Calculator Requirements

All students at MATES are required to have a calculator for math classes. The calculators must be brought to class daily and must be used at home as well. Below are the requirements for each grade level as well as guidelines for specific types of calculators.

Grade 9 Scientific Calculator
Students in 9th grade will be required to have a scientific calculator. Please read the scientific calculator requirements below, as calculators used in middle school may not be acceptable.

Grade 10 Graphing Calculator
Students start their second year at MATES with Probability and Statistics, a course that involves tedious computations that can be done easily on a graphing calculator. Students are strongly encouraged to have a graphing calculator for this and all subsequent math courses. In the spring semester, Algebra 2 will incorporate graphing calculator activities and students are encouraged to use them daily to facilitate use on standardized tests, such as SAT’s.

Although they are expensive, they are worth the expense and waiting for good sales or buying a used one can save a significant amount. If family circumstances do not allow for the purchase, we do have graphing calculators to lend in school for classroom use, but students will have to use alternate technology at home. Please read the guidelines below regarding choosing a graphing calculator.

Sophomores should retain their scientific calculators, provided they meet the new requirements below, for use on assessments. We will continue to have scientific calculators to lend students if necessary.

Grades 11 and 12 Graphing Calculator
Upperclassmen will continue to use graphing calculators for all tasks with the exception of assessments. Students may use their own scientific calculators for assessments if they meet the new requirements below, otherwise we will continue to have them in the classroom to lend.

Scientific Calculator Requirements
Scientific calculators must be appropriate for honors level high school level math courses. The calculator must have buttons for square roots and exponents, as well as sin, cos, tan, log, and ln. Having these functions embedded in menus is not an acceptable alternative, as accessing these menus reduces efficiency. Be advised that TI-34 (Texas Instruments) calculators do not meet this requirement and will not be allowed for classroom use. Our classroom calculators are model TI-30XIIS (see photo), which is an inexpensive reliable calculator that does not require batteries. They are readily available at all stores that sell school supplies.

Graphing Calculator Guidelines
There is a wide variety of graphing calculators available. At MATES, we have TI-83 calculators (see photo), which are similar to TI-84 calculators, but less expensive. All MATES math teachers are knowledgeable in the use of these calculators and lessons are based on these models. Students who choose to use a more elaborate calculator or another brand are responsible for learning how to access calculator functions on their own. Students are advised to have their calculator instruction book with them at all times, so they can participate in classroom activities. Teachers will not be able to instruct students on the use of alternate calculator models.
MATES Calculators

Life size photos of scientific and graphing calculators used at MATES