

MIDDLE SCHOOL
HONORS PROGRAM
2023-24



PAVIRTUAL
CHARTER SCHOOL

A COMMUNITY OF PARTNERSHIP, LEARNING & ACHIEVEMENT

Middle School Program

The Middle School Honors Program is designed to encourage and support outstanding students who display exceptional academic ability and desire optimized learning opportunities. While all PA Virtual courses meet PA Core Standards and are designed to prepare students for higher education, Honors Program courses in Science, Math, History, and ELA delve deeper into the content at a more rapid pace and have elevated expectations for both quality and quantity of student work. These courses are more rigorous and stretch student learning above and beyond grade level. Students participating in the Middle School Honors Program may be required to complete additional reading, research, writing, and individual/collaborative projects. Teachers deliver instruction and curriculum at a faster pace and in greater detail while incorporating more complex analysis and additional resources. Students in grade 8 have the opportunity to earn high school credit for the English 9 and/or the Algebra I Honors courses.



All Honors courses are taught with the Imagine Edgenuity curriculum. Students enrolled in the Honors program do not have access to the K12 Online School. Students enrolled in the Honors program must take all Honors courses for their core subjects: Math, ELA, Science, and History.

Eligibility

Current PA Virtual Students must:

- Demonstrate high academic achievement in prior courses.
- Have a score of 90% or above in the previous year's courses.
- Be recommended by the previous year's teacher(s).
- Demonstrate measurable success on NWEA Map Diagnostic Exams and/or the PSSA Exams.

Incoming students from other educational placements may be eligible for Honors courses based on the following:

- A score of 90% or above in the previous year's courses
- Learning coach request supported by transcript documentation

Here are some common traits and characteristics found in PA Virtual Honors Program students:

1. Academic Excellence

- Maintains consistently high grades across various subjects.
- Actively engages in class discussions and demonstrates a deep understanding of the material.
- Takes on challenging coursework and excels in honors or advanced classes.

2. Strong Work Ethic

- Demonstrates a strong commitment to learning and is dedicated to their studies.
- Completes assignments on time and with a high level of accuracy.
- Shows initiative in seeking additional knowledge beyond the standard curriculum.

3. Curiosity and Critical Thinking

- Asks thoughtful questions and demonstrates curiosity about the subject matter.
- Applies critical thinking skills to analyze information and solve problems.

4. Positive Attitude

- Maintains a positive and enthusiastic approach to learning.
- Encourages and supports classmates, creating a positive and inclusive learning environment.

5. Effective Communication

- Expresses ideas clearly and articulately, both in writing and verbally.
- Collaborates well with peers and teachers, fostering a positive and communicative classroom environment.

6. Responsibility and Organization

- Manages time effectively and stays organized with assignments and deadlines.
- Takes responsibility for their own learning and academic success.

Imagine Edgenuity Course List for Honors Program

7th Grade Imagine Edgenuity Courses for the Honors Program

Department	Imagine Edgenuity Course Name
Math	Pre-Algebra
English	PA Common Core ELA 8
Science	Life Science
History	Survey of World History Honors**
Art	Middle School Studio Art 1A
Music	Middle School Exploring Music 1A
Health and PE	Foundations of Personal Wellness

8th Grade Imagine Edgenuity Courses for the Honors Program

Department	Imagine Edgenuity Course Name
Math	Algebra I Honors*
English	PA Common Core ELA 9 Honors*
Science	PA Physical Science
History	Survey of World History Honors**
Art	Middle School Studio Art 1B
Music	Middle School Exploring Music 1B
Health and PE	Foundations of Personal Wellness
Foreign Language	Spanish I

* Students will earn High School credit for the 8th grade Math and ELA Honors courses if they earn an 80% or higher.

** MS World History is divided into part A and B and noted as World History I and II on the progress report. Seventh graders will take part A and eighth graders will take part B.

Course Descriptions



Pre-Algebra (Grade 7)

This full-year course is designed for students who have completed a middle school mathematics sequence but are not yet algebra-ready. This course reviews key algebra readiness skills from the middle grades and introduces basic Algebra I work with appropriate support. Students revisit concepts in numbers and operations, expressions and equations, ratios and proportions, and basic functions. By the end of the course, students are ready to begin a more formal high school Algebra I study.

Algebra 1 Honors (Grade 8)

This full-year Honors course introduces students to linear, exponential, and quadratic functions by interpreting, analyzing, comparing, and contrasting functions that are represented numerically, tabularly, graphically, and algebraically. Technology is utilized within some lessons to further support students in identifying key features as well as displaying images of the functions. The course builds upon the basic concepts of functions to include transformations of linear and nonlinear functions. Students deepen their understanding of quantitative reasoning, piecewise functions, and quadratic functions through performance tasks. The additional performance-based skills allow the Honors students to apply more of the concepts taught in the course. The course concludes with students analyzing data through displays and statistical analysis.



PA Common Core ELA 8 (Grade 7)

In this course, students build on their knowledge and blossom as thoughtful readers and clear, effective writers. A balance of literary and informational texts engages students throughout the course in reading critically, analyzing texts, and citing evidence to support claims. Students sharpen their vocabulary, grammar, and listening skills through lessons designed to provide explicit modeling and ample opportunities to practice. Students also routinely write responses to texts they have read, and use more extensive, process-based lessons to produce full-length essays in narrative, informative, analytical, and argumentative formats. In this full year course, students develop a mastery of reading, writing, and language arts skills.

Language Arts 9 Honors (Grade 8)

This freshman Honors English course invites students to explore a variety of diverse and complex texts organized into thematic units. Students will engage in literary analysis and inferential evaluation of great texts, both classic and contemporary. While critically reading fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction, Honors students will master comprehension, use evidence to conduct in-depth literary analysis, and examine and critique how authors develop ideas in a variety of genres. Interwoven throughout the lessons are activities that encourage students to strengthen their oral language skills, research and critically analyze sources of information, and produce clear, coherent writing. In addition to activities offered to students in core courses, Honors students are given additional opportunities to create and to participate in project-based learning activities, including writing a Shakespearian sonnet and creating an original interpretation of a Shakespearian play. Honors students will read a range of classic texts, including Homer's *The Odyssey*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Jack London's "To Build a Fire" and Richard Connell's "The Most Dangerous Game." Students will also read Sue Macy's full length nonfiction work *Wheels of Change: How Women Rode the Bicycle to Freedom (With a Few Flat Tires Along the Way)*, and will study a variety of short but complex texts, including influential speeches by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan. Contemporary texts by Richard Preston, Julia Alvarez, and Maya Angelou round out the course.



Life Science (Grade 7)

This full-year middle school course focuses on introducing students to the diversity of life found on our planet. The course includes an overview of scientific principles and procedures and leads students toward a clearer understanding of cells and heredity, the five kingdoms, human body systems, and ecology. As students refine and expand their understanding of life science, they will apply their knowledge in investigations that require them to ask questions and explore the world around them. Throughout the course, students will also solve problems, reason abstractly, and learn to think critically.

PA Physical Science A and B (Grade 8)

This full-year course focuses on basic concepts in chemistry and physics and encourages exploration of new discoveries in the field of physical science. The course includes an overview of scientific principles and procedures and has students examine the chemical building blocks of our physical world and the composition of matter. Additionally, students explore the properties that affect motion, forces, and energy on Earth. Building on these concepts, the course covers the properties of electricity and magnetism and the effects of these phenomena. As students refine and expand their understanding of physical science, they will apply their knowledge to complete interactive virtual labs that require them to ask questions and create hypotheses. Hands-on lab options are also available.



History

Survey of World History Honors (Grades 7 and 8)

By studying the first civilizations through today's society, students will embark on a more rigorous yearlong study of our world's history. Students investigate classical civilizations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and Asia while exploring the economic, political, and social revolutions that have transformed human history. Units progress through the course by touching on world wars, imperialism, and cultural aspects of each region's society. From creating an explorer's notebook to mapping out how Europe changed after World War II, students are better equipped to compare what happened in yesterday's world with what is going on in our modern era. Throughout this Honors course, students continuously analyze primary and secondary sources relating to the region and era of study. Incorporating activities from other disciplines gives students the opportunity to connect history to other subjects. Students read excerpts from novels such as Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* and memoirs like Ji-li Jiang's *Red Scarf Girl*. Projects such as writing a summary of a current event based on an ancient religion encourage students to perform throughout the course at a higher level.



Specials

Foundations of Personal Wellness A and B (Grade 7 and 8)

This course combines a wide range of health and fitness concepts, creating a comprehensive exploration of all aspects of wellness. The course uses educational planning to ensure that as students investigate fitness and physical health, they are also learning about the nature of social interactions and how to plan a healthy lifestyle. The course fulfills both health and physical education standards at the state and national level.

Middle School 2D Studio Art 1A (Grade 7)

In this introduction to 2D Studio Art, students will learn how to bring artistic visions to life and harness creative possibilities. Students will be required to understand the principles of design, the use of tools and color, and the influence of world art and culture. The successful student will enhance their understanding of art and its role in the world.

Middle School 2D Studio Art 1B (Grade 8)

Building on the prior prerequisite course, students will delve deeper into the world of art. Students will harness their creativity by exploring art themes throughout history, learning the techniques of critiquing art and understanding how museums contribute to a greater cultural understanding. In addition, students will learn about artistic career paths and how to pursue them.

Middle School Exploring Music 1A (Grade 7)

Throughout this course, students will learn the fundamentals of music and its place in human life. Its origin will be analyzed and students will develop listening skills for a greater understanding of music. Capitalizing on the use of rhythm, pitch, and melody, students will begin to learn how to read music.

Middle School Exploring Music 1B (Grade 8)

Building upon the prior prerequisite course, students will become more proficient at recognizing the structure of music. Students will learn about the various instrument families and their place in music, explore the evolution of music and its genres, and establish the basics of how to compose music. Students seeking a path in the music industry will find this course a valuable resource.

Spanish I: Grade 8 (Elective)

Students begin their introduction to Spanish with fundamental building blocks in four key areas of foreign language study: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. Each week consists of an ongoing adventure story, a new vocabulary theme and grammar concept, numerous interactive games reinforcing vocabulary and grammar, reading and listening comprehension activities, speaking and writing activities, and multimedia cultural presentations covering major Spanish-speaking areas in Europe and the Americas. The course has been carefully aligned to national standards as set forth by ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).