



# Middle School Honors Classes

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

## MATHEMATICS HONORS CLASSES

**Mathematics 7 Honors** is open enrollment for all students. This course 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.

Algebra I Honors is open enrollment for all 8th grade students; however, there are specific requirements for enrollment in Algebra I Honors in 7th grade:

- 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 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.

### **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., Honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. Honors classes provide students with challenging and rigorous experiences through advanced academic work. They also offer full-time 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 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. You may want to speak with the school counselor, advanced academic resource teacher, and classroom teacher at your child's school. The Director of Student Services (DSS) is also a valuable resource 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, available at <https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/policies-regulations-and-notice>.

### **If my child does not enroll in Honors classes in the first year of middle school, is it possible to be enrolled in Honors classes the following year?**

Yes. Each year, parents/guardians may select one or more Honors classes for their child.

### **Where can I find additional information about the Honors classes?**

For a complete description of Advanced Academic Programs please visit [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu) and search for "AAP" or call the AAP office at 571-423-4740.