

# Arrowhead High School

## Making Informed Choices about Grade 9



**Parent and Student Meeting for Class of 2021 Students**

**Arrowhead High School South Campus**

**November 14, 2016 or November 15, 2016**

**6:30 pm**

## Making an Informed Choice:

- **Grade 9 Opportunities for Freshmen Students for 2017-18:**
  - **Integrated Learning Experience**
  - **AP Human Geography Aligned with English 9 Honors**
  - **English 9 and Social Studies 9**
  - **Science 9/Biology Honors Block**

### Introduction

The special parent and student meeting for Class of 2021 students is designed to provide more specific information about course choices parents and students need to make for 9th grade based on readiness and preferred learning environment.

### English and Social Studies Options

In order to provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum based on the standards in English Language Arts and Social Studies, and to assure all students are Career and College Ready, Arrowhead High School offers the following 3 opportunities open to all Grade 9 students for 2017-18.

By providing three viable learning environments, Arrowhead High School will provide parents and students a choice that best fits the student's individual strengths.

The three opportunities are:

- Integrated Learning Experience(ILE)
- AP Human Geography aligned with English 9 Honors
- English 9 / Social Studies 9

### Common Characteristics for each English and Social Studies Opportunity

All three choices are available to students. Parents and students will choose the best fit for their son or daughter based on individual strengths and desired learning environment. All choices are based on the following criteria:

- Are aligned to content standards
- Have rigor
- Will use direct instruction, individual assignments, small group work, and projects
- Will adapt to the learning needs of students

### **Option ONE: Integrated Learning Experience (ILE) – English 9 (enriched), Social Studies 9 (enriched)**

**Description** – The Integrated Learning Experience provides students with learning that is inquiry-based and connected through social studies, English, and business. The curriculum takes a thematic approach. English 9 (Enriched) and Social Studies 9 (Enriched) will appear on the transcript for 2 credits each.

Enrichment means that the learning environment and curriculum are augmented with guest speakers, field trips, authentic/real world application of knowledge, self-directed, collaborative in nature. Content is fully integrated to make strong cross-curricular connections. Business Multimedia Applications and Career and Life Skills will each appear on the transcript for 1 credit each. The Integrated Learning Experience meets graduation requirements for English 9 and Social Studies 9.

Learning Environment – Students in the Integrated Learning Experience will be learning through team teaching by the same group of teachers who create flexible use of time and space (periods 6-8) to integrate key themes using inquiry-based approaches, as well as traditional methods of learning. The standards and assessments for each subject area are blended together creating an engaging and unique approach which emphasizes collaboration and community building. Each student will have an advisor from the teaching team. Students will partially direct their own learning by scheduling training sessions on key concepts and skills. Research, writing, and presentation skills are emphasized in the Integrated Learning Experience. The ILE provides an opportunity to create a community of learners that support each other and the learning process.

#### Profile for Students Success-

Students of all ability levels will find success in the Integrated Learning Experience. In particular, those students who like independence, who are curious, who think “out of the box,” who are creative, and consider themselves “self-starters” will find this option a match?

**OPTION TWO: English 9 Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) Human Geography** – English 9 Honors will meet the requirements for graduation; however, those taking AP Human Geography will meet the Social Studies credits for graduation, but **students still need to take either the AP Politics and Government or Political Science to meet graduation requirements.** Political Science will be offered online in Summer School.

AP Human Geography Description – According to the College Board, this course is “designed to introduce students to the systematic study of patterns and processes that have shaped human understanding, use, and alteration of the Earth’s surface.” Students are expected to take the AP Human Geography exam that includes both a 60-minute multiple-choice section and a 75-minute free-response writing section in May. The English 9 Honors course aligns with AP Human Geography, focusing on the skills necessary for the exam.

AP Human Geography and English 9 Honors will appear on the transcript for 2 credits each.

AP Human Geography is an appropriate college level course for capable and college ready (Reading) grade 9 students. In 2015, of the 136,000 students who took the exam nationally, approximately 59% were freshmen. This is the most common AP class for freshmen. At AHS, 91% of the students passed the AP Human Geography exam in 2015.

Learning Environment - This is a more teacher-directed environment using a national curriculum that is recognized by the College Board, and upon successful performance on the AP exam, students could earn college credit. The classroom will use more interactive lecture and discussion and focus on higher level thinking skills. Students will be expected to comprehend and write at a higher level. For example, the AP Human Geography teacher will lecture from one text while the students read from another text. In such a setting, students will need to synthesize what they read on their own and learn in class. Teachers in the **AP Human Geography and English 9 Honors** will work collaboratively to prepare students for success, align reading and writing skills and use common final assessments. **Students must**

**enroll in both offerings.**

Profile for Success- While students of all ability levels and learning styles may benefit from this choice, those students who take direction well, complete their summer readings, manage their time, commit to being prepared by completing the required homework, readings, and writings will find the most success. In addition, students should make sure they either have study halls every day rather than every other day and /or take seven classes. Students who have found past success in the structure of school, miss less than three days each semester and really want to take these courses will do well.

An Aspire score of 430 in Reading (or 90th percentile on MAP or other standardized assessment in Reading, Advanced proficiency on the Forward exam) is an indicator that students should take the required PRE- ACT test on December 3 or December 17. To assist students in making an informed decision, **a minimum PRE- ACT score of 22** in reading would indicate readiness for these two courses. Last year, students enrolled in AP Human Geography had an ACT Reading score average of 24. Furthermore, students who have a Lexile level of 1300 are considered college level readers.

**OPTION THREE: Social Studies 9 aligned with English 9– Both Required for Graduation**

Description – The classes provide all students with an opportunity to apply reading, writing, speaking, listening, and research and media skills to themes/units in these two subject areas. English 9 and Social Studies 9 will appear as 2 credits each on the transcript.

Learning Environment – Students who choose the English 9 and Social Studies 9 will meet daily for 40 minutes. The classes will focus on college and career readiness skills. The classroom instruction will involve note taking, reading, discussion, writing, research and projects. There will be four writing assessments, one each quarter, that will connect the learning for students and be applied in each course.

Profile for success- Students of all abilities and learning styles will find success with this choice. Students who are used to a more traditional learning environment but want to see how their learning and work is connected through two subject areas will benefit from this choice.

**For More Information Contact:**

Arrowhead High School--369-3611,

Sue Casetta-Director of Learning- Ext. 4204 casetta@arrowheadschoools.org

Shanna Hechimovich- Social Studies Program Leader- hechimovich@arrowheadschoools.org

Dave Gierach - English Program Leader -gierach@arrowheadschoools.org

See Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) at the end of the packet.

**Science 9 Options**

There are three options for Science for the 2016-17 school year: Science 9/Biology Honors Block, Science 9, and the Integrated Learning Experience.

**OPTION ONE: Science 9/Biology Honors Block (Meets 2 Life Science and 2 Physical Science credits required for graduation)**

Description - The Science 9/Biology Honors Block is an opportunity for motivated students with high ability and strong interest in science to complete Science 9 and Biology during their freshmen year. The Science 9 portion of the course places a heavy emphasis on preparation for chemistry and physics, but also includes topics in earth and space science. The Biology portion has units in classification, ecology, biochemistry, cell structure and function, genetics, and evolution.

Learning Environment - Throughout the course, students will be required to develop a deeper understanding of concepts at a more abstract level. In addition, students will be required to design experiments and develop data collection procedures. They will use this data to develop models of scientific phenomena and will be asked to apply mathematics at a more advanced level. The course will meet daily for 84 minutes.

Profile for Student Success - Academically motivated students - those who take direction well, complete their readings, manage their time, and commit to being prepared by completing the required homework, readings, writings and lab reports - will find the most success. It is especially important that students are very capable and interested in Science. Students should also be advanced in math. The recommendation is that students are concurrently enrolled in Geometry at a minimum. Students should meet or exceed a score of 22 on the PRE-ACT in each of the science, math and reading sections of the test as an indicator of success in Science 9/Biology Honors Block. Students who have scored in the 90th percentile in the math and science portions of any standardized test should consider taking the Pre-ACT.

### **OPTION TWO: Science 9 meets the 2 credits of Physical Science Required for Graduation**

Description - This course has been designed to develop the thinking processes and skills needed for science literacy, while emphasizing connections between science and real life. Students will participate in laboratory investigations and projects with the purpose of exploring physics, earth science, space science, and chemistry.

Learning Environment - Students who choose Science 9 will meet every other day for 84 minutes. The classroom instruction will involve note taking, reading, discussion, writing, labs, research and projects. An important aspect of this course is the development of the science skills that will be an essential foundation for biology and additional science courses.

Profile for success- Students of all abilities and learning styles will find success with this choice. Critical thinking skills will focus on all levels of thinking. The class will focus on college and career necessary skills. Students will be taking Biology in Grade 10.

#### **For More Information Contact:**

Brian Corry, Science Program Leader at Arrowhead High School 369-3611 ext. 4707 or  
corry@arrowheadscool.org

## **Informed Choices for Strong Mathematics Students entering Grade 9**

### **Advanced Algebra/Trigonometry**

This course is for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students with a strong aptitude and enthusiasm for learning mathematics.

Students in this course sequence will be able to complete 2 semesters of college AP Calculus and AP Statistics by the end of the 12 grade. A teacher recommendation is required in order to sign up for this course. Students who enroll should earn an A in Geometry.

### **Advanced Algebra**

This course is for students who have been identified with strong abilities in math and expect to take AP Calculus AB and AP Statistics by the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. AP Calculus AB and AP Statistics earn students one semester of college credit each. Advanced Algebra emphasizes algebraic expressions and forms, especially linear and quadratic, powers and roots, and functions based on these concepts. Students study logarithmic, trigonometric, polynomial and other special functions both for their abstract properties and for modeling real-world situations. A graphing calculator is required. It is strongly recommended that students have earned a grade of A in Algebra and/or a B or higher in Geometry in order to take this math course.

### **Geometry/Advanced Algebra Block**

This course is for students who have been identified with strong abilities in math and expect to take AP Calculus AB and AP Statistics by the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. AP Calculus AB and AP Statistics earn students one semester of college credit each. This course meets two periods per day for one year (Geometry in first semester and Advanced Algebra in second semester). It is designed for strong math students who did not have the opportunity to take Geometry prior to grade 9. An A in Algebra is strongly recommended.

#### **For More Information Contact:**

Dave Olenchek, Math Program Leader at 369-3611 ext. 3715 or  
olenchek@arrowheadschoools.org

# FAQ

## Arrowhead High School

### Making informed choices about Grade 9 options

#### 1. What does it mean that the honors program is self-selected?

- Students and parents make 9th grade course choices using data and other indicators to help guide their decisions.

#### 2. How do I make an informed choice? When do I need to choose? Who can help me?

- Students should always start with parents, teachers, G/T coordinator and counselors from the K-8 school.
- Students should consider personal motivation when making course decisions.
- You should consider taking the PRE- ACT test on December 3 or December 17 at AHS South Campus. This is required for those students considering AP Human Geography with English 9 Honors and also for Science 9/Biology Honors Block.
- Students sign up for courses after January freshmen orientation.

#### 3. Are students required to take the PRE-ACT test if they are considering AP Human Geography/English 9 Honors and Science 9/Biology Honors Block?

- **Yes.** If you want to take these classes, students **must** take the PRE-ACT test. There is no cut score to get into the AP Human Geography class. However, a PRE-ACT reading score of 22 or greater and/or a Lexile score of 1300-1350 (Advanced reader) will indicate that the student has a 50 % chance of getting a 3 or better on the AP exam
- For students interested in Science 9/Biology Honors Block students must take the PRE-ACT and meet the following criteria for optimum placement.
  - Science > or = to **22**
  - Math > or = to **22**
  - Reading > or = to **22 and/ or Lexile score of 1300**

#### 4. What is the format for the PRE- ACT?

- A PRE- ACT test will be given December 3 or December 17. Students need to report by 7:45 am to South Campus and are expected to be finished by 12:00. More details will follow once registration takes place.
- **All students must be preregistered for the PRE- ACT test.**
- **Registration is online- AHS Website -front page. For the December 3th date, registration must be completed by November 28. For the December 17 date, registration must be completed by December 12.**
- **The following information is needed to complete the online registration form:**
  - School Name (K-8)
  - Name of student including last, first and middle initial
  - Birthday including day, month and year

- Email address
- Phone number
- Home address
- Test date – December 3 or December 17
  
- Results from this test will be distributed to students as soon as the scores are received (approx. two weeks after testing) Details will be provided to the student as part of the testing experience. Staff will be available to answer questions as part of the freshmen orientation in January.

**5. What is AP Human Geography?**

- AP (Advanced Placement) Human Geography introduces students to the systematic study of patterns and processes that have shaped human understanding, use and alteration of the Earth’s surface. It will provide a learning experience equivalent to that obtained in most college introductory human geography courses. An AP exam score (taken in May) of 3 or better can give the student one semester of college credit - depending on the college or university.

**6. Is the AP Human Geography open to all grade levels?**

- No- this is a Freshman only AP class

**7. Can a 9th grade student handle an AP class?**

- Yes. AP Human Geography is a college level course for capable 9th graders. A well organized, motivated and high level nonfiction reader will be able to handle the course. However, students should be prepared to balance total school schedule with outside commitments. It is recommended that students have one daily study hall. At AHS, 91% of the students passed the AP Human Geography exam in 2015. These students met the parent informed choice benchmarks for readiness

**8. What is the difference between Honors and AP courses?**

- An AP (Advanced Placement) course is based on a national curriculum and exam. AP is college level work and students can earn college credits if they pass the exam at the end of the year.
- An Honors course is offered at the local level with curriculum developed at the local high school. All Honors courses will be different from high school to high school.
- Arrowhead’s English 9 Honors is specifically aligned with the AP Human Geography course.

**9. If a student does not take an Honors class, can the student still take AP courses later?**

- Of course. No matter what courses freshmen take, they can always take an AP course later.

**10. What does Enrichment mean?**

- If a student chooses the ILE – they will learn in an enriched learning environment augmented by frequent field trips, guest speakers, long-term research, cross-curricular connections, increased self-directed learning.

**11. What happens if I make the wrong choice?**

- If AP Human Geography is too difficult, individual circumstances may be considered, but it is rare that a student would be switched out of the class. Please note that there is summer reading for students who enroll in AP Human Geography and Honors English 9.
- If it is essential that AP Human Geography be dropped, then English 9 Honors will be dropped too.
- ILE curriculum is designed for students to be enrolled for the entire year. Due to the nature of integration, content is not taught in exactly the same order. If a wrong choice is made- rescheduling can be difficult.
- Careful consideration must be made based on the choices available. There is a strong likelihood that space availability in other options will be very limited.

**12. What is an example of the nature of the rigor?**

- While all choices develop and emphasize writing, students in AP Human Geography will need to write informed opinion based documents. The emphasis is on why, rather than what. Students are expected to take the College Board exam in May.
- ILE students are expected to incorporate college prep level research skills, perform controlled experiments, apply knowledge to real world situations and communicate their findings using multiple formats. Many learning tasks are self-directed.
- English 9 and Social Studies 9 students will have a variety of writing choices based on higher order thinking skills like remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating, based on individual learning levels.

**13. What choices do students have for 10th grade?**

**English and Social Studies**

- Parallel courses are offered for the 10th grade level (ie. U.S. History or Western Civilization with English 10; ILE 10; and AP U.S. History with English 10 Honors).

**Science**

- Biology is the typical 10th grade course for Science. In addition some students choose to also take Chemistry or Physics; ILE 10.
- For students who complete the Science 9/Biology Honors Block may choose to take Honors Chemistry, Chemistry, Physics, or AP Physics 1. It should be noted that for students who expect to take AP Physics 1 they will need to be concurrently enrolled in Functions for Math. This means students should complete Advance Algebra in the 9th grade.

**14. How will the ILE and English 9/Social Studies 9 learning environments meet the needs of highly gifted students?**

- Highly gifted students in the ILE and English 9/Social Studies 9 classes will create relevant and meaningful learning experiences that will be challenging. Students will develop leadership skills while using innovation to solve real-world problems. Both the ILE and English 9/Social Studies 9 classes will foster creativity. The ILE offers differentiated instruction where students can explore topics of interest within themes and choose alternative formats to show what they know.

**15. Can I mix and match my choices among the 3 options?**

- You can only mix and match ILE with Science options

- AP Human Geography without English 9 Honors and the reverse? No
- English 9 Honors with SS9? No

**16. What are the requirements for graduation for Class of 2021?**

- Social Studies 9 and English 9, ILE courses, and English 9 Honors will meet graduation requirements. Students who take AP Human Geography must still fulfill the government graduation requirement by either taking AP Government and Politics or Political Science during high school. Political Science will be offered online during summer school (not for incoming freshmen).

**17. What is the difference between Science 9/Biology Honors Block and Science 9?**

- In general the students in the Science 9/Biology Honors Block will be more accelerated and the course will be more challenging due to an emphasis on the following:
  - Higher level of mathematics
  - Higher level of critical thinking skills
  - Greater difficulty of lab activities and extension
  - Double periods of classes daily for the year whereas Science 9 is 2 periods every other day.

**Who should I contact if I have questions?**

- Questions about registration online for the ACT - Contact Kim Dion- [dion@arrowheadschoools.org](mailto:dion@arrowheadschoools.org) -369-3633 Ext 4113
- Sue Casetta-Director of Learning, 262-369-3611 ext. 4204, [casetta@arrowheadschoools.org](mailto:casetta@arrowheadschoools.org)
- Visit [Arrowheadschoools.org/academics/ILE.cfm](http://Arrowheadschoools.org/academics/ILE.cfm) for more information on the ILE- contact Ron Reichle 262-369-3611 Ext 3674
- Visit [Arrowheadschoools.org](http://Arrowheadschoools.org) web page and follow the links under course selection