

Hasbrouck Heights Middle School



ACADEMIC COURSE OFFERINGS 2025-2026

Hasbrouck Heights Middle School

From the OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents/Guardians:

At Hasbrouck Heights Middle School, we work hard every day to create the best possible learning environment for our students and staff. We work together as a team to provide a safe environment that is both challenging and nurturing, so that our students may grow into well-rounded, responsible young adults. Our outstanding team of educators will remain committed to ensuring that our students develop the necessary skills needed to be successful in high school and beyond. We will continue to set high expectations for our students and hold them accountable for being the very best that they can be.

As your principal, I promise to ensure a commitment to your child's education that is second to none. We will work tirelessly to support and guide your child to achieve the highest possible academic achievements, while at the same time, developing their interpersonal skills and self-esteem. We believe in our staff members, our community, our school system, and most importantly, our students! I truly look forward to working alongside our Junior Aviators, as well as our parents, the PTSA, and the entire community of Hasbrouck Heights throughout the school year.

This booklet of information has been prepared to provide you with an overview of the academic course offerings at Hasbrouck Heights Middle School for the 2025-2026 school year.

Thank you,

Mr. Joseph Mastropietro
HHMS Principal

Mr. Frank D'Amico
HHMS Vice Principal



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Schedules By Grade Level

| 6th Grade Courses: | 7th Grade Courses: |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math 6 • Math Topics 6 • Language Arts: Reading 6 • Language Arts: Writing 6 • Physical Science 6 • Social Studies 6 • Physical Education/Health • Art, Study Skills, Theater, Personal Finance, S.T.E.A.M, World Language (30 day cycles) • Instrumental Music/Band is a pull-out program that takes place during the elective period • ESL is offered as a full-year course • Lunch | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math 7 • Math Topics 7 • Language Arts: Reading 7 • Language Arts: Writing 7 • Life Science 7 • Social Studies 7 • Physical Education/Health • Art, Study Skills, Theater, Personal Finance, S.T.E.A.M, World Language (30 day cycles) • Instrumental Music/Band is a pull-out program that takes place during the elective period • ESL is offered as a full-year course • Lunch |

| 8th Grade Courses: |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math 8 or Algebra I H • Math Topics 8 or Topics in Algebra H • Language Arts: Reading 8 • Language Arts: Writing 8 • Earth Science 8 • Social Studies 8 • Physical Education/Health • Art, Study Skills, Theater, Personal Finance, S.T.E.A.M, World Language (30 day cycles) • Instrumental Music/Band is a pull-out program that takes place during the elective period • ESL is offered as a full-year course • Lunch |

Please Note: Each student in grades 6-8 will have 2 periods of math instruction in their schedule to ensure that mastery of standards is attained. The double period of math allows for in depth instruction of topics, remediation of skills (when needed), as well as focusing math instruction to make math relevant, rigorous, and possible for every student.



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Middle School Counseling Department

The mission of the Middle School Counseling Department is to empower all students to achieve their highest potential by fostering academic growth, social-emotional development, and career readiness. Through a comprehensive and student-centered approach, we strive to create a supportive environment where every student feels valued, confident, and prepared for future success.

The Middle School Counseling Program is designed to support students as they navigate the critical transition from childhood to adolescence. Our school counselors provide individualized support and counseling, and classroom lessons to help students develop self-awareness, resilience, and decision-making skills. The school counselors collaborate with families, teachers, and administrators to ensure that students receive the guidance they need to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.

General Contact Information

Middle School Administration

| | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Mr. Mastropietro | <i>Middle School Principal</i> | mastropietroj@hhschools.org | 201-288-1218 |
| Mr. D'Amico | <i>Middle School Vice Principal</i> | damicof@hhschools.org | 201-338-8815 |

School Counseling Department

| | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|--------------|
| Mrs. Gesell | <i>School Counselor (A-L)</i> | gesellin@hhschools.org | 201-393-8167 |
| Ms. O'Hagan | <i>School Counselor (M-Z)</i> | ohagank@hhschools.org | 201-393-8156 |
| Mrs. Calligy | <i>Supervisor of Guidance & Testing</i> | calligyash@hhschools.org | 201-338-8812 |

Curriculum Department

| | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|--------------|
| Mrs. DaCosta | <i>Pre-K to 6 Supervisor of Instruction and Programming</i> | dacostadia@hhschools.org | 201-393-8156 |
| Mrs. Vetrano | <i>K-12 Director of Curriculum</i> | vetranodom@hhschools.org | 201-393-8156 |

If you have any questions regarding our programming, please feel free to contact your child's school counselor, Supervisor of Guidance & Testing, Director of Curriculum, or Supervisor of Instruction and Programming.



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Grade 6 Courses (Listed Alphabetically)

**Indicates that the course has an HONORS section*

***Math 6/Math Topics 6:**

These courses develop fluency with rational numbers and proportional relationships. Analytical skills and algebraic thinking techniques are emphasized. Mastery of the relationships among fractions, decimals, and percent is stressed. The program encompasses the development of equivalent expressions and solving variable equations and inequalities. The connections to real life will be realized by verbally, numerically, graphically, and symbolically, analyzing situations. These courses also teaches students to describe and classify standard geometric objects, as well as compare and contrast the properties of geometric objects, make conjectures, and use reason and proof to verify or refute conjectures and theorems. It focuses on symmetry, congruence, and similarity. NJSLA assessment preparation includes the four basic operations in mathematics as they are applied to fractions, decimals, and percentages. Problem-solving and logical reasoning are applied to all aforementioned topics.



***Reading 6:**

This multi-genre curriculum introduces major foundations in literature to our students, which is experienced through various cooperative projects and novel studies. Students will read drama, novels, short stories, and poetry. They will learn to recognize literary devices contained in the selections, as well as be able to compare and contrast styles employed by authors. Oral fluency is also focused upon as well as comprehension skills. Writing skills are enhanced through journal exercises and multiple writing reflections.

***Science 6 (Earth Science):**

Earth and Space Science focuses on the structure and development of the Earth over time and concludes with an introduction to astronomy. This course includes units on mapping, plate tectonics, earthquakes and volcanoes, the rock cycle, weathering and erosion, the cycle of water, atmosphere and climate, our solar system, and the universe.

***Social Studies 6 (Ancient Civilizations):**

In this course, students study the history, geography, and culture of the nations in the Eastern Hemisphere. This course introduces the students to the study of early civilization, Ancient Egypt, Rome, Greece, India, China, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance. Students also will understand how these ancient civilizations have influenced our modern western civilization. In addition to the eight units covered, a review of map and globe skills is incorporated at the beginning of the course with a strong emphasis on the countries and geography of Europe and Asia.



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***Writing 6:**

Students' skills are developed through various styles of writing, such as narrative, expository, descriptive, and persuasive. In this course, students will plan, draft, revise, and edit their writing. Special attention is given to composition and style as well as sentence formation, usage, and mechanics. Vocabulary, a key to analyzing literature, is an important component of this program. Whenever possible, writing is used as a tool for learning academic concepts. Students develop critical-thinking skills while utilizing rubrics for evaluation.

Grade 7 Courses (Listed Alphabetically)

**Indicates that the course has an HONORS section*

***Math 7/Math Topics 7:**

Students will focus on the symbols and rules of algebra and how they are used to represent relationships. Topics include concepts typically covered in first-semester Algebra, such as translating words into mathematical expressions, solving equations using multiple operations, applications of linear equations and systems, solving systems of linear equations and inequalities, examining perpendicular and parallel lines, and solving absolute value equations. Other topics include reinforcement of reasoning, direct and indirect proof, parallel lines and planes, congruence, similarity, quadrilaterals, measurement, polygons, right triangles, circles, coordinate geometry, reflections, transformations, and symmetry. Students will master skills and concepts through practice problems and interactions within each lesson. Data analysis, graphics, probability, geometry, and measurement are applied to problem-solving. Topics in geometry are investigated, with the employment of inquiry-based learning. Test-taking skills and logical reasoning are an important part of this curriculum.



***Reading 7:**

Students will study literary elements found in both classic and contemporary selections, develop vocabulary, and practice reading comprehension skills such as inferring main ideas, interpreting cause-effect relationships, and drawing conclusions. Writing skills are enhanced through journal exercises and multiple writing reflections. Articulation with social studies, science, and writing teachers gives a strong interdisciplinary nature to this course.

***Science 7 (Life Science):**

The seventh-grade Life Science curriculum focuses on an understanding of environmental issues, change, cycles, patterns, and relationships in the living world. Students will build on these basic principles by exploring the cellular organization and classification of organisms; relationships among organisms within the environment and change as a result of genetic information. Experimental inquiry, math, content-specific reading, writing, and technology skills are integrated into the curriculum. Students are challenged to think like scientists and to reinforce skills/ expand student abilities through the independent application of scientific concepts using experimental design. Our goal in science is to prepare students for the rapidly changing future while mastering the Standards of Learning.



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***Social Studies 7 (Civics/Government/Constitution):**

Students will examine the roles that citizens play in the political, governmental, and economic systems in the United States. They will examine the Constitution of the United States; identify the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens, and describe the structure and operation of government at the local, state, and national levels. Students will investigate the process by which decisions are made in the American market economy and explain the government's role in it. They will identify personal character traits, such as patriotism, respect for the law, and a sense of civic duty, that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in the civic life of an increasingly diverse democratic society.



***Writing 7:**

Students' skills are developed through various styles of writing, such as observation and description, informative writing, persuasion, and cause and effect (explaining how). Students practice oral and written exercises that stress grammar and punctuation and the use of figurative language. Vocabulary is an important component of this program. The students will fine-tune their grammar and spelling skills during the writing process. Students will develop critical-thinking skills while utilizing rubrics for evaluation.

Grade 8 Courses (Listed Alphabetically)

**Indicates that the course has an HONORS section*

***Algebra I (Honors):**

This course teaches students to develop fluency in working with linear equations as well as extending their experiences with tables, graphs, and equations to solve linear equations and inequalities and systems of linear equations and inequalities. The curriculum of Algebra 1 ensures that students use technology and models to investigate and explore mathematical ideas and relationships and develop multiple strategies for analyzing complex situations. Students will analyze situations verbally, numerically, graphically, and symbolically.

***Language Arts 8:**

Students plan, draft, revise, and edit writing with emphasis on personal and expressive writing, narrative and literary writing, informative writing, and persuasive writing. The writing process offers additional opportunities to practice advanced composition and grammar skills. In literature, students develop the skills necessary to analyze works of literature in various forms. The primary focus is the understanding of structure and story. Students are instructed in the various elements of plot and character development and are given numerous opportunities to analyze how and why stories and other literary forms unfold. Students develop skills to recognize subtleties planted by an author and understand why events are taking place in a literary piece. Students learn to extrapolate meaning from symbolic references and utilize higher-level thinking skills to conclude meaning, morals, and themes.



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***Math 8/Math Topics 8:**

Students will focus on the symbols and rules of algebra and how they are used to represent relationships. Topics include concepts typically covered in first-semester algebra, such as translating words into mathematical expressions, solving equations using multiple operations, applications of linear equations and systems, solving systems of linear equations and inequalities, examining perpendicular and parallel lines, and solving absolute value equations. Students master skills and concepts through practice problems and interactions within every lesson. Topics in geometry are investigated, with the employment of inquiry-based learning, and include data analysis, graphics, probability, geometry, and measurement. Test-taking skills and logical reasoning are an important part of this curriculum. (*The Math Topics Honors section will focus on several Algebra 1 Units.)



***Science 8 (Physical Science):**

In this course, introductory concepts of nature and the structure of matter are studied, along with the characteristics of energy. Considerable emphasis is placed on technological application and laboratory investigation of physical science principles. This course stresses an in-depth understanding of the nature and structure of matter and the characteristics of energy. Students are given the responsibility to plan and conduct research through classroom experimentation. Students are challenged to use scientific techniques and procedures to reinforce skills and to apply physical science concepts by conducting appropriate experiments. Physical Science students will be challenged to learn, to research, utilizing both classroom experimentation and literature reviews from written and electronic resources. The course includes units on properties and structures of matter, the periodic table of elements, chemical reactions, electromagnetism, sound and light, Newton's Laws, and simple machines.

***Social Studies 8 (US History):**

In this course, students will begin learning about the expansion of political rights and how Andrew Jackson's election indicated the increased power of the American people. Students will then learn about the expansion of the United States as settlers braved difficult trails to reach Oregon and California. This course also includes an in-depth look at the Industrial Revolution and its impact on both the North and South. Students will learn how the United States developed through a wave of immigration and also how in the mid-1800s tensions between the North and South heightened over slavery. These tensions were increased by political divisions that culminated in 1860 with the election of Abraham Lincoln. As a result, several Southern states seceded from the Union. Students will study the Civil War and complete the year with learning about the challenges of Reconstruction Era. The United States faced two major challenges; to reunite the country and to define the rights of African Americans. In 1865, the 13th Amendment ended slavery in America.



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Additional Required Courses: Grades 6-8

Physical Education Grades 6-8:

The program for grade 6 introduces students to a variety of games and activities that develop physical and social skills that can be continued in later years. Emphasis in this course is placed on maximum participation by each student. Opportunities for leadership and decision-making are provided to the students. Emphasis is given to Fitness using The Presidential Physical Fitness test which is given twice a year. This course represents an orientation period in which students are exposed to a wide variety of physical education activities. Skills are taught through various games and sports where large numbers of students may participate. In Physical Education 8, skills and knowledge of rules are stressed with competitive learning strategies in football, basketball, volleyball, soccer, softball, and overall fitness.



Health/Family Life Grades 6-8:

The Health Curriculum is designed to teach students the information and skills they need to maintain and improve health, prevent disease, and reduce health-related risk behaviors. Students will develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. In addition, the students will demonstrate good character and behaviors that promote a healthy individual, family, community, and nation. Upon completion, students will ascertain knowledge and skills in the following health-related areas: mental, emotional, family, and social health; growth and nutrition; personal health and safety, drugs and disease prevention; community and environmental health. Seventh-grade topics studied include personal and social development; nutrition and eating behaviors, mental health and stress management; violence prevention; health services and careers; and safety. Within each topic, activities are provided for students to develop an understanding of fundamental health concepts and to promote health-enhancing behaviors. Areas of emphasis are nutrition, safety awareness, suicide prevention, endocrine and reproductive health, as well as understanding the individual and societal effects of tobacco. Students also study topics such as the physiology of the human body, individual responsibility to self, family, friends, and community, and drug education. In the eighth grade year, the curriculum was constructed to provide students with the resources to make safe, conscientious choices in the areas of sexuality and drug abuse prevention. The importance of remaining drug-free and the dangers of use, misuse, and abuse of substances is emphasized. Additional units in personality, personal relationships, and safe dating, as well as an examination of lifestyle diseases, basic first aid, and suicide prevention, are presented to eighth graders preparing for high school.

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Cycle Courses: Grades 6-8 *(Listed Alphabetically)*

Art Grades 6-8:

Students will be given the opportunity to create various projects that they can be proud of, while at the same time learning valuable aspects of creativity and art. The course will focus on the basic elements of design including; line, value, space, shape, and texture. Students will also obtain foundation knowledge of a series of different artistic mediums. Coursework will include symmetrical design, pattern and shape drawings, as well as watercolor paintings. Both two-dimensional and three-dimensional works will be explored, and students will be asked to complete a number of projects that follow detailed steps, familiarizing them with techniques that will be used in higher-level art classes. The students in this class will explore different art mediums, progress their artistic ability, and have a firm understanding of what art class has to offer them. This program can help students see the world with an aesthetic frame of reference; building on the concepts of form, color, shape, and light in their surroundings. Students will have the opportunity to recognize that there are multiple solutions to problems and that they can express their own individuality in their work in a way that many other subjects do not provide.

Instrumental Music/Band Grades 6-8:

By means of hands-on experience, students learn the basics of playing a musical instrument. Instruments for student selection include flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, or trombone. In addition to weekly instrumental music instruction, students will have an additional pull-out period during the week to enhance their musical abilities. The students also learn instrument assembly and care, as well as posture, tone production and technique. The elements of music, including all elements of notation as well as pitch, rhythm, dynamics, and articulation are taught.

Personal Finance Grades 6-8:

In this course, students will learn the skills they need to truly be adaptable, reflective, and proactive in life and careers. Students will understand the important fiscal knowledge, habits, and skills that must be mastered in order to make informed decisions about personal finance. Financial literacy is an integral component of a student's college and career readiness, enabling students to achieve fulfilling, financially secure, and successful careers. The curriculum will focus on aspects of financial literacy including income and careers; money management; credit and debt management; planning, saving, and investing; becoming a critical consumer; civic financial responsibility; and ensuring and protecting one's finances.

S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Music) Grades 6-8:

In conjunction with the South Bergen Jointure Commission, this course will provide an educational approach to learning that utilizes Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. The principles of technology and the forces and laws of nature will be studied, with an emphasis on their application to modern technology. Equilibrium, motion, momentum, energy conversion, electromagnetism, and optical phenomena are presented in the context of current, real-world applications. Demonstrations, math labs, and applied laboratory experiments are an integral part of the Principles of Technology curriculum.



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Study Skills Grades 6-8:

This course is designed to help middle school students develop the skills they need to become confident, independent learners. Students will learn effective strategies for organization, time management, note-taking, test preparation, reading comprehension, and goal setting. Through interactive lessons and practical activities, students will build habits that support academic success and reduce school-related stress.

Theater Grades 6-8:

This course introduces students to the exciting world of theater through acting, improvisation, movement, and voice work. Students will build confidence, creativity, and collaboration skills as they explore storytelling, character development, and stage performance. The class includes fun activities, group projects, and opportunities to perform for an audience in a supportive environment.

World Language Grades 6-8:

In grade 6, this course provides an introductory experience into world language. As students move from grade 6 to grade 8 they move from introductory language acquisition to conversational with emphasis placed on grammar. Key words and expressions are emphasized and activities involve the spoken and written language. Highlights of the cultures of countries in which these languages are spoken are also a part of the student's learning experience.

Additional Support Courses: Grades 6-8

ESL Grades 6-8:

The fundamentals of speaking, reading, writing, and understanding English will be stressed within this course. It is taken by students who do not meet established criteria on the Access for ELLs Assessment or from those whose native language is one other than English. Student placement and continuation within this program is based on an annual screening.



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2624.21 - Middle School Honors Criteria

MATHEMATICS COURSES

Students must be enrolled in both Math Honor classes in Middle School. Both classes will be averaged in 6th and 7th grade to qualify.

6TH GRADE HONORS MATH

A Student qualifies by attaining all three items:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 5th Grade Math course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.
- Passes a comprehensive Mathematics assessment (Link It Form C with a passing score).

7TH GRADE HONORS MATH

If currently in Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 83 in 6th grade Math Honors courses.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.

If currently in Non Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 6th Grade Math courses.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.
- Passes a comprehensive Mathematics assessment (Link It Form C with a passing score).

8TH GRADE ALGEBRA 1 HONORS OR MATH 8 HONORS/MATH TOPICS HONORS

If currently in Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 83 in 7th-grade Math Honors courses.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.
- Students that are in 7th grade Honors Math will have the option to be in Algebra 1 or Math 8 Honors

If currently in Non Honors (Students will be placed in Math 8 Honors):

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 7th Grade Math courses.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.
- Passes a comprehensive Mathematics assessment (Link It Form C with a passing score).

LANGUAGE ARTS COURSES

Student must be enrolled in both Language Arts Honor Classes in 6th and 7th Grade. Both classes will be averaged from 5th, 6th, and 7th grades to qualify.

HONORS READING/WRITING 6

A Student qualifies by attaining all three items:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 5th Grade Reading and Writing courses.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment.
- Passes a comprehensive Language Arts assessment (Link It Form C with a passing score).

HONORS READING/WRITING 7

If currently in Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 83 in 6th grade Language Arts Honors courses.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment.



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If currently in Non Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 6th Grade Language Arts courses.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment.
- Passes a comprehensive Language Arts assessment (Link It Form C with a passing score).

HONORS READING/WRITING 8

If currently in Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 83 in 7th grade Language Arts Honors courses.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment (if given).

If currently in Non Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 7th Grade Language Arts courses.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment (if given).
- Passes a comprehensive Language Arts assessment (Link It Form C with a passing score).

SCIENCE COURSES

HONORS SCIENCE 6

A Student qualifies by attaining three out of the four following items:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 5th Grade Mathematics course.
- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 5th Grade Science course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.
- Passes comprehensive Language Arts assessment focusing on informational text and writing with a grade of an 80 or higher (Placement Assessment).

HONORS SCIENCE 7

If currently in Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 83 in 6th grade Science Honors course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.

If currently in Non Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 6th grade Science course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.
- Passes comprehensive Language Arts assessment focusing on informational text and writing with a grade of an 80 or higher (Placement Assessment).

HONORS SCIENCE 8

If currently in Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 83 in 7th grade Science Honors course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.

If currently in Non Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 7th grade Science course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Mathematics state assessment.
- Passes comprehensive Language Arts assessment focusing on informational text and writing with a grade of an 80 or higher (Placement Assessment).



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SOCIAL STUDIES COURSES

HONORS SOCIAL STUDIES 6

A Student qualifies by attaining three out of the four following items:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 5th Grade Language Arts courses.
- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 5th Grade Social Studies course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment.
- Passes comprehensive Language Arts assessment focusing on informational text and writing with a grade of an 80 or higher (Placement Assessment).

HONORS SOCIAL STUDIES 7

If currently in Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 83 in 6th grade Social Studies Honors course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment.

If currently in Non Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 6th grade Social Studies course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment.
- Passes comprehensive Language Arts assessment focusing on informational text and writing with a grade of an 80 or higher (Placement Assessment).

HONORS SOCIAL STUDIES 8

If currently in Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 83 in 7th grade Social Studies Honors course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment.

If currently in Non Honors:

- Student attains an assessment average of 90 in 7th grade Social Studies course.
- Student attains a four or five on their Language Arts state assessment.
- Passes comprehensive Language Arts assessment focusing on informational text and writing with a grade of an 80 or higher (Placement Assessment).

Transfer Students

Placement in honors classes will be based on past academic records and required prerequisites that have been achieved. A test will be given for a student to qualify for an Honors class where transcripts do not match with our course.

Revised: May 21, 2020

Revised: March 18, 2021

Revised: May 18, 2023



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