

Frequently Asked Questions About Placement at Highland Middle School

Sixth Grade Placement at Highland Middle School

Highland Middle School teachers and administrators do an excellent job preparing students and parents for the transition to middle school. Parents will have the opportunity to attend the sixth grade parent night on May 1st, 2019. Information is also provided to parents through mailings and the Highland Middle School website. As students near the end of fifth grade, many parents have questions regarding student placement at the middle school. The following information gives an overview of placement at Highland Middle School (HMS).

Course Offerings

Students entering HMS as sixth graders are placed in the following classes:

- Language Arts/Literature (80 minute block)
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- Physical Education
- World language, health, middle school skills, music, art, consumer education (6 weeks each)
- Applied Technology

Language Arts and Math Courses

At HMS there are different course offerings for math and language arts/literature. Regular language arts/literature classes are for students who have successfully completed the fifth grade curriculum and are prepared to continue learning at grade level. Accelerated language arts/literature and math courses are designed for students who require more rigor, are able to work at an increased pace, and acquire skills and knowledge more quickly. The content in the accelerated classes is one year above grade level. Gifted language arts/literature and math are designed for students who have been identified as gifted through an established process. The content of these courses is two years above grade level.

Placement

All students in fifth grade are administered the STAR reading and math assessments in the fall, winter, and spring. Results from the three most recent STAR reading and math assessments are used to determine initial classroom placement at HMS. In addition, fifth grade students will also be administered a language arts/literature placement assessment and a math problem solving placement assessment. These assessments will be scored and analyzed as additional data points to determine appropriate placement for sixth grade. Input from fifth grade teachers will determine if assessment data is consistent with classroom performance. In an effort to not detract from students' fifth grade experience, math and language arts/literature placements are not finalized until the end of the year and are reflected in a letter that will be included in fifth grade students' third trimester report card.

January 17, 2019

Students recommended for Accelerated placement should meet **at least two of the three** following criteria:

Accelerated Mathematics	Accelerated Language Arts/Literature
Median STAR math score \geq 90th percentile on three most recent STAR assessments (Winter of 5th grade, Fall of 5th grade and Spring of 4th grade)	Average STAR language arts score \geq 85th percentile on three most recent STAR assessments (Winter of 5th grade, Fall of 5th grade and Spring of 4th grade)
A score \geq 3 on the Math Placement test	A score \geq 75% on the Language Arts/Literature Placement test
Teacher Recommendation	Teacher Recommendation

Can I as a parent, override course placements for my sixth grader?

No. A great deal of consideration has gone into identifying the placement determinants for sixth grade language arts/literature and mathematics. Over time, these qualifiers have proven consistent in determining the success of most students as they participate in various courses. Although in the past, parent overrides were permitted for mathematics, those students often times struggled and experienced a great deal of frustration. On some occasions, based upon a student's classroom performance, a change in placement will be made. Teachers at Highland Middle School are diligent in monitoring student progress and making those recommendations to Highland Middle School Principal, Dr. Hallmark and Highland Middle School, Assistant Principal, Ms. Davis when warranted. Should a change in placement be recommended, Dr. Hallmark or Ms. Davis will conference with parents and the student prior to making a schedule change.

How are students placed in ninth grade?

Parents will receive placement information from Libertyville High School District 128. Course placement for incoming freshman to Libertyville High School District 128 is dependent upon previous coursework, local Libertyville District 70 assessments (STAR), and teacher recommendation. As always, parents will have the opportunity to discuss course recommendations with District 128 during students' eighth grade school year. Additional information can be found on the following website (<http://www.d128.org/lhs/students/student-services/registration/course-selection>).