

West Orange Public Schools



Middle School Honors Program Parent Information Night

March 24, 2021
6:30 pm

Middle School Honors Program

The West Orange Middle School Honors Program provides students performing above grade level standards an advanced course of study where content is explored in greater depth and complexity.

Grades 6-8	Math		ELA	Science	Social Studies
Grade 6	Pre Algebra 6		Honors ELA 6		
Grade 7	Algebra 1	Pre Algebra 7	Honors ELA 7	Honors Science 7	Honors SS 7
Grade 8	Algebra II	Algebra I	Honors ELA 8	Honors Science 8	Honors SS 8

Shift in Science and Social Studies

Science

- The NJSL-Science, adopted directly from the NGSS, provides opportunities for students to learn life science, physical science, and Earth and space science in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. Each grade level allows students to develop a greater depth of understanding of all three disciplines as they spiral throughout the middle school years. Having honors level courses in 7th and 8th grade accommodate students who exceed expectations and require additional academic challenges.
- In 6th grade, teachers are certified in science and have the advantage of being under the same roof, meeting weekly, and planning together. All students in the district will have the same advantages and opportunities in 6th Grade Science. This will reduce the opportunity gap and allow for a greater number of students to be successful in future honors and AP science courses.

Social Studies

- The middle school social studies curriculum is directly aligned to the New Jersey Social Studies Content Standards. Additionally, each middle school social studies course covers a different content area within the Social Studies Content Standards. The 6th grade curriculum covers United States History to 1876, the 7th grade curriculum American Civics and the 8th grade curriculum Ancient World History up to 1450 CE. In regards to content, there is no scaffolding between courses and the elimination of the 6th grade honors course would have a minimal impact on grades 7 and 8.
- All sixth grade social studies teachers work closely together in order to lesson plan, share resources, create assessments and discuss methodologies. Additionally, all 6th grade social studies teachers are certified in social studies. If honors is eliminated, all the students in grade 6 will be provided the same opportunities which will narrow the opportunity gap and allow for more students to meet the criteria to enter honors in 7th grade.

NGSS

Science and Engineering Practice

Grades K-2	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8
<p>Asking questions and defining problems in K–2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to simple descriptive questions that can be tested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions based on observations to find more information about the natural and/or designed world(s). • Ask and/or identify questions that can be answered by an investigation. • Define a simple problem that can be solved through the development of a new or improved object or tool. 	<p>Asking questions and defining problems in 3–5 builds on K–2 experiences and progresses to specifying qualitative relationships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions about what would happen if a variable is changed. • Identify scientific (testable) and non-scientific (non-testable) questions. • Ask questions that can be investigated and predict reasonable outcomes based on patterns such as cause and effect relationships. • Use prior knowledge to describe problems that can be solved. • Define a simple design problem that can be solved through the development of an object, tool, process, or system and includes several criteria for success and constraints on materials, time, or cost. 	<p>Asking questions and defining problems in 6–8 builds on K–5 experiences and progresses to specifying relationships between variables, and clarifying arguments and models.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ that arise from careful observation of phenomena, models, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information. ○ to identify and/or clarify evidence and/or the premise(s) of an argument. ○ to determine relationships between independent and dependent variables and relationships in models. ○ to clarify and/or refine a model, an explanation, or an engineering problem. ○ that require sufficient and appropriate empirical evidence to answer. ○ that can be investigated within the scope of the classroom, outdoor environment, and museums and other public facilities with available resources and, when

Both General Education and Honors Courses

- Follow a rigorous curriculum
- Work toward mastery of the NJ content area standards
- Prepare students for high school
- Develop critical and analytical thinking skills
- Read closely for deep meaning
- Engage in all types of writing for variety of audiences
- Question, develop claims and problem solve
- Utilize technology to enhance learning

In an Honors Class...

The coursework...	Therefore, the student...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advances beyond current grade level standards• Provides a greater depth and complexity of study• Pacing is quicker• Reading is more often completed independently, outside of class rather than during class• Assignments may be at a higher level of difficulty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Works on skills in the next grade level standards• Works independently of teacher assistance more often• Products are more sophisticated (stronger vocabulary, more complex and varied sentence structure, greater depth of thought and analysis) and more extensively researched• Is typically required to think critically and synthesize the material that they learned in class independently via homework, projects, and assignments over longer periods of time.

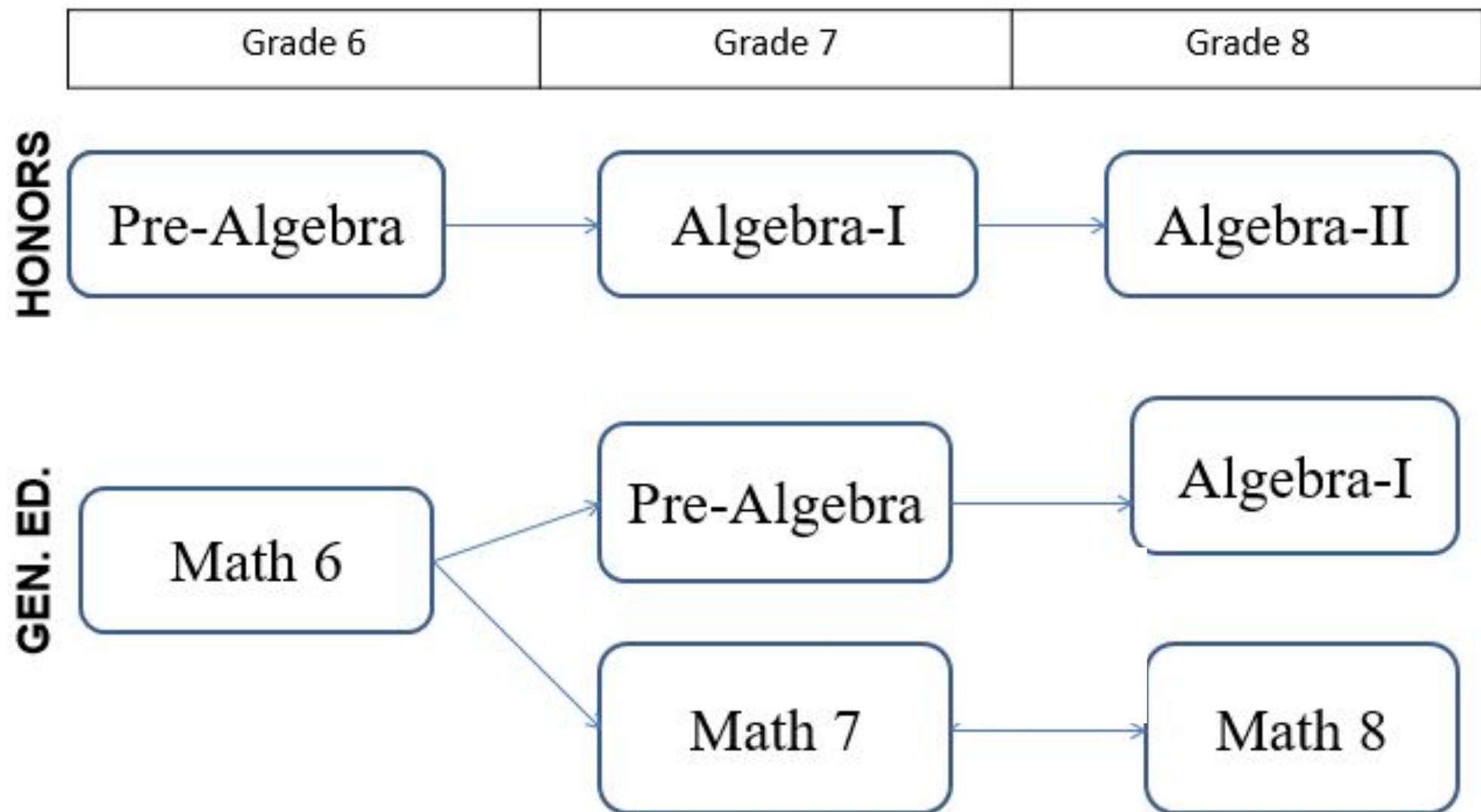
Expectations of an Honors Student

- Learning and achievement is a passion, has an exceptional work ethic, is highly self-motivated, and works well independently.
- Values the challenges of complex, critical-thinking opportunities; can achieve this with minimal assistance and often takes ideas to a higher level.
- Seeks out and actively contributes to classroom discussions and can articulate and argue in response to text.
- Is inquiry-driven, which is demonstrated by thinking critically about world issues related to the assigned reading and writings.
- Goes beyond surface meanings, makes connections and inferences.
- Manages time well.

Honors Curriculum

English Language Arts, 6-8	Math, 6-8	Science, 7-8	Social Studies, 7-8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill and inquiry driven, concentration on ability to independently comprehend and analyze text • Provides insightful explanation when citing evidence in text • Texts may be at a higher level of difficulty, read additional texts, more reading on own • Ability to construct structured analytical responses that answers prompt in depth with sophisticated style • More emphasis on student led discussion • Full command of grammar; uses rich vocabulary • Possesses greater depth of thought and analysis • Guidance and support is provided as needed, more opportunities for independent work • Independent research projects such as Genius Project in grade 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency in all rational number computations and understands and applies the Properties of Real Numbers. • Inquiry-driven demonstrated by thinking critically about real world applications of mathematical concepts through modeling, logical analysis, effective problem solving methods, and communication techniques. • Greater depth and complexity of study; Advance beyond current grade level standards and work on skills in the next grade level standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Types of functions studied: Linear, Exponential, and Quadratic. – Solving and graphing inequalities in two variables. • Assignments may be at a higher level of difficulty; Required projects are more often done as homework outside of class rather than during class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGSS based curriculum with greater depth and complexity of study. • Students work with more independence and greater depth of inquiry. • Informational texts are above grade level and will be used inside and outside the class. • Student groups lead lab investigations and STEAM projects that extend outside the classroom. • Homework requires more long term projects where students demonstrate greater independence. • Students are required to extend learning through local and national competitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiry-driven demonstrated by thinking critically about world issues related to historical content and concepts • Evaluate the credibility of primary and secondary sources of higher complexity with an emphasis on identifying bias. • Readings vary in complexity and may be at a higher level of difficulty. • Construct a historical and/or contemporary argument on a complex topic and defend it with valid evidence using multiple sources in both oral and written formats. • Is highly skilled in the writing process including the construction of well-developed, insightful paragraphs/essays using above grade level vocabulary and a variety of sentence structures. • Requirements of writing assignments may include increase in length and/or more sophisticated written expression and additional research.

Math Pacing Guide 6-8 For Current 6 Grade



Gifted Instruction, Grade 6

- The Gifted and Talented class will be held as a Related Arts Cycle Class.
- Students electing to participate in Gifted instruction may opt for a year-long, semester or marking period, alongside other related arts cycle courses, such as: Exploratory World Language courses (Mandarin and Spanish) and/or STEM.
- The curriculum will be dedicated to topics around Gifted instruction, i.e. philosophy, ethics, inquiry, logic, problem solving, etc. versus ELA content.
- Students in the Gifted Program will be identified in 5th grade.
- Students in the Gifted Program, who are also eligible for Honors, will have the opportunity to take both courses.

Gifted Curriculum, Grade 6

- Gifted and Talented units are concept based, grounded in inquiry, and focus on problem solving skill while exploring content through discovery.
- Curricular units will focus on fostering creative ways of addressing global challenges and strengthening task commitment by giving students opportunities to make decisions about their learning and evaluate their own products and progress.
- Curriculum content will focus on Philosophy, Ethics, Psychology, and Logic.
- Students may explore concepts and ideas, such as, dystopian societies, alongside reading and analyzing literary elements and their connections to the psychological world.

Gifted Enrichment for Grades 6-8

Additional After School Opportunities

- Dialectical Society
 - Logical discussion of ideas and opinions
- Academically Speaking
 - Jeopardy style competition based club
 - Competes against other middle schools in the area
- STEM
 - Hands on problem solving activities
 - Creative projects
 - Real world application
- Strategic Gaming
 - Chess/Checkers
 - Risk
 - Scattergories
 - Card Games
 - Dungeons and Dragons
- Totally Tech / Coding
 - Coding
 - Stock Market Challenge
- Science Club
 - Environmental trips and activities



Criteria for Students Entering Grade 6

Current Grade 5 Students	GRADE 6 MATHEMATICS	
	Eligible for Honors	Eligible to Appeal*
NJSLA 2020	Waived for 2021-2022	
MAP Spring 2021	85th percentile or higher	80% percentile
Grade Level Benchmarks Standards Based Report Card	<p align="center"><u>Trimester 1, Trimester 2 Average of Current Year</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EXCEEDS in Operations & Algebraic Thinking ● T1: MEETS, T2: EXCEEDS in Numbers and Operations ● EXCEEDS in Fractions ● MEETS in Measurement / Data ● MEETS in Geometry 	

*Students must meet eligibility criteria for an appeal to the Grade 5 Principal / Math Supervisor

Current Grade 5 Students	GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	
	Eligible for Honors	Eligible to Appeal*
NJSLA 2020	Waived for 2021-2022	
MAP Spring 2021	85th percentile or higher	80% percentile
Grade Level Benchmarks Standards Based Report Card	<p align="center"><u>Trimester 1, Trimester 2 Average of Current Year</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EXCEEDS in Reading at Grade Level, Inferring, and Language & Vocabulary ● MEETS in Main Idea and Fluency ● T1: MEETS, T2: EXCEEDS in Speaking and Listening ● T1: MEETS, T2: EXCEEDS in Writing 	

*Students must meet eligibility criteria for an appeal to the Grade 5 Principal / ELA Supervisor



Criteria for Students Entering Grade 7 & 8

GRADE 7-8 MATHEMATICS

Eligible for Honors

New to Honors New to District

- Prerequisite Coursework
- A average or higher in grade level Math course
- 85th percentile i-Ready
- NJSLA Waived for 2020-2021

Current Honors Students

MP1, MP2 Average of Current Year

B average or higher in Pre Algebra 6 → Algebra I
B+ average or higher in Math 6 → Pre Algebra 7

Appeal

- Prerequisite Coursework
- A average or higher in grade level Math course
- Teacher Recommendation
- 80th percentile i-Ready

Students must meet the minimum eligibility criteria in order to appeal. Appeals are submitted to the Principal / Math Supervisor, to include Teacher Recommendation.

GRADE 7-8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Eligible for Honors

New to Honors New to District

- A average or higher in grade level ELA course
- Writing Sample*
- 85th percentile MAP: Reading and Language
- NJSLA Waived for 2020-2021

Current Honors Students

MP1, MP2 Average of Current Year

B average or higher in Grade Level ELA

Appeal

- A average or higher in grade level ELA course
- Writing Sample*
- Teacher Recommendation
- 80th percentile MAP: Reading and Language

Students must meet the minimum eligibility criteria in order to appeal. Appeals are submitted to the Principal / ELA Supervisor, to include Teacher Recommendation.

*For in district students, the writing sample criteria may be met by exceeding grade level benchmarks on common writing assessments and essays in the current course.

GRADE 7-8 SCIENCE

Eligible for Honors

New to Honors New to District

- A average or higher in grade level SCIENCE course
- 85th percentile MAP: Reading and Language
- 85th percentile iReady Math
- NJSLA Waived for 2020-2021

Current Grade 7 Honors Science

MP1, MP2 Average of Current Year

B average or higher in Grade Level SCIENCE

Appeal

- A average or higher in grade level SCIENCE course
- 80th percentile MAP: Reading and Language
- Teacher Recommendation
- 80th percentile iReady Math

Students must meet the minimum eligibility criteria in order to appeal. Appeals are submitted to the Principal / Science Supervisor, to include Teacher Recommendation.

GRADE 7-8 SOCIAL STUDIES

Eligible for Honors

New to Honors New to District

- A average in grade level Social Studies course
- Writing Sample*
- 85th percentile MAP: Reading and Language
- NJSLA Waived for 2020-2021

Current Grade 7 Honors Students

MP1, MP2 Average of Current Year

B average or higher in Grade Level Social Studies

Appeal

- A average in grade level Social Studies course
- Writing Sample*
- Teacher Recommendation
- 80th percentile MAP: Reading and Language

Students must meet the minimum eligibility criteria in order to appeal. Appeals are submitted to the Principal / Social Studies Supervisor, to include Teacher Recommendation.

Middle School Honors Program Timeline

By April 9th

- Principals send letters informing of Honors Program / MAP Assessment schedule and sign up

Week of April 19th / 26th

- By April 16th, Student sign-up for MAP Assessment
- April 23rd, READING and LANGUAGE , take MAP assessments remotely
- April 30th, MATH, take MAP assessment remotely

Week of May 3rd

- Principals receive MAP scores and eligible students

Week of May 10th

- Principals mail home acceptance letters

May

- Appeals due by May 21st
- Appeals process May 24th - 28th

August

- Parents informed of student schedule to include Honors (6-8)



Thank you!