



# HOUGHTON-PORTAGE TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

HOUGHTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

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**Julie Filpus** – Principal

Dear New Student and Family!

Welcome to Houghton Middle School! I am Kristen Rundman, the Middle School Counselor. I am glad that we will have many new faces at HMS this year. I know that starting in a new school can be intimidating and you may have a lot of questions.

I would like to invite you to our New Student Orientation on **Monday, August 31, 2026 from 9:00-11:00 AM**. This orientation is intended for students and parents. At this time, we will discuss specific information about lockers, use of the assignment notebook, classroom expectations, computer use, and hallway rules, lunchroom procedures, class schedules, and other items from the Houghton Middle School Student Handbook.

I look forward to meeting you and helping you start the year out strong!

Sincerely,

*Kristen Rundman*

HMS Counselor



## General Information

**Schedule changes will be permitted during the first 4 days of school and the week prior to the new semester in January.** Please be aware that the master schedule may change between now and the start of the new school year. If you have questions about the scheduling process, please contact Mrs. Rundman 482-0450 Ext. 1160 or via e-mail at: [krundman@hpts.us](mailto:krundman@hpts.us).

During 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th hours, students in the 7/8th grade take core classes. During 2nd and 7th hours, students take electives/EnCore classes or Advisory.

### Seventh Grade Core Classes

#### English 7

English 7 covers the areas of reading, writing, grammar, language usage, listening, and speaking. Students will read short stories, essays, poems, drama, supplemental paperbacks, and books chosen individually. Writing will include letters, journals, newspaper articles, dialogue, and various creative writings. Improving sentences and paragraphs will also be stressed. Students will review grammar and will apply mechanics and usage rules to their writing. Speeches and other oral presentations will be developed.

#### 7th Grade Math Options

##### Middle School Math Curriculum

6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Math 6		
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Math 7	-OR-	Accelerated Math 7
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Math 8	-OR-	Algebra (For H.S. Credit)

##### Math Curriculum 6th to 12th Grades

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Grade 6	Math 6	Math 6	Math 6
Grade 7	Math 7	Math 7	Accelerated Math
Grade 8	Math 8/ Intro. Algebra	Math 8/ Intro. Algebra	Algebra (For H.S. Credit)
Grade 9	Algebra I	Algebra I	Geometry
Grade 10	Geometry	Geometry	Algebra II
Grade 11	Algebra II Core	Algebra II	Pre-Calculus
Grade 12*	Math related course	Pre-Calculus	AP Calculus

**\*It is a State requirement that all students complete Algebra II and that a Math course be taken all 4 years of high school.**

#### Criteria used in choosing which curriculum to follow:

1. Math 6 overall GPA 3.667 (A-)
2. Recommendation of Math 6 Teacher (based on grades, timely completion of homework, math skills (multiplication & division tests and attitude towards math)
3. Scores on the M-STEP (Math **and** ELA = 4's) and FastBridge (College Pathway) tests
4. End of Year Math 6 Assessment (80%)
5. Desire of student and parents

If you have additional questions regarding the Middle or High School Curriculum, please contact Ms. Filpus (MS Principal), or schedule a time to meet with the Middle School Math Department.

## **Math 7**

This course was designed to provide students with rich opportunities to build understanding of important mathematical concepts and develop fluency with key skills necessary for success in algebra, and to gain proficiency with the habits of mind and thinking dispositions of proficient mathematics students. To achieve these goals, the program includes content-focused lessons, 3-Act Mathematical Modeling lessons, and STEM projects. The topics covered in Grade 7 include Integers and Rational Numbers, Analyze and Use Proportional Relationships, Analyze and Solve Percent Problems, Generate Equivalent Expressions, Solve Problems Using Equations and Inequalities, Use Sampling to Draw Inferences About Populations, Probability, and Solve Problems Involving Geometry. Homework will require about 30-45 minutes daily.

## **Accelerated Math**

This course was designed to provide students with rich opportunities to build understanding of important mathematical concepts and develop fluency with key skills necessary for success in algebra, and to gain proficiency with the habits of mind and thinking dispositions of proficient mathematics students. To achieve these goals, the program includes content-focused lessons, 3-Act Mathematical Modeling lessons, and STEM projects. The topics covered in Accelerated Grade 7 include: Integers and Rational Numbers, Real Numbers, Analyze and Use Proportional Relationships, Analyze and Solve Percent Problems, Generate Equivalent Expressions, Solve Problems Using Equations and Inequalities, Analyze and Solve Linear Equations, Use Sampling to Draw Inferences About Populations, Probability, and Solve Problems Involving Geometry, Congruence and Similarity, and Surface Area and Volume. Homework will require about 45-60 minutes daily. *Students must maintain an A- or better in Accelerated Math 7 to stay enrolled in the class. In addition, students must achieve an A- or better grade for the year **and** must pass the final exam in June 2027 in order to advance into Algebra following Accelerated Math 7.*

## **Physical Education 7**

P.E. 7 is a mix of team sports, individual sports, and life time fitness ideas. Water sports and water safety is also covered, as well as an introduction to the weight room and cardio area. Students will also be tested 2-3 times throughout the year in some basic muscular strength and endurance testing. Grading is based on changing each day (when appropriate) into the proper gear, keeping a positive attitude and participating to their best ability for each event.

## **Science 7**

This course emphasizes basic concepts of life, earth and physical sciences. Students are involved in daily activities in which the individual discovers truths and prepares for living in a world that is greatly influenced by science. Class time is spent in lecture, discussion and laboratory activities. Proper laboratory techniques and safety are stressed. The student should become familiar with basic laboratory equipment and how it is used. Topics covered in life science include an overview of organisms in 5 kingdoms, photosynthesis, cell functions, growth and development, and heredity. Earth science concepts include the water cycle, atmosphere, weather and climate, and solar energy. Topics covered in physical science include chemistry, forces and motion, energy and waves, sound and light.

## **Social Studies 7**

In Social Studies 7, students will study the geography and history of various countries in the Eastern Hemisphere. Comparison and contrast of countries will be emphasized as students develop inquiry and decision making abilities. Students will also examine the characteristics of government and economics.

## 7th and 8th Grade EnCore Classes

### Full Year Classes

**Choir (7th hour):** Choir is a performance-oriented class. The number of performances varies with the interest and abilities of the choir. Opportunities are available to sing in large and small groups and as a soloist. This choir meets every day and is open to all who want to improve their singing skills.

**Band (2nd hour):** This class is performance based. We will have at least three concerts per year. Students will have opportunities to perform at solo and ensemble events and clinics throughout the year. Band is open to any student with previous knowledge of an instrument. Any student may begin band at this level if they take private lessons with a teacher throughout the school year.

### Blended Classes (Class & Advisory- 7th hour)\*

**Middle School Advisory** provides students with a supportive small-group environment focused on academic, social, and emotional growth. Through activities and discussions, students develop organization, goal-setting, communication, leadership, and wellness skills while building positive relationships and a strong sense of community

**Intro to Theatre:** Have you always wanted to be on stage but didn't know where to start? Are you interested in stage management, set design, sound effects, or working behind the scenes? Whether you're a Drama Club veteran or brand new to the performing arts, this class is for you! Work through the process of putting on a production with your peers, and perform the play/musical by the end of the quarter. This course follows the Advisory structure, embedding social-emotional and community-building skills directly into daily rehearsals and production preparation.

**Woodshop/Advisory:** Students will learn shop safety, band saw safety and use, sanding techniques, and basic project assembly by constructing a series of projects designed to challenge the woodworking skills of beginning woodworkers. This class is offered for a semester and combines Woodshop 1 and Woodshop II. Students who sign up for this will have one semester of woodshop and Advisory the opposite semester.

**New for 2026-2027: MEERA** is a hands-on manufacturing education program for students in grades 7-8. It helps students explore how things are designed, made, and improved while learning skills that are important for future careers. The program includes exciting learning labs, modern technology, real-world projects, and lessons connected to today's manufacturing industry. It is a semester-long class and offered for students to take **either** during 2nd or 7th hour.

*\* These classes have limited availability. Once the classes fill up, students will be assigned to Advisory during 7th hour.*

### 9 Week Classes (2nd hour - Available to non-band students)

**Adventures in Outdoor Recreation:** Students will be learning about various forms of Outdoor Recreation. Activities planned: Team Building, Geocaching, DiscGolfing, Camping/Shelter building, Fire Starting, Survival Skills, Mountain Biking, and Swimming. Each student will be creating a Personal fitness plan which will include weight room use, cardio, and skill building.

**Art:** A variety of mediums and techniques used to create artwork will be introduced to students. Projects include drawings, watercolor paintings, acrylic paintings, ceramic pieces, tiles and collages.

**Family and Consumer Science (F.A.C.S.):** In this Family and Consumer Skills class, students will be introduced to basic skills in the areas of cooking, baking, and sewing.

**Service Learning:** Service Learning is a class that integrates community service with academic instruction. It focuses on critical and reflective thinking and civic responsibility (volunteering). Students in the class will be a part of a service project where they will volunteer three times a week in the elementary school during class time. Students will also participate in a large group community service project and develop individual service projects.

**Splash & Dash:** This comprehensive 9-week swimming course is designed for swimmers of all levels who wish to improve their swimming techniques, build confidence in the water, and learn the fundamentals of diving. Led by an experienced instructor (Previous LG instructor/ Water Safety Instructor), participants will progress through a structured program focusing on stroke development, endurance, water safety, and diving skills. By the end of the course, students will have gained proficiency in multiple swim strokes and mastered basic diving techniques.

**Technology 7/8 (Required):** In Tech Explorations students will investigate what technology is and how it affects our everyday life. This will be a hands-on project based class. Students will work directly with software and develop a basic understanding of how to use them. If a student takes MEERA during 2nd hour, the technology class requirement may be waived.

**Woodshop I:** Woodshop I is a class that teaches students basic woodworking skills. Students will learn shop safety, band saw safety and use, sanding techniques, and basic project assembly by constructing a series of projects designed to challenge the woodworking skills of beginning woodworkers.

**Woodshop II –(Prerequisite Woodshop I):** Woodshop II is a class that furthers a student's knowledge and abilities in an industrial woodshop setting. Students will learn shop safety for all tools in an industrial woodshop, and how to assemble projects in a variety of different ways by constructing an advanced woodworking project.