

# divided by TWO

## Math teachers, students deal with division between online and in-person learning

**F**rozen. Another kid, frozen. In all eight years of her teaching, math teacher **Megan Oliver** had never dealt with something like this. It was frustrating, not enough kids back in class, and too many unresponsive online. It was a brand new dynamic she was not prepared for.

"It was hard for everyone involved because I couldn't help them when they needed or wanted help," Oliver said.

Although she did have to deal with technological issues, Oliver created a routine she felt worked well with her kids and helped herself keep them on track.

"I do more live teaching," Oliver said. "So, for the kids in class, it's normal, and for the kids online I've shared my screen and they're following along. It is kind of normal, although it is more exhausting for me to not only keep one group engaged, but two."

The new online process with scheduled virtual meetings every day has benefited Oliver's teaching greatly. This is a different dynamic from the previous spring 2020 semester, which was also online but less structured.

"Now is a lot better for me and for the kids. I think that the routine is important, I think most of my kids in the spring were completely off schedule," Oliver said. "They were sleeping until 1 [p.m.], texting me questions on the Remind at 1 [a.m.]. I wasn't working then, because we as teachers were working normal hours, but a lot of my students were not

doing that."

**Leanne Fonesca**, 11, an AP math student, had her own take on the new math learning environment as well.

"I think that it's better being in class because I get the chance to communicate with the teacher as well as other kids in my class," Fonesca said.

**Tyler Hernandez**, 11, has also dealt with the new online environment, and shares a similar viewpoint.

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day," Hernandez said. "There are only six or eight kids [in my math class] right now, and it's the biggest class I've had. But, I feel like [the smaller class size] brings more attention to the kids in school, because they can ask more one-on-one questions, and it's a lot easier to get [the students'] attention."

Both Fonesca and Hernandez also said that this year and the new learning schedule have benefited the students both online and in-person greatly.

"My math teacher has been able to balance everything well. She works hard to make sure that people in the class participate, as well as the kids online.

She's doing a really good job," Fonesca said.

"It doesn't change [the learning environment] that much. Only whenever we're asking questions, or going over a review packet does it take longer so that the kids on the Zoom can speak up and ask questions," Hernandez said.

Hernandez felt like the schedule was important as well. He said he felt as though the spring of 2020 helped teachers understand what some do's and don'ts were for teaching online, and everyone, students and teachers alike, benefited from it.

"I feel like since [the teachers] had some practice at the end of last year, they had a way to kind of know what they were doing and have learned a little bit more from it to use this year. It felt like nothing changed, and I'm in a regular math class," Hernandez said.

Oliver, from a teacher's perspective, also said like it was important for students to be in-person to benefit from the interaction. She also realized that she benefited from seeing kids in person.

"I think I missed the personal, lack of interaction. It's the part of my job that I like so much," Oliver said. "I mean I knew how much it affected me, but I truly do benefit from having kids here. Some teachers have realized through this that they can teach online, but that isn't me. I want to teach them in person."

**Story by Emalee Goode  
Designer Amanda Falcon**

**SELF MOTIVATION:** (above) Learning how to keep up with math during COVID, **Kylie Robertson**, 12, finds new ways to get her work done. "We've been having to watch lesson videos at night when we get home and that can get boring sometimes. But so far I've been able to motivate myself one way or another to get my work done and learn," Robertson said; photo by g. orr

# AXIS OF symmetry

Payton Lewis, 10, breaks down how to complete and express an axis of symmetry (AOS) equation

1

"Write out standard form, then the problem."

$$3x^2 - 4x + 12$$

2

"Then the formula for AOS."

$$-\frac{b}{2a} = \text{AOS}$$

3

"Solve through distribution and simplification."

$$\frac{-(-4)}{2(3)} = \text{AOS}$$

$$\frac{4}{6} = \text{AOS}$$

4

"Plug the numbers from the quadratic into the formula."

$$\frac{2}{3} = \text{AOS}$$