for the student's well being. In particular, it will be the counselor's responsibility to check that the student is present in the residence hall every evening before the counselor group meeting, which takes place each night just before preparation for bed. Thereafter, students should be in their own rooms or the bathroom. Lights should be turned off in the student's room at the scheduled lights-out time.
3. Students will not be allowed to leave the campus unless accompanied by MathPath personnel or an authorized adult. The only authorized adults are the parents or guardians, unless they authorize others on the form we provide. During off-campus program excursions, students will be grouped under MathPath staff leaders who, in turn, will answer to the Camp Director.
4. A Nurse will be available during scheduled times on most days for consultation about ailments, injuries, and other health matters, and will be on call when not present on campus to provide medical consultation when needed. In the event of a minor injury or medical problem, it is the student's responsibility to inform their counselor or a senior staff member immediately. The student will then be expected and reminded to visit the Nurse at the next possible opportunity. After a consultation with the Nurse, further action will be taken as indicated.

On the health form, you inform us of medications the student must take, and we will see to it that the medications are taken as you have described. If you request that the Nurse administer the medication, the medicine will be kept in the Nurse's office, and the student must visit the Nurse to take the medication.

In the case of a serious medical problem or other emergency affecting the student, we will attempt to notify parents or guardians immediately, while at the same time prompt medical attention will be obtained as required. On the health form you authorize us to commence treatment while we attempt to reach you.

It is our policy that a counselor or another staff member (as opposed to your child) should be the first person to contact you about a serious medical problem, so that you know we are on

top of it. Likewise, if you are concerned about a medical issue, please be in touch with us first, not your child. If your child contacts you first, they may not have informed us of the problem, and you should insist that your child does inform us – and contact us yourself, too.

5. A student diagnosed later than June 1 by their physician as having a serious or highly communicable disease (e.g., mononucleosis, meningitis, a serious flu) will not be allowed to attend the program. If a student develops any such disease during the program, they will be immediately admitted to a nearby hospital or placed in cared-for-isolation, as merited by the case.

– end –