

Looking Ahead



High School Opportunities:

Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) Conferences are held during the second semester of the 8th grade year to assist students in signing up for high school courses. Counselors from the middle and high schools work with students and parents in one-to-one conferences to explore student options in career clusters, high school majors, and course selections for 9th grade.

High School course levels

- Career Ready
- College Preparatory
- Honors
- Advanced Placement
- International Baccalaureate

Opportunities for College Credit

Students may earn college credit in high school in many courses including:

- Advanced Placement
- International Baccalaureate
- Dual Credit courses

*“Aim for the moon. If you miss,
you may hit a star.”*

W. Clement Stone

How To Begin the Conversation With Your School About Advanced Courses:

- **Academic Progress**—what does the report card say about my child’s mastery in subject areas?
- **Test Scores**—what do the test scores really say about my child’s abilities?
- **Classroom Behaviors**—what does the teacher recommend based on my child’s classroom performance?
- **Home Behaviors**—what patterns have been noticed about my child’s dependability with homework, projects, and independent assignments?

Tips for Parents:

- Set goals with your student about the courses he or she takes in school.
- Have high expectations for your student’s participation in curricular and extracurricular activities.
- Talk to your student about higher level courses and **ENCOURAGE** him/her to **TRY IT**.
- Find a mentor to support the student if needed.
- Ask questions when you need more information.

For more information, contact the school and speak with your child’s guidance counselor or assistant principal.

Dr. William Cook
Executive Director of Secondary Education
803-981-1055
wcook@rmail.org

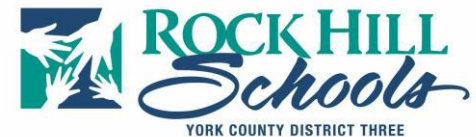
Updated 2016

Getting ahead...

Moving Forward In Middle School



Parent Guide To Help Ensure Academic Success



Where to begin...

Helping your child to move ahead.



Did You Know.....

Many students who perform above average in school every day are never identified as “gifted and talented.” Schools use many formal tools such as national intelligence tests and state achievement tests to determine a student’s academic abilities. However, test scores rarely tell the whole story. There are other informal tools or “general rules of thumb” that parents, teachers, and school officials may use to determine a student’s readiness for advanced classes. *Parents play a critical role in encouraging students to take the most challenging courses in school.* Many bright students are reluctant to believe they can succeed in advanced classes without active parental support. In this brochure, we will share with you:

- formal tools or tests that qualify your student for advanced courses.
- informal tools which may also indicate a readiness for advanced classes.
- parental tips to support and encourage your child to try advanced classes.

Formal Measures of Academic Skills

The tests below are used by your middle school to determine if your child is ready for advanced coursework. Talk with the teacher about your child’s performance this year.

MAP – The Measure of Academic Progress is for all students in Grades 2-8. This computer adaptive test is given each year in the fall and spring. A written report is sent home for parents. A percentile rank score of 70 or higher is a reasonable indicator that your student can do advanced coursework.

PASS – The SC Palmetto Assessment of State Standards is given in the spring of each year for students in grades 4-8. Tests are given in science and social studies and measure the progress your child has made toward state curriculum standards.

SC READY – SC READY is given in the spring of each year for students in grades 3-8. Tests are given in reading, writing and mathematics and measure the progress your child has made toward state curriculum standards.

PASS and **SC READY** scores are sent home with students in the fall of the next school year. Scores of “Exemplary” 4 or 5 indicate that your child is ready for advanced coursework.

Informal Measures of Academic Skills

Schools and parents should also consider these “General Rules of Thumb” for advanced courses:

- Does the student consistently maintain an A or B average in the desired advanced subjects?
- Does the student enjoy school, complete assignments on time, and apply good organizational and study skills?
- Does the student do his school work independently with little adult assistance?
- Is the student an independent reader with good comprehension skills and/or a problem solver who thinks mathematically?
- Does the child’s teacher recommend the student for advanced classes?

Advanced Courses in Middle School

English

Advanced English students read a variety of works that are at or above grade level in reading. Students learn to read critically and interpret meaning. Writing to explore ideas, analyze, persuade and entertain is strongly emphasized. Students use inquiry methods for in- depth research and apply oral communication skills to make presentations. Advanced students should like to read independently, participate in lively class discussion, and be able to juggle multiple tasks easily.

Social Studies

Advanced social studies students study a wide range of historical time periods at a rapid pace. Students should enjoy reading, discussing, researching, and writing about history. Students should also be able to move beyond simple recall of historical facts and into analysis of cause and effect and its impact on historical events, governmental structures, and economic policies.

Math

Advanced math students study both pre-algebra and algebra concepts. Students should be able to apply mathematical concepts and problem-solving strategies to solve a variety of types of problems. Students should also be able to adequately express in writing how they arrive at answers. Students move from Advanced 6th grade math to Pre-Algebra to Algebra I.

Science

Advanced science students study the theory and practical applications of Life, Earth, and Physical sciences. Students in advanced sciences conduct in-depth labs, research and write through the scientific method, and apply content through presentations and projects. Students should have strong reading, writing, and math skills and be able to use those skills to draw conclusions about scientific phenomena.