

MATHCOUNTS Club at Cabin John MS: Frequently Asked Questions

September 11, 2019

1. What is Mathcounts Competition Series?

Mathcounts Competition Series is “A national program that provides students in grades 6-8 the opportunity to compete in live, in-person contests against and alongside their peers.” See <https://www.mathcounts.org/> for more information.

2. How do the CJMS Mathcounts Club and Team work?

We started the Mathcounts Club for the first time at CJMS during the 2018-2019 school year, with substantial help from many parent volunteers, CJMS staff and PTSA board members. Six of the ten team members qualified for the Maryland State Mathcounts competition, an outstanding performance for a first-time participant.

This year a parent steering committee, consisting of Abigail Luo, Jun Liu, and Aruna Madakasira, will coordinate the process. Our beloved student coaches from last year will be in charge of the training again, given the excellent outcome of last year.

The Mathcounts Club and Team process is as follows. Dates are approximate and specifics are subject to change.

1. Tryout. A link to a Google form for sign up of the tryout will be announced via School and/or PTSA newsletters. About 20 students with the highest scores will qualify for the Mathcounts Club. Details will be provided in the Google form.
2. Club training, Team formation, and competition. Club members will meet weekly or biweekly on Sunday mornings for training and testing. A school-level Mathcounts test will be administered in January 2020. The performance in this test, together with the weekly (or biweekly) test performance, will form the basis for the coaches to select 10 members, out of the ~20 Mathcounts Club members, to form the CJMS Mathcounts Team. The Team will participate in the Chapter level Mathcounts competition in February, which will advance qualified students to the State level Mathcounts competition.

We may excuse a student who scores in the top 5 in the tryout and have a good reason to be excused from the regular meeting. In that case, we will try to arrange an alternative way for the student to take the regularly scheduled tests. The student can also access the same training material via Google classroom. Having conflict with another regular extracurricular activity does not qualify for this exception.

3. How can I prepare for the tryout?

The tryout test is modeled after the problems that you can find at <https://www.mathcounts.org/get-mathcounts-school-handbook>. So this is an excellent resource for you to help your student prepare for the tryout.

4. CJMS also has a school math team, how does it relate to the Mathcounts club and team?

The Mathcounts club/team is independent of the School Math Team. For information on the School Math Team, please refer to its information on the CJMS website.

5. What are some resources and opportunities for advancing students' math skills if they do not qualify into the Mathcounts club and team?

There are many free online resources for students to practice and improve their math skills, including some listed on the mathcounts.org website. In addition, there are many math competitions that welcome any student to participate. These competitions often rely on parent and community volunteers. Last year, several parents took our students to several different math competitions and took home trophies. We often receive information on such competitions, but don't have the resources to coordinate. If there are parents who are interested in chairing a committee to coordinate these competitions, please let one of us know. Be forewarned that it might require a substantial amount of effort and time, so do not sign up unless you are committed to follow through independently.

6. Who can I contact if I have questions?

Hopefully this FAQ is self-explanatory. We will not respond to questions that you can find answers by reading this FAQ and checking the mathcounts.org website. In addition, we prefer to disseminate information through the school or PTSA announcements to ensure equal access to the same information for all students and families. If you still have a question after due diligence, you may email Sandy Hsu, our coach coordinator, at mingshanghsu@yahoo.com.