



**South Valley Junior High
Honors Program**

Student Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Please indicate below for which course(s) your student is seeking Honors consideration:

- _____ **Honors English 7**
- _____ **Honors History and Social Sciences 7 (Must be co-enrolled in Honors English 7)**
- _____ **Honors Math 7 (*This course covers the AZ Mathematics Standards for 8th grade. See reverse side for details.)**
- _____ **Honors Science 7**

South Valley Jr. High Honors courses are designed and implemented to demand more challenging involvement on the part of students. The coursework is significantly more rigorous than their standard course counterpart and provides students multiple opportunities to take greater ownership of their learning. Honors courses are designed for students who have demonstrated a high level of interest and academic achievement in a given subject area. Students and parents should understand that Honors courses are more demanding and have requirements beyond those of standard, grade-level courses.

Honors Courses:

- Contain additional depth and breadth of content areas
- Are taught at a more rapid pace
- Are aligned to subject-area state standards
- Often integrate two or more different content areas
- Are inquiry-based
- Require content application through research
- Emphasize critical and reflective thinking

Indicators of Honors Level Student Readiness:

- Demonstrates interest and curiosity in the subject area.
- Consistently completes and submits assignments on time.
- Previous attainment of prerequisite skills and vocabulary in the subject area.
- Actively participates in class activities and discussions with appropriate peer interactions.
- Motivation remains high in face of challenges.
- Extends learning by voluntarily going beyond the parameters of the assignment.
- Reads above grade-level.
- Enjoys learning, making connections between subjects and with the larger world.
- Self-motivated, well-organized, and apt to work independently for extended periods.
- Demonstrates ability to self-advocate, seeking help and guidance when needed.

The guiding principles of our Honors Program are based on the expectation that all students can perform at rigorous academic levels, and that students should be continuously challenged to expand their knowledge and skills to the next level.

Performance in the Honors program is evaluated on a quarterly basis. This evaluation may include a review of standardized assessment scores, completed coursework, participation, grades and attendance. Failure to demonstrate a preparedness to meet the rigor of an accelerated course could result in withdrawal from the program.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the above statements and, if eligible for participation in an Honors course, are committing to its demands and expectations.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____



HONORS MATH 7

This course covers the Arizona Mathematics Standards for 8th grade. The domains are Number Systems, Equations and Expressions, Functions, Geometry and Statistics and Probability. This class is for the able and ambitious with first priority given to identified gifted students. The next class in this sequence is Honors Algebra IA/IB.

Honors Math Placement Frequently Asked Questions

My student is performing very well at grade level standards. Why is s/he not recommended to “accelerate” (skip a level) next year if s/he is earning A’s in math this year?

Research continues to show that students are more successful in all mathematics courses if they have a solid understanding of the standards in all math class prerequisites. Thus, decisions about recommending “acceleration” in math courses at the middle level are made very thoughtfully and in the best interest of students.

“Rigor” in mathematics often refers to a deep, authentic command of mathematical concepts. Based on state math standards, it is recommended that students demonstrate readiness in three aspects of rigor, prior to being recommended for acceleration: conceptual understanding, procedural skills and fluency, and application.

Conceptual understanding and application often depend on mathematical “habits of mind”. Although students exhibit these habits of mind at every grade level, the demonstration of these practices will build in complexity throughout the child’s educational experience. Asking high performing students to delve deeply into concepts that they may not be ready to understand can lead to temporary achievement based on formulaic approaches to problem solving and memorization, but it often does not provide students with the solid foundation that they will need to be successful in higher level and more demanding courses.

Using student readiness indicators to properly place students each year ensures that students are cognitively ready for the standards and thinking expected in each course – providing students with a stronger foundation for their future mathematical experiences.

We are transferring into GPS, and my son/daughter has been previously “accelerated” in a private or charter school district. Can we assume that our son/daughter will be automatically ready for the next course in sequence at South Valley Junior High?

The standards taught, curriculum materials used, and the names and sequence of math courses at the middle level vary greatly between school districts (and between states). Because of this variation, it is important that SVJHS determines an incoming student’s mastery of learning and readiness for course work within our course sequence, based on Arizona State Math Standards.

What are the indicators SVJHS is using to determine the Honors Math eligibility?

SVJHS considers several data points (including objectives measures of student aptitude, achievement and performance) when determining placement in its Honors program. These indicators are calculated in a readiness matrix and used to recommend the most appropriate math course for each student.

Where can I learn more about the Arizona State Math Standards and the change in expectations in what students are expected to know and be able to do in math? What resources/books are recommended for parents or teachers to learn more about how students are expected to make meaning with math as a result of the instructional shifts with the standards?

The Arizona Department of Education (www.azed.gov) is an excellent resource for the standards, expectations and assessment of the Arizona Math Standards.