



Fairfax County Public Schools
Instructional Services
Advanced Academic Programs
www.fcps.edu/is/aap
571-423-4740

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Questions

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

What are the benefits of taking an Honors class?

Honors classes offer students the opportunity to build on individual academic strengths, develop critical and creative thinking skills, and prepare students for advanced coursework in high school, e.g., Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and/or Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, by providing students with the experience of challenge and rigor of advanced academic work. They also offer Advanced Academic Level IV students the opportunity to take Honors classes at their local middle school and develop relationships with peers who will attend the same high school.

How is the middle school Advanced Academic Level IV center program different from middle school Honors classes?

The Level IV center program for students in grades 7 and 8 offers identified students a full-time, highly challenging instructional program in all core subjects: social studies, English, science, and/or mathematics. Honors classes provide opportunities for students to develop academic strengths through a more rigorous and challenging program in one or more identified subject areas.

My child has been in an elementary Advanced Academic Level IV center program. What options are available in middle school?

Rising seventh grade students, who are center-eligible, may attend the assigned middle school Level IV center, or they may take Honors classes at their local middle school. (Please note: some rising seventh grade students qualify for Algebra I Honors instead of Mathematics 7 Honors. This is determined based on published criteria.) During the course selection process, parents/guardians help children make the decision whether to attend a middle school Level IV center or enroll in Honors classes at their local middle school.

Are there any pre-requisite course requirements for taking Honors classes?

There are no pre-requisite course requirements for taking Honors classes in social studies, English, science, or mathematics. However, there are specific requirements for enrollment in Algebra I Honors in 7th grade.

Questions

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

How will I know if my child is ready for Honors classes?

Students who have demonstrated high achievement, interest, and/or potential in one or more academic areas may be ready to take Honors classes. Do not hesitate to have a conversation with the school counselor, advanced academic resource teacher, and classroom teacher at your child's school. The principal and Director of Student Services (DSS) are also valuable resources at the middle school level.

How many Honors classes should my child take?

There are many factors parents/guardians and students may want to consider when deciding how many Honors classes a student takes. This may include the student's strengths, interests, additional responsibilities, and/or extracurricular activities.

How much homework is involved in middle school Honors?

The amount of homework will vary depending on the instructional decisions made by the individual teacher and the learning style of the student. For more information on homework policies, refer to Regulation 3205.1, available online.

If my child does not enroll in Honors classes in their first year in middle school, will they be able to enroll in Honors classes the following year?

Yes. Enrollment in Honors classes takes place in the spring during the course selection process. Each year, parents/guardians may help their child select one or more Honors classes.

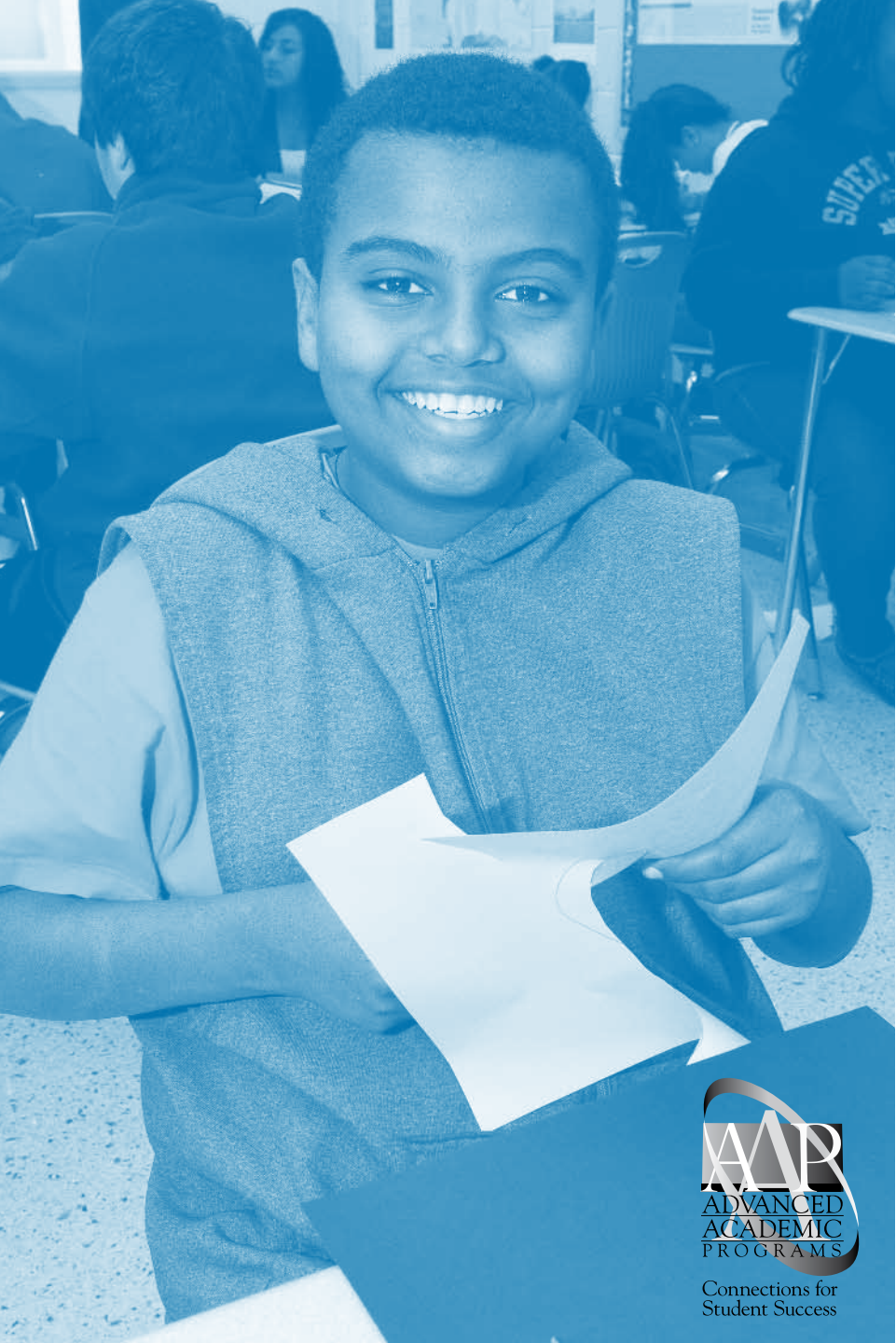
Where can I find additional information about the Honors classes?

For a complete description of Advanced Academic Programs please visit www.fcps.edu/is/aap or call 571-423-4740.

Honors Classes

Middle School





Connections for Student Success

Overview

Overview

Honors classes, aligned with national standards for gifted and talented education, are open to all students who seek academic rigor. The goal of Honors classes is to provide extensions to the Program of Studies that add depth and complexity. Resources, units, and lessons are designed to nurture and develop advanced academic potential in all learners. The extensions in Honors classes encourage students to think conceptually; to make connections across time, place and subject; to perform as a practitioner or scholar in a discipline; and to self-assess and reflect on their learning and the learning process.

Fairfax County offers open enrollment in Honors social studies, English, science, and mathematics. Students who have demonstrated high achievement, interest, and/or potential in one or more academic areas and seek academic rigor may enroll in Honors classes. Students eligible for full time Level IV center placement have the option to take full Honors at their local middle school. Each spring, during the course selection process, parents/guardians may choose which social studies, English, science, and/or mathematics Honors classes will best meet the needs of their child.



Time Line

Time line for Enrollment in Social Studies, English, Science, and/or Mathematics Honors Classes

January-March

The middle school course selection process begins for students. Parents and students are encouraged to attend all information and orientation sessions offered at their student's middle school. These sessions will assist students and parents in making course selection decisions.

March

Elementary and middle schools provide Honors brochure to parents in order to assist in course selection process.

April

Middle schools review student data to encourage students who have not already selected Honors during the course selection process to enroll.

April-August

Course selections are confirmed. School staff and parents work together to resolve scheduling conflicts prior to the start of the school year.

Mathematics

Mathematics 7 Honors is open enrollment for all students; however, there are specific requirements for enrollment in Algebra I Honors in 7th grade. Enrollment in Algebra I Honors in 7th grade is based on the following criteria:

- ▶ Successful completion of the Advanced Mathematics Grade 6 curriculum or a year-long accelerated mathematics program
- ▶ Score at or above the 91st percentile on the Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (IAAT)
- ▶ Score a pass advanced (500 or above) on the grade 7 mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) test



Frequently Asked Questions

What advanced academic services are available for students in middle school?

All 26 middle schools offer Honors classes. In addition, eleven middle schools offer the Advanced Academic Level IV center program.

What is the difference between an Honors course and a standard course?

Honors classes extend the Program of Studies through additional standards and learning experiences that offer greater levels of depth and complexity. Students learn to think conceptually; make connections across time, place, and subject areas; perform as a practitioner or scholar in a discipline; and reflect on their learning and the learning process. Instruction is designed to develop critical and creative thinking skills as well as engage and challenge advanced learners through problem-based learning, concept-based instruction, research, and investigations.

It is important to note, Mathematics 7 Honors is an acceleration of mathematics curriculum which requires students to master the content assessed on the Mathematics 8 SOL assessment. Students who have not completed Advanced Mathematics 6 may need support and/or require additional effort and study to be successful. Both Mathematics 7 and Mathematics 7 Honors prepare students for Algebra 1 or Algebra 1 Honors in Grade 8.

Questions