

Shakopee Public Schools | Department of Teaching & Learning
ADVANCED COURSES | FAQ | Parents

1. What kinds of advanced courses are available in Shakopee schools?

- **Honors** courses use grade-level curricular standards with greater rigor and complexity and are targeted to the top 15% of students.
*The Honors sequence is being phased out and is being replaced by a true Accelerated course sequence over the next few years.
- **Accelerated** courses use grade level standards one grade level ahead or are college-level courses offered in the high school setting and are targeted to the top 15% of students.
 - **Advanced Placement** (AP) courses are sponsored by the College Board and culminate with a high stakes test in May (scores of 3+ generally earn college credit)
 - **College in the Schools** (CIS) courses are sponsored by the U-MN and taught in the high school by U-approved high school teachers.
- **Twice-Accelerated** courses are taught grade level standards two grade levels ahead and are targeted to the top 5% of students.
- **Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)** | students attend classes at nearby colleges or universities.

A full list of all the advanced course options available to students is available in Registration Guides.

2. What are the eligibility standards for getting into advanced courses?

- **Honors Sequence** | Average scores on MAP and MCA data for the previous two years at or above the 85th percentile.
- **Acceleration Sequence** | Average scores on MAP and MCA data over the previous two years at or above the 85th percentile.
- **Twice-Accelerated Sequence** | Average scores on MAP and MCA data over the previous two years at or above the specific Department criteria (greater than the 95th percentile).
- **Advanced Placement** (AP) Courses | There are no identification criteria or requirements for AP courses. The College Board offers this insight into what it takes to be successful in AP courses: <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/exploreap/what-it-takes>
- **College in the Schools** (CIS) Courses | The University of Minnesota/Twin Cities issues its own identification criteria which is used as the identification standard for these courses. Details at <http://cce.umn.edu/documents/DCP/CIS-Course-Info-Chart.pdf>

3. How does my student get in to advanced courses? What about if s/he is a new student in Shakopee?

Beginning in 6th Grade, based on the criteria described above, historical student performance is analyzed and qualifying students are assigned to appropriate courses. Identification takes place at the beginning of each advanced course sequence.

AP courses are available beginning in 9th grade and are “open enrollment” courses. CIS courses are available beginning in 11th grade and students wishing to take them must meet U of MN course admission criteria.

Students who are new to Shakopee will be evaluated for eligibility for advanced courses based on available data from their previous district(s).

4. Does my student have to re-qualify every year to continue on in an advanced course sequence?

No. Once students are placed into an advanced course sequence, they will remain in it as long as they remain successful.

5. If a student does not meet the initial eligibility criteria, can s/he appeal into a course?

Yes. **MATH Appeals** | Students must test out of the pre-requisite course using an end of course assessment in order to advance.

All Other Disciplines | Complete written Appeal Request Form (available from the building administration or counselors).

6. If my student did not start in an advanced course sequence at the beginning of the sequence, can s/he enter the sequence at a later date?

There are many reasons why a student might choose not to begin an advanced course sequence when it is first offered. If that is the case for a student, his/her scores will be reevaluated annually, and invitations to participate in advanced courses will be sent to those who qualify. Again, if a student does not initially qualify, his/her parents may submit an appeal to their student’s building administrator.

7. What are ways a student might be exited from an advanced course sequence of courses?

There are three ways students might be exited from an Advanced Course Sequence:

1. **Request by Student and/or Parent** | Students and/or their parents request to be dropped. Drops happen at quarter breaks.
2. **Recommendation by Teacher** | Ongoing communication with students & parents, individual performance contract, & joint decision
3. **Student Failure** | If a student fails the course, s/he will be removed from that advanced course sequence.

The Building Administrator will be the final authority on ALL student exits from advanced courses.

8. Whom should I contact if I have more questions about Shakopee Schools’ advanced courses?

Students and parents are best served by initially contacting their student’s counselor(s) or building administration. Further inquiries can be made to the District’s High Potential Coordinator: Erin K. Heilman | Email: ehailman@shakopee.k12.mn.us | Phone: (952) 496-5055