

Honors Program

Middle and High School

Honors courses are advanced courses designed to provide a challenging curriculum to motivated students with strong interests in particular subject areas. The curriculum of an Honors course is accelerated in both pace and content, is rigorous and relevant, assumes a mastery of the basic skills related to the subject area and has the expectation of high-quality student work.

Students enrolled in one or more Honors courses should:

- Be highly motivated, independent learners
- Demonstrate intellectual curiosity and a willingness to accept higher levels of challenge
- Have a strong interest in the subject area
- Demonstrate the ability to link new knowledge to prior knowledge quickly
- Use the time management and task commitment skills to perform consistently at an advanced level

Honors Program Entrance Expectations

Students and their parents/guardians should consider the rigor and academic demands of an Honors course experience. The following are suggested performance indicators that will help guide students' decision-making process.

Recommended Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) Results:

The Virginia SOL tests represent a minimum standard of performance; therefore, other assessments and criteria should be considered as a predictor of Honors success. Students should have passed previous SOL tests in the required content area for which they are seeking Honors placement.

Recommended Course Grades:

- Students entering an Honors course should have above-average grades in previous classes in the Honors content area.
- For rising sixth graders, a recommended 3 or 4 in the Honors content area is advisable.
- For students in grades 7-12, an average grade of B or higher in the Honors content area is recommended.

Recommended Reading Levels:

- Reading comprehension is an essential component of success in any Honors class.
- Entering students should be reading at or above grade level.
- The complexity of Honors texts requires students be achieving at or above identified Lexile levels for each grade and each course within the Program of Studies (e.g., minimum 800 at sixth grade, 850 at seventh grade, 900 at eighth grade, etc.).

- Students and parents/guardians are also encouraged to refer to the expectations descriptions for each Honors course in the Program of Studies, including recommended Lexile levels of the texts used in the class, reading implications of additional in-class and out-of-class assignments and the following:
- Lexile level of the texts used in the class
- Accelerated and enriched assignments in class and at home
- Major projects

Recommended Writing Competencies:

- All Honors classes require students to express themselves in a variety of written formats.
- Students' previous academic experiences should prepare them for writing in a variety of genres (informational/expository, narrative and persuasive).
- Students should be able to formulate a thesis statement and support it with text-based evidence.
- Additionally, students should be prepared to engage in research projects and investigations, expressing their conclusions in organized, coherent written formats.

HONORS COURSES

DEPARTMENT	MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE
Language Arts	Language Arts Honors 6
Language Arts	Language Arts Honors 7
Language Arts	Language Arts Honors 8
Mathematics	Math Honors 6
Mathematics	Algebra I
Mathematics	Geometry
Science	Honors General Science 6
Science	Honors Life Science 7
Science	Honors Physical Science 8
Social Studies	U.S. History I Honors
Social Studies	U.S. History II Honors
Social Studies	Civics and Economics Honors
DEPARTMENT	HIGH SCHOOL COURSE
English	Honors English 9
English	Honors English 10
English	Honors English 11: Survey of American Literature
English	Honors English 12
Science	Honors Biology I
Science	Honors Chemistry I
Science	Honors Earth Science I
Social Studies	Honors World History and Geography Part I
Social Studies	Honors World History and Geography Part II
Social Studies	Honors Virginia and U.S. History
Social Studies	Honors Virginia and U.S. Government - We the People
World Languages	Chinese IV Honors

World Languages	French IV Honors
World Languages	German IV Honors
World Languages	Latin IV Honors
World Languages	Spanish IV Honors

Middle School Honors Intervention Support Plan

1. Students who are enrolled in an Honors course but are having difficulty should receive academic and counseling support. A variety of challenges may confront Honors students, including:

- Lack of background knowledge and skills essential for learning the course content
- Difficulty keeping up with the instructional pace of an Honors class
- Struggles with the complexity of course' content
- Quality of time management, goal attainment, and self- regulation
- Social-emotional issues related to maturity of the learner

2. Once the teacher, parent/guardian, counselor, or student is aware of issues affecting the quality of student performance and work products, teacher or counselor conferences and interventions should be initiated. However, no later than the time of the interim report for any grading period, a plan must be initiated for any student who is not earning at least a “B” grade in the specific Honors class.

3. When a student is experiencing difficulties in one or more classes within the Honors program (as evidenced by a grade of “C” or lower), a focused intervention plan will be initiated to support the student’s academic needs. The support plan should proceed in the following order, with each additional step taken only if the student continues to struggle:

- Counselor, teacher, student and parent/guardian meet to discuss what additional supports are available. The student is encouraged to speak candidly about what is working and what is not working in terms of meeting the requirements of the course.
- A support plan is developed, listing the following:
 - Specific intervention steps and dates are identified for follow-up to monitor implementation of the support plan.
 - The student, parent/guardian, and counselor sign the support plan.
 - Intervention steps may include attending before, during, or after school tutoring, attending bi-weekly meetings with counselors to discuss student progress, enrolling in remediation classes or other supports.
- After all avenues of accommodation and support have been explored, the student, parent/guardian, and counselor should work together to consider if alternative placement for the student in the parallel standard course is the right decision developmentally for the student. If a consensus regarding placement cannot be reached, the school principal will make the final decision regarding the appropriate placement of the student no later than the interim grade report of the following grading period.