Math Domain Revisions

2026 Washington Math Domains Defined

The Washington State K–12 Learning Standards for Mathematics (WA Math 2026) domains reorganize math standards in all grades through four connected content areas. These domains support teaching and learning mathematics through making sense of the world, making predictions, and examining impacts of mathematical relationships.

Data Analysis

The standards in this domain focus on formulating statistical investigative questions, collecting and considering data including measurements, creating data visualizations (ranging from bar graphs and histograms to scatterplots and complex representations as appropriate for the grade), and interpreting results and communicating justification for conclusions.

Quantity

The standards in this domain focus on analysis of magnitude and comparison of quantities. In early grades, mathematical fluency focuses on efficient, flexible, and accurate strategies applied to math operations and symbols. Moving toward middle and late elementary, math standards shift towards decimal and fractional reasoning and math operations with place value. In middle and high school grades, math standards examine number systems (real, integers, rational, irrational, etc.).

Relationships

The standards in this domain focus on developing reasoning strategies and understanding of quantities as parts of a relationship, and understanding and explaining relationships in real situations. In elementary school, students explore relationships through identifying parts and wholes, using fluency strategies to perform operations with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals, connect decomposing and recomposing number strategies to shapes and fractions, then to geometry principles. Middle school students explore the relationships between terms of expressions and equations, proportionality, and set the groundwork for functions and abstract algebraic relationships in high school. Across all grades, students use mathematical modeling and problem solving to understand real-world relationships.

Spatial Reasoning

The standards in this domain focus on understanding shapes, space, and visual patterns, both in geometry and data analysis (graphing). In elementary grades, students identify and define attributes of shapes and geometric principles, and the quantities/measurements associated with those attributes. Middle school students extend their understanding within graphing relationships and geometric principles in the coordinate plane. High school students

examine complex attributes of geometry, foundational trigonometric principles, and graphing real-world concepts to examine the meaning of shape and spread of data or a function in context.

Acknowledging Overlap and Flexibility

Many of the standards could fit in more than one domain. For example, reasoning with numbers and understanding how things are related are connected skills. These skills involve math operations and often require students to pay attention to both how big or small numbers are (Quantity) and how they are connected to each other (Relationships). The new domains are not meant to be rigid classifications. The new domains function as a framework for flexible grouping that supports instructional decision-making. Teachers may emphasize Quantity or Relationships depending on instructional goals, student needs, and the mathematical ideas being learned, while still maintaining coherence across domains. This is similar to the Crosscutting Concepts in the Next Generation Science Standards. They are not mutually exclusive; they will overlap in practice and application.

For example, students might model a situation, understand the relationship involved, reason about the quantities within that relationship in context, and create and interpret a graph representing that relationship. Each of those perspectives could align to a different domain depending on which thinking is being emphasized. This supports flexibility within the domains rather than a fixed single category for each standard to sit in. This flexibility reinforces the intent of the standards: to support deep, connected mathematical understanding across grades.

Vertical Articulation of Standards

The new domains help connect related skills while keeping learning organized and building on ideas from one grade to the next. The original root coding from the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) remains embedded, which means the backbone of the progression of the standards has not changed. What has changed is the opportunities for connections across that progression are more explicit. This allows teachers to keep ideas connected from one grade to the next while organizing math concepts based on how students understand them across the four domains.

High Quality Instructional Materials

The standards still include the CCSS numbering system. For example, in the standard code "M.3.R.MD.5" the "MD" is the CCSS domain abbreviation and the "5" is the standard number. This coding was kept on purpose to help educators align instructional materials with the standards. The *Crosswalk* tab in the standards Excel spreadsheet shows the CCSS code and the WA Math 2026 code on the same row. Thus, districts will still be able to use national resources like EdReports to select high quality instructional materials that best fit the needs of their students.

Teaching Through Big Ideas

The four domains of WA Math 2026 are designed to highlight the connected nature of math learning across grade levels and content areas. Rather than organizing it as isolated topics or disconnected procedures, the domains highlight the big ideas that connect mathematical concepts, reasoning, and applications over time. This organization supports students in building deeper understanding by connecting new learning to prior knowledge and seeing math as a coherent system of ideas.

Teaching through big ideas connects principles of algebra and geometry, no matter the grade, and increases direct application to students' lives and communities. Teaching connected math concepts through the four domains means that the nuance of each standard has meaning and purpose.

For example, students can explore how population density, suburban growth, infrastructure, and resource use are connected. They do this by using ideas from geometry, algebra, and functions. Students work with population data, maps, and visuals to link geometry to linear, exponential, and quadratic functions, and learn how to build and understand functions. While studying these big topics of population growth and resource management, students still develop a deep understanding of mathematical ideas and learn how to correctly use the steps needed to meet the learning standards. This helps students understand both why things work and how to solve problems.