Mastery of Math

Peer-led Cabrillo course prepares students for college math

2x² + 16x + 27

2(x² + 8x + 3²) + 27

2(x² + 8x + 16) + 27

Students learn mastering pre-calculus takes time

By KARA GUZMAN
kguzman@santacruzsentinel.com

APTOS — Mastering pre-calculus requires a time investment, not a so-called “math brain,” said Sue Tapper, Cabrillo College professor.
The 20 students in Tapper’s intensive preparatory course will test that theory this semester, as they log 100 extra hours of peer-led math presentations and group study.
The program’s goal is not only to help students succeed in pre-calculus, Cabrillo’s entry-level math class, but also to change their approach to studying math, said Tapper.
“We try to find a way to have them experience a little taste of mastery of a math topic so they know what they need to shoot for,” said Tapper, who established the program in 2009.
The week before the semester starts, students spend