



HOUGHTON-PORTAGE TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

HOUGHTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

1603 Gundlach Road | Houghton, Michigan 49931

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www.hpts.us

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

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.

Eighth Grade Core Classes

English 8

English 8 emphasizes the connections between reading, writing, speaking, listening, and grammar. Class novels are still in discussion for next year. Students will also be required to read several independent novels throughout the year. Writing will include poems, position paper, informative essays, literary analysis, weekly journal writes, research paper, letters, and other creative and technical writing pieces. Students will use the writing process when working towards final drafts. A variety of oral presentations and speeches will be given.

Math 8

This course utilizes the enVisionmath 2.0 math program for grade 8. It is the follow up to the current Math 7 course. It emphasizes problem solving and critical thinking skills, while adding in the use of more technology. Successful completion of this course will provide students with a solid foundation for Algebra I.

Algebra I (High School Credit) -Prerequisite: *Successful completion of Accelerated Math, which means students must achieve an A- or better grade for the year and must pass the final exam in June 2025 in order to advance into Algebra.* The emphasis in this course is placed on algebraic skills and concepts. The content and questions in this book integrate geometry, probability and statistics with algebra. Pure and applied mathematics are also integrated throughout the book. Both reading and writing mathematics are emphasized. Use of scientific calculators is assumed and graphing calculators are introduced. **Students will earn high school credit for this course. These credits will count toward High School Graduation progress and GPA.**

Physical Education/Health (High School Credit)

This course is a combination of physical education and health. This course will fulfill the high school requirement of Health/Physical Education. There will be periodic tests and an exam at the end of each semester. Participation points will also be used in the calculation of grades for each student. **Students will earn high school credit for this course. These credits will count toward High School Graduation progress and GPA.**

Science 8

This is a full year earth science course designed for investigations in geology, astronomy, meteorology, oceanography, and limnology. Students will engage in numerous hands-on activities, lecture and discussion sessions, field explorations, and an individualized research project. Completion of this course will give students a better understanding of: rocks and minerals; earthquakes; volcanoes; Earth's interior; a star's life cycles; universe origin possibilities; major stars and constellations; Earth and moon relationship; weather prediction, maps and instruments; fronts and air masses; ocean currents.

Integrated U.S. History

In Integrated U.S. History, students will study American History from the Revolutionary War to the end of the nineteenth century. Students will study the nation's past and its relation to the present and future. Subjects covered will include a review of exploration and colonization, the war for independence, formation of the United States government, foreign policy, Westward Expansion, the Civil War and Reconstruction.

EnCore/Elective Classes - 8th grade only - Class for High School Credit

JROTC (High School Credit) - This class helps students develop Leadership, Communication and Individual Life Skills while focusing on Citizenship within our community. Several other topics designed to improve confidence and life skills will be covered. This course would fulfill a VPAA high school graduation requirement. **Students will earn high school credit for this course. These credits will count toward High School Graduation progress and GPA.**

7th and 8th Grade EnCore Classes

Full Year Classes

Band (2nd hour): This class is performance based. There will be 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.

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.

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

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.*

Quarter/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.

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: 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. Prerequisite (Woodshop 1).