

Subject: Elementary Math Education program update - W21

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Hello GVSU Elementary Math majors!

This message is being sent by the Math Department to all declared Elementary Education Math majors. As you may have heard, the State of Michigan has recently changed the certification structure for elementary teachers. Most of these changes will not affect you, but **there are a few things you should do** to make sure you don't get caught in the transition:

1. Plan to finish by 2026,
2. Double-check your major on Banner, and
3. Be aware of course substitutions.

See below for details on these three points.

Background: Michigan's current certification structure provides content area expertise and certifies teachers to teach in grades K-8. The new grade band structure will certify teachers to teach either at the PK-3 level or the 3-6 level, or they can pursue both grade bands (PK-6). The new major is titled "Pedagogical Content Knowledge for Elementary Teaching" or PCKET.

****As declared Elementary Math majors, you will earn your K-8 certification and are NOT subject to these changes as long as you complete your program by the summer of 2026.** Since you are already a declared Math major in the Elementary Certification track, you DO NOT need to switch to the PCKET major. In fact, switching would increase your time to graduation and is not recommended. You may continue with your current degree program and apply to the College of Education at the usual time (i.e., the semester before Teacher Assisting).

Three things to do right now:

1. **Plan to finish by 2026.** You must complete your entire program of study and pass your MTTC K-8 certification tests by July 2026. (The Michigan Department of Education will offer MTTC K-8 certification tests through July of 2026.)
2. **Double-check your major on Banner.** Starting in F21, students will no longer be able to declare the Math Major with Elementary Certification. Please double-check that your major is listed correctly on Banner / MyPath:

- In the top table in myPath you should see the following:

Majors	Mathematics - Teaching Education
Minor	Elementary Certification
Emphasis	Elementary Education

- As you scroll down to see how you've fulfilled different requirements, you should see different headings listing majors, minors, general education, etc. You should have two

Majors listed: “Mathematics - Elementary Education” and “Education”, and one **Minor:** Elementary Certification.

- If your major, minor, or emphasis is not listed correctly, please contact your Math Advisor **before the end of W21 semester.**
3. **Be aware of course substitutions.** Most of your required MTH courses will continue to be offered as scheduled, but MTH 221, 222, and 223 are being phased out or replaced.
- **Complete your MTH 221 and MTH 222 requirements by W22 if possible.**
 - **MTH 221** (4 credits) is being replaced starting F21 with the two course sequence, MTH 126 (2) + STA 126 (2). They are offered as half-semester courses in the same block, so they can be taken in a single semester (in either order). Together, these courses can substitute for MTH 221 in the current program. Students who have already completed MTH 221 do NOT need to take the new courses.
 - **MTH 222** (3 credits) will run as usual next year (2021-22). We may offer one or two sections in F22, but it is best to complete it next year if possible. If you do not complete MTH 222 before it disappears, you will need to substitute the two-course sequence, MTH 226 + MTH 326 (6 credits), in place of MTH 222.
 - **MTH 223** (5 credits) was an optional course that could replace MTH 221 + MTH 222 that will no longer be offered. Complete MTH 221 + MTH 222, or the alternate courses described above.
 - The rest of the MTH courses in your major will continue to be offered as usual! Please consult the **Course Offering Plan** on the [Math major advising web page](#) for details.
 - Consult your education advisor or the [CLAS academic advising center](#) for advice about how the transition might affect your non-MTH courses in the major.

Again, we recommend you keep your existing Math - Elementary Education major: you will be one of the last graduates in Michigan with a flexible K-8 certification AND a bachelor’s degree in your content area, which together will increase your marketability because of the wider grade range you can teach and because your content area expertise will set you up to be a leader in mathematics instruction at your future school. Your math major also gives you the flexibility to explore other career options.

You may also find the resources available on the [Math major advising web page](#) useful. If you have any questions, please contact your Math Advisor or mthdept@gvsu.edu.

Best wishes,

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