

Honors Frequently Asked Questions

Honors Classes vs. Regular College Prep

1. How important is it for a student to have Honors classes on his/her report card in order to get into a preferred college? It is important, but not all important. Yes, selective colleges like to see that a student has stretched themselves. However it may be preferred for a student to have an A or B in the college prep level course (which are our regular-level courses) rather than a B or C in the honors course. Honors courses are not weighted into the GPA the way that Advance Placement courses are weighted. Most college scholarships are based on GPA and standardized test scores (ACT or SAT). It is only if a student is being considered for the very top scholarships that the scholarship committee may break down the transcripts to see to what degree a student stretched themselves within their learning environment. However, "honors", "accelerated" and other terms used for course names tend to vary drastically from school to school as to their **rigor** and it is difficult for admissions committees to keep track. Therefore, the grade is the prevailing factor.

2. If my child does not qualify for an honors course this year, is he/she eligible for next year, or do we completely miss the boat? If a student meets the minimum criteria, they may sit for honors testing the following year. It is an opportunity to set a goal and prove that they can meet that goal. It will also show colleges that they have seen the need to improve their grades and test scores to become eligible.

3. Does LCA have a cap on how many students can take Honors classes, or are the classes available for all those who qualify? We do not have a cap on the number of students who can take honors. We make as many sections of honors as we need in order to accommodate all those who qualify and desire to take the course.

4. For some courses why are the test results from the previous year used to determine class acceptance for the future and not the current year's tests. Students will not take the Stanford Achievement tests until the spring and we will not receive the results until the scheduling process is already complete.

5. Why not let the borderline students who want to be in Honors classes, have the opportunity to take the entrance exam to help determine if that class is for them? The guidelines for qualification for honors testing was researched thoroughly and planned by the departments. The plan was then presented to, and passed by the Education Committee and the Board of Directors. No matter where the cut off is, there will be students on the "bubble". In college, many courses, even freshmen level courses, will have pre-requisites of a minimum score on the ACT or SAT in a subject area, a minimum grade in a previous course, etc. This is just a first introduction to pre-requisites and meeting minimum standards to qualify for certain courses.

6. My child did not meet the criteria for honors this year. What can I do to prepare them for next year? There are several things you can do. Most times the road to improving grades is better time management skills. We are not typically born with these skills...it is a learned behavior. Start by having your child use a planner to plan out, and not procrastinate on, assignments, tests, quizzes, papers, etc. Each day should be filled with study time, exercise, eating, extra-curricular activity, screen time (computer, TV, games), and it is usually most effective to break down their time in 15 minute increments so their life seems more easily managed. If study skills are an issue there are many places around town that can work with your child to improve study skills and habits. Some examples are: The Tutoring Club, Kumon, Sylvan Learning Centers, etc. A few sessions can make a huge difference and is worth the investment.

7. Will exceptions be made to the criteria so my child can at least sit for the entrance exam? No. Unfortunately there must be a cut off somewhere and exceptions will not be considered.