

Dear students and parents,

The IDEA MATH team hopes that this email finds you well. We would like to share with you some information on the IDEA MATH 2017-2018 winter programs.

We will be holding four winter programs this year – one main program and three shorter programs.

- (1) The main winter program will be held in San Jose (Queen of Apostles School) from 12/26 to 12/31 (six full class days). For program info., please visit [http://www.ideamath.org/amc123\\_main.htm](http://www.ideamath.org/amc123_main.htm);
- (2) Jan. 3 – 6, 2018 at Houston Baptist University, Houston, Texas (four full class days). For program, please visit <http://www.ideamath.org/WinterTX.htm>;
- (3) Jan. 4 – 7, 2018 at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas (this program is co-sponsored by the Texas A&M University Math Circle and will last for four full class days). For program info., please visit <http://www.ideamath.org/WinterAM.htm>;
- (4) Jan. 13, 14, 20, 21, 2018 (four full class days) at Lexington MA. For program info, please visit <http://www.ideamath.org/WinterMA.htm>

Here are answers to some frequently asked questions:

(Q1) The online payment option is now active. Please log in to your account to make a tuition payment. No reference letter or personal essay is required for students who are new to our program.

(Q2) Curriculum: For each course (UW series and up), there are three components: Mock Tests, Contest Review, and Winter Projects. All materials are written in a 5-problem mini-test format. Among these materials, Mock Tests are original problems written annually, while our Contest Review materials are on a 10-year revision cycle and Winter Projects are on a 2-year revision cycle.

In short, every student will receive new materials in every course (even if they are taking a course with the same course code as they have taken previously).

(Q3) Placement: We will make initial placements based on our students' general academic background (age, grade level, math courses taken, official contest scores, and programs taken with IDEA MATH – if any). We will use the first day's tests as a significant data point to fine-tune our placement of students into classes.

Our winter program is test-preparation based. Students will be grouped so they can take proper tests to fit their backgrounds. If a student is solving on average 3+ problems (out of 5) on the mini-tests, then they are properly placed. Otherwise, we will discuss with them and make appropriate adjustments. In particular, the course code is really irrelevant because every student will receive new and/or revised materials in every course in every winter program. We recommend you do not read much into course code or "level" at all.

(Q4) What are the differences between these programs? The main program in San Jose provides all course levels (about 10). The Houston program provides three medium- to medium higher- level courses for more experienced students. The College Station program provides intro- and medium-level courses. The Lexington program provides mainly medium-level courses with some higher-level course offerings.

(Q5) These are all non-residential programs. Students need to manage their own lodging and transportation. For the San Jose winter program, we do have hotel group rates for traveling students. After the student is enrolled (i.e., tuition has been paid and processed), the hotel link will be available in the student's account. (The rate is about \$90 per night plus tax. The hotel is either the Hilton Garden Inn or the Marriott Courtyard, both in Cupertino.)

(Q6) Lunch is included for all full program students. Half-day program students should prepare their own lunch or they may pay an extra fee and we will provide their lunch.

Look forward to working with you soon!

IDEA MATH staff