

Dear Parents of FCHS Jaguars,

As you know, your student is currently considering course options for the 2012-2013 school year. School counselors have provided registration forms to students through their mathematics classes. Your child's school counselor will soon be collecting course requests. I want to make sure that all of our students and parents are aware that the Fairfax County School Board has restored five honors classes to be offered next year. Honors level courses will be offered next year in English 11, English 12, World History and Geography II, Virginia and United States History, plus Virginia and United States Government.

I often tell a parent that honors level courses are appropriate for students who are potentially college-bound, are interested in the subject matter, and who have above average skills in reading comprehension. Honors level courses are rigorous and challenging and require a greater study time commitment than regular level classes. Additionally, honors level courses are best suited for those students who are emerging as independent learners, and who are able to make relevant connections to apply what they read and research to classroom lecture, discussion and activities.

Unlike Advanced Placement courses, honors level courses are not considered "college level" courses, but rather are more aptly described as "college-preparatory" classes. Honors level courses are excellent options for students who may not be ready or who may not be interested in pursuing Advanced Placement classes, but who want to pursue the subject matter in greater detail and complexity than is common in general level classes. Honors level courses receive an additional .5 added to the final grade which is calculated into the grade point average (GPA). Advanced Placement courses receive an additional 1.0 added to the final grade which is calculated into the GPA.

It is important to us that your student be placed in classes that are most appropriate for his or her abilities, interests and future plans. We want our students to be challenged and excited about learning in their classes, but never overwhelmed or bored. Please feel free to contact your child's school counselor if you are unsure which courses are most appropriate for your son or daughter.

Thank you,

Cathy Benner, Principal