

# Ridgeland Honors Academy

## Facts and Relevant Information

As the Ridgeland Honors Academy strives to challenge ourselves and continually improve, we know that parents and students need to be kept abreast of current information. This information sheet attempts to do exactly that. Hopefully you will find it useful. In addition, we would encourage everyone to go to the Honors Academy website throughout the school year.

For more information go to: <http://www.ridgelandhonorsacademy.com>

TWITTER @ RidgelandHonors

For questions or additional information, contact Dr. Ryan Bandy: [ryanbandy@walkerschools.org](mailto:ryanbandy@walkerschools.org)

### Instruction and Resources

Honors Academy teachers believe in blending traditional and **“hands-on” learning strategies**. In science classes, students engage in multiple labs and dissections. English and social study classes incorporate many student-led debates and seminars, while math classes use real life applications such as calculating statistics in the NCAA March Madness.

- \* Each of the Honors Academy courses has a **Google Classroom** where teachers post assignments and resources.
- \* Each Honors Academy teacher has office hours before or after school, so students have access to tutoring and consultation. However, students **MUST** schedule their appointments with teachers.

### STEM Classes in the Ridgeland Honors Academy

According to the United States Department of Education (<http://www.ed.gov/stem>)

*“In a world that’s becoming increasingly complex [...]it’s more important than ever for our youth to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to solve tough problems, gather and evaluate evidence, and make sense of information. These are the types of skills that students learn by studying science, technology, engineering, and math—subjects collectively known as STEM.*

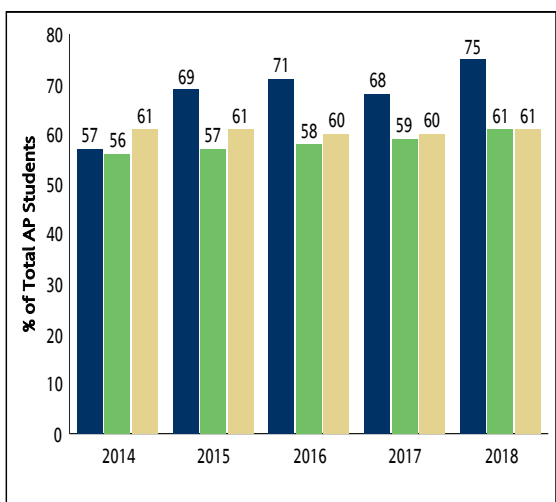
*[Fewer than 71 percent] of high school students attend high schools where the full range of math and science courses are offered (Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II, calculus, biology, chemistry, and physics).*

The Ridgeland Honors Academy strives to offer the best education possible to our students, so we offer the most rigorous STEM courses. Also, Advanced Placement classes are only offered in the Honors Academy.

### Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment Courses

**Advanced Placement (AP)** is a program which offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. Colleges and universities may grant placement and course credit to students who obtain high scores on the examinations. We offer **4 dual enrollment** mathematics classes that involve students being enrolled in two separate, academically related institutions (RHS and GNTC). High school students take college courses and get credits that transfer to some public colleges and universities in the University of Georgia system, provided they earn a “C” or higher in the dual enrollment course.

% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+



■ Ridgeland High School (112615) ■ Georgia ■ Global

2014      2015      2016      2017      2018

#### Ridgeland High School (112615)

Total AP Students	155	165	177	171	188
Number of Exams	217	219	236	233	268
AP Students with Scores 3+	89	114	126	116	141
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	57.4	69.1	71.2	67.8	75.0

#### Georgia

Total AP Students	90,027	93,636	97,938	99,585	99,731
Number of Exams	154,755	162,928	171,756	176,952	179,425
AP Students with Scores 3+	50,705	53,547	56,900	58,629	60,934
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	56.3	57.2	58.1	58.9	61.1

#### Global

Total AP Students	2,352,026	2,497,164	2,625,319	2,762,293	2,831,018
Number of Exams	4,199,454	4,516,044	4,741,566	5,006,273	5,141,714
AP Students with Scores 3+	1,442,136	1,515,264	1,583,115	1,666,078	1,736,338
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	61.3	60.7	60.3	60.3	61.3

## SCHEDULES BY GRADE LEVEL:

	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
English	Honors English I	Honors English II	AP Language	AP Literature
So Studies	AP Human Geography	AP World History	AP U.S. History	Honors Econ. & AP Government
Math	Accelerated Algebra I	Accelerated Geometry	Quant. Analysis & Pre-Calculus	Pre-Calc. & College Calculus or Stats
Science	Honors Physics	Honors Biology	Honors Chemistry	AP Bio or AP Chem or AP Env. Science
Extra	P. E. (Outside the Academy)	Honors Spanish I	Honors Spanish II	AP Psych, APCS, AP Env. Sci., or Sr. Proj.
Elective	Additional Electives (Outside the Academy)			

- **Field Trips:**
  - Each year, we plan a field trip that is both fun and culturally expansive for all members of the Honors Academy. In past years, we have visited Washington D. C. and Nashville, Tennessee.
  - Freshmen will also explore Sewanee and Chattanooga State campuses on a field trip in April.
- **Advanced Placement classes:** Freshmen will take one college-level class: AP Human Geography. Since this is students' first experience with courses of this rigor, the content is well organized, and student reading is supported with review, in-depth discussion, and practice of the material. While the class is challenging for 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students, the Honors Academy consistently has over 80% of freshmen to pass the exam each May.
- **ACT Preparation:** Students practice ACT-type questions in math, science, and English classes all year.

### Improvement on ACT scores for the past 10 years

#### Pre-Honors Academy

2008 graduates 23.0  
2009 graduates 21.8

#### After establishment of the Honors Academy:

2012 graduates 22.4	2015 graduates 23.3	2018 graduates 25.4
2013 graduates 23.2	2016 graduates 24.0	2019 graduates 26.0
2014 graduates 23.3	2017 graduates 25.2	

### Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Will my GPA be lower if I am in the Honors Academy?**  
It is possible that your GPA will be lower than that of students outside the Honors Academy due to the rigor of the courses. However, colleges typically would rather accept a student with a slightly lower GPA and numerous honors and AP courses than a student who has taken much easier classes throughout high school. In addition, students receive an additional 3 points added to their average in Honors courses and 6 points added to their average in AP courses due to the rigor of the curriculum.
2. **Will I have time for a social life?**  
Many Honors Academy students maintain their academic schedules and work, while still participating in extra curricular activities such as band, ROTC, and sports.
3. **What if the work in the Honors Academy is too difficult for me?**  
Honors Academy teachers monitor students continuously to offer academic support and scaffolding of academics as needed. They offer individual attention to ensure that every student is successful.
4. **What if I am interested in a science, engineering, or mathematics degree?**  
Most universities that specialize in science, engineering, or mathematics recommend that a student take the most rigorous academic courses offered by his/her high school.
5. **What if I do well in English and Social Studies, but I struggle in science and math?**  
Because class sizes in the Honors Academy are limited, teachers get to know each student's strengths and weaknesses. Teachers meet weekly to discuss ways to help struggling learners, regardless of the area of difficulty. In addition, teachers hold regular office hours and tutoring sessions as needed. *The motto of the Honors Academy teachers is "Push With Support".*
6. **What if my grades were not good in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, but improved in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade?**  
One poor grading period will not necessarily keep a student from gaining acceptance; however, a history of poor grades, even with excellent Georgia Milestones scores, may limit a student's chances of acceptance. Dedication to academics, such as homework completion, is a prerequisite for Honors Academy students.
7. **What if I am not sure what major I want to pursue in college, why should I take more challenging classes in high school?**  
The Honors Academy's purpose is to provide a strong liberal arts education to its students. Because we do not specialize in any particular subject our students gain a solid academic foundation in every content area, making them more appealing to colleges and universities. We believe students often need the most academic challenge in the subject areas where they feel weakest. Perhaps the quotation from Yale College explains it best... "Yale is committed to the idea of a liberal arts education through which students think and learn across disciplines, literally liberating or freeing the mind to its fullest potential. The essence of such an education is not what you study but the result – gaining the ability to think critically and independently and to write, reason, and communicate clearly – the foundation for all professions."