

MATHCOUNTS Club at Cabin John MS: Frequently Asked Questions

September 10, 2020

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. However, this year only the National competition, the last in the series will be in-person. School, Chapter, and State level competitions, the first three in the series, will all be online.

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

Several CJMS parents started the Mathcounts Club for the first time at CJMS during the 2018-2019 school year, with substantial support 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. For the 2019-2020 school year, State level competition was cancelled. Our school team ranked 4th in the Chapter level competition, with two students placed in the top 10%.

What is more important, we have fostered interest in math in CJMS students. Many students have sought out additional math learning and contests beyond Mathcounts.

The parent steering committee, consisting of Abigail Luo, Aruna Madakasira, Liping Zhang, and Jun Liu, will coordinate the process. Three of our beloved student coaches from the last two years started their college adventures this year. Our coaches in training in the last two years will take charge of the training.

Because of the pandemic, Mathcounts will be different this year. CJMS Mathcounts Club will also be run virtually. We don't yet have all the information and the logistics in place. Below is a tentative outline of what to expect based on our past experience. Note that things are subject to change.

- Tryout. A link to a Google form for sign up of the tryout will be announced via School and/or PTSA newsletters. About 30 students with the highest scores will qualify for the Mathcounts Club. Details will be provided in the Google form. We have a tentative test date 9/25, Friday at 6pm, which is subject to change.
- Club training, Team formation, and competition. Club members will meet weekly or biweekly on Fridays 6-8pm for training and testing. The performance in these tests will form the basis for the coaches to select 15 members, out of the ~30 Mathcounts Club members, to form the CJMS Mathcounts Team. Competition schedule for the Mathcounts series can be found at https://www.mathcounts.org/sites/default/files/Critical%20Dates%202021_0.pdf

3. How can I prepare for the tryout?

The tryout test is modeled after problems in Mathcounts handbooks in past years. Google “mathcounts handbook” would turn up handbooks from past years. 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. In the last two years, 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. To ensure equal access to information, we will announce tryout signup through CJMS or PTSA channels, hopefully by 9/18. After that time, we will start monitoring the cabinjohnmathcounts@gmail.com email account regularly until the team has been formed, after which time communication would be mainly through team email list and Google classroom, and this email account will not be monitored routinely.