Students who earn credit for algebra I as 8th graders (85% or better for the course) should follow this math track through High School if they wish to pursue a post-secondary degree:

9th Grade   Geometry
10th   Algebra II
11th   PreCalculus/Trig   Dual Credit   (5 credits)
12th   Calculus   Dual Credit   (4 Credits)

The advantage to taking calculus in high school is that the number of students in class is usually less than 15 (could be in a lecture hall with 50 or 60 in college). In high school, students spend 5 days a week for over an hour each day all year long. In college, you will meet 3 days a week for 50 min. From the first of September to Christmas. Students have 12 hours a week outside of class to get extra help in high school. A professor's office hours are typically no more than 4 hours a week in college. Even if a student serves a mission after high school and needs to retake calculus in college (having been away from math for 2 years), they will be able to start with calculus instead of having to retake college algebra and trig. If a student goes to college immediately after high school they will be prepared to take their second course (of 3) in calculus and will be a semester ahead in math.

This is the recommended course for those wanting to pursue careers in medicine, dentistry, law and any type of engineering or science. This sequence will allow students finish college in the prescribed amount of time for their degree.

Students who begin high school taking Algebra I as a freshman should follow the this math sequence to pursue a post-secondary degree.

9th   Algebra I
10th   Geometry
11th   Algebra II
12th   PreCalculus/Trig for Dual Credit or not

If students go straight to college after high school they will be prepared to take their first calculus course in college. Students who do this will be on track to finish the more academic college majors listed above. They will be ahead of the game for less rigorous college majors such as business, nursing, education etc. If they serve a mission first, they will need to retake college algebra and trig. For students pursuing medicine, engineering, dentistry and law, they will be year behind in math. They will be on track for the less rigorous courses of study.

Students who start high school taking Algebra I as a freshman and wish to pursue a post-secondary certificate or enter the world of work after graduating can follow this math track through high school.

9th   Algebra I
10th   Geometry
11th   Algebra II (optional but you're jeopardizing your future)
12th   Senior Math (financial literacy and elementary statistics)

If students follow this math track and decide later they want to pursue a 4-year degree, they will need to repeat or take Algebra II and College Algebra before they can start on course work they should be taking as a freshman in college. They are now 2 years behind and receive no credit for the remedial courses though they will have to pay for them in time and money.

Students who skip math in their junior year are not doing themselves any favors as it is the junior year when college entrance exams are taken. Students not currently in a math course do far worse on those exams than those who have math currently on their minds.

If students take the minimum six math credits required to graduate from high school, they will be inadequately prepared to enter college/university and be successful in the prescribed amount of time for their chosen major. The costs for catching up at that point will have to be paid in time, effort, and money. We are concerned that many in that situation will be unable or unwilling to pay that price and will, therefore, be severely limited in what they are able to do with their lives. Dreams often go unfulfilled in the name of 'taking it easy' and 'having a good time'.

Please be sure your student is enrolled in the math courses necessary to open as many doors as possible for his/her future.

At the moment a student is allowed to quit math too soon, listen very carefully. You will hear the doors of opportunity shut.