

PRINCE Leadership MONTHLY



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Middle School Honors Classes

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Hello Middle School Parents,

We are now three weeks into the 2nd semester and I hope the second part of the school year has gotten off to a great start for your middle school student. We have hit the ground running since we have returned from break in the Middle school. Both our boys and girls middle school basketball teams made it to the championship game and the swimming team is competing at a high level and trying to finish their seasons strong; while baseball, soccer and track are all gearing up to get started. We have a number of students preparing for the spring production of Dear Edwina and will be ready in late February. We sent a group of students to the Academic Team finals recently and they represented Prince extremely well. We have students preparing for Math Olympics, ACSI Spelling Bee and ACSI Geography Bee. These are exciting times at the Prince Avenue Middle School.

Getting lost in all the excitement is that in the coming months your middle school student will start choosing classes for next year! Can you believe we are rapidly approaching that time of year again? Even though picking new classes can be an exciting time for students, I know that it can also be a stressful time for parents wanting to know if their students will be in Honor's classes or not. At PACS middle school we offer Accelerated math in the 6th and 7th grade and we offer Honors classes in Math, English, Science and History for 8th graders.

Prince is a college prep school; meaning our goal is to prepare students to go onto college and we want them to be ready for the rigors of college when they get there. To be able to best meet this goal we feel offering higher level classes in the middle school and high school is essential. However, this does not mean that each student in our school is going to qualify for the Honors courses. In our school we have students with all different strengths, gifts and talents. We have one of the strongest Fine Arts and Athletic programs in the area because of the gifting and talents of our students as well as the instruction of great teachers and coaches. We have students that are incredible at band and are earning awards for their talents. As the Middle School Principal I want to make sure

that each student is appropriately challenged in the classroom. A student that is gifted in Math and Science and takes honors classes in those two subjects might not be as gifted in English and History and should not be in Honors classes in those two subjects. There are a handful of students that are gifted enough to take all the Honors classes offered. There are also students that are appropriately challenged in our college prep classes.

One of the main concerns I hear from parents is that their child will be left behind if not placed in Honors classes. In my 11 years in high school and middle school education I have not seen this to be the case. A student who is placed in classes properly and does well in those classes and then supplements their time with athletics, fine arts, student leadership, volunteer hours or club participation are equally ready and qualified for college. A student that is misplaced in Honors classes' tend to cut back on co-curricular activities in order to stay on top of their course work. This leaves those students with a transcript of Honors classes, but little else to show potential colleges. As we move forward with the school year I will sit down with all the middle school Math, English, Science and History teachers to find the students that over the course of the school year have shown themselves to be capable of honor classes. Some of the criteria we take into consideration are: class grades, Terra Nova testing, organization skills, responsibility, behavior and attitude. When we look at all these considerations we feel we find the students that are best suited for the rigors of honors course work.



I look forward to working with you and your student on finding them just the right track for their gifts and talents.