

Family Letter

Dear Student and Family Members,

Our class is about to begin an exciting year of *Impact Mathematics*. Some of the topics we will study include negative numbers, exponents, three-dimensional geometry, ratios, probability, and data analysis. Throughout the year, your student will also develop and refine skills in algebra.

We'll begin by looking at algebraic expressions—the combinations of numbers, letters, and mathematical symbols that form the language of algebra. We will learn about variables—letters or symbols that can change or that represent unknown quantities. For example, in the expression $b + 2$, the variable is b .

Once we're familiar with variables and expressions, we will create flowcharts to match expressions and then use the flowcharts to solve equations. We will also explore formulas used in everyday life, such as the formula used to convert degrees Celsius to degrees Fahrenheit: $F = \frac{9}{5}C + 32$.

Vocabulary Along the way, we'll be learning several new vocabulary terms:

algebraic expression
backtracking
distributive property
equivalent expressions
expand

exponent
factor
flowchart
formula
variable

What can you do at home?

Encourage your student to explain the kinds of problems he or she is solving in class. In addition, help him or her think about common occurrences of algebraic expressions in daily life. Your interest in your student's work helps emphasize the importance of mathematics and its usefulness in daily life.