

Ron Thiele, Superintendent

February 28, 2022

Dear Incoming 6th Grade Parents:

The purpose of this letter is to explain the Issaquah School District's advanced and accelerated options in English Language Arts, Math, and Science for students in middle school whose personal goals, interests, and abilities would benefit from these options. Families interested in Advanced Language Arts or skipping a year of science or math content should consider the following guidance.

Students choosing advanced/accelerated courses should:

- reflect student's interest and aspirations in that course of study
- have excellent study habits and organizational skills.
- have strong communication and reading skills for engaging with rigorous material.
- demonstrate motivation, maturity, perseverance and stamina for learning challenging material.
- be active participants in all aspects of the classroom, including discussions, group or individual projects, and labs.
- consider the increased time commitment to studies outside of the school day. Please consider all responsibilities, including sports, music and club affiliations.
- consider the possibility that grades could be lower than if students took the typical course sequence(s).
- consider the possibility that by skipping courses in math and science your student may have some gaps in content knowledge.

This is an important decision for students and families. In Language Arts, this decision will be made yearly. However, for math and science, once a student starts a path above grade level it is not possible to change course without repeating content at some point in time. Below is additional information to consider as you make your course selections.

Advanced Language Arts Readiness Criteria	CC7/8 Math Readiness Criteria (skipping content)	Science Pathway 2 Readiness Criteria
SBA ELA score: Level 4	SBA Math score: Level 4 Common Core 6 Mastery Assessment: 80% or higher	SBA Math score: Level 4 Common Core 6 Mastery Assessment: 80% or higher
5 th grade Report Card Grade in Reading and Writing: 4	5 th grade Report Card Grade in Math: 4	5 th grade Report Card Grade in Math: 4 Reading and Writing: 4

The following pages have more information to consider when choosing middle school math and science placement. The readiness criteria is designed to serve as a guide. Students do not have to meet the readiness criteria in order to select a more advanced or accelerated pathway.

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Families should also be aware that high school level credit courses taken in the 2019-2020 school year or LATER will automatically be added to the student's transcript, this is in accordance with District Regulation 2410. Students can request to have the course transcribed only for credit toward graduation and not include the grade in the student's high school GPA calculation. Students can also request to have these credits removed completely from their transcript. **Please note that once the grades and/or credits are deleted from the high school transcript, the grade and credit cannot be added back and will permanently be excluded from the student's grade point average.** This will impact students that choose to skip CC6 in math and pathway 2 in science.

The course selection form will be used for course placement. Please complete and return the course selection form to your student's fifth grade teacher **by Wednesday, March 23, 2022, at 4:00 pm.**

Sincerely,

Rich Mellish
Executive Director
Teaching and Learning Services