



# **Welcome Parents and Students**

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## **MSN HAL Gifted Program**



# Mission Statement

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The mission of Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95 is to inspire all students to be passionate, continuous learners and to prepare them with the skills to achieve their goals and flourish as responsible, caring citizens in a global community.

# District 95

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## Strategy:

To align and develop curriculum, innovative instructional practices and learning opportunities that promote high level thinking, promote connections to global issues, and support students' pursuit of personally meaningful goals:

- To provide for the mastery of basic skills while affording students an opportunity to increase pace, depth and level of learning  
To promote the development and application of critical thinking and reasoning skills
- To encourage divergent thinking
- To encourage advanced oral and written skills
- To develop research skills and methods
- To address characteristics unique to the gifted population

## Core Value:

- All people can learn and they do so at different rates and in different ways.

# HAL Program

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# HAL Program

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HAL stands for High Ability Learners

We offer an accelerated curriculum to match the pace of instruction to student learning at all levels.

- Class discussions draw on advanced level of information and challenge thinking.
- The expectation is that students have the ability to complete more challenging assignments, which may affect the amount of time needed to complete them.

We offer a program in all subject areas with the flexibility to meet students' academic strengths.

We enrich and extend the standard curriculum by increasing depth of topics.

- Topics are explored at a deeper level, emphasizing prior mastery of subject knowledge.
- Complex thinking is required for open-ended questions and multi-faceted projects.

# Gifted and Core Class Similarities

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State Standards and District Learner Objectives  
are the same for all students

BUT...

- ❑ Topics may be explored at a deeper level
- ❑ Complex thinking skills are taught
- ❑ Open-ended questions are explored
- ❑ Critical thinking tasks and challenging projects that promote an in depth understanding are part of the assessment process
- ❑ Class discussion and participation are necessary



# Math Program

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## Accelerated Curricula

- 6th Grade: Pre-Algebra
  
- 7th Grade: Algebra I
  
- 8th Grade: Honors Geometry
  - ( HS Freshman Geometry book)
  
- Freshman: Algebra II

# Science Program

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Gifted science curriculum emphasizes learning at deeper levels than just fundamental ideas. Classes involve inquiry investigations, concept development, problem-based learning, laboratory experiences, and collaborative opportunities.

- 6<sup>th</sup> Life, Earth, and Physical Science
- 7<sup>th</sup> Life, Earth, and Physical Science
- 8<sup>th</sup> Physical Science (Freshman/Sophomore Book)
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Semester Physics
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester Chemistry
  - Proficiency in Algebra is required



# Lit/LA Program

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## Literature & Language Arts

The gifted language arts and literature curricula allow students the resources and instruction necessary to develop advanced verbal and oral communication skills. Additionally, students develop a strong knowledge of the literary elements employed by authors in order to better understand the novels studied in class. The gifted teachers introduce many of the reading and writing strategies used in the high school honors English classes.



# Social Studies Program

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## Social Studies

The gifted social studies curriculum challenges students to think at a higher, more abstract level about the historical concepts covered in class. Students are encouraged to investigate topics aligned with their interests, and class discussions allow students the opportunity to think critically.

- 6<sup>th</sup> – World History and Cultures I
- 7<sup>th</sup> – World History and Cultures II
- 8<sup>th</sup> - US History 1865- Present



# HAL Teachers

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- Grade level and content area teams
- Dedicated ourselves to working with gifted students for the past 10 years
- Graduate level course work and experience in gifted education
- Master Graduate degrees in content areas and/or Curriculum Instruction



# Benefits of HAL Program

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- Learning is more personalized
- Continuity in the academic program
- Opportunities for deeper relationships
- More support for the individual
- Stability and sense of community (safe learning environment)
- Expectations are clear from year to year



# Transition to Middle School

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- Students receive a full 40 minutes of instruction in each core subject every day.
- As part of the initial transition period into middle school, it is normal for some students to struggle with organization and prioritization of work load.
  - In response, teachers recognize the purpose of homework as an extension of the classroom and are sensitive to the amount of homework assigned.
  - Please let us know



# Challenges

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- Study skills may need to be established
- Time management skills
- Perceiving the learning objectives
- Embracing higher level thinking
- Students need to learn to prioritize
  - Assignments
  - Extra-curricular activities
- Stress management skills

# COMMUNICATION

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# Avenues of Communication

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- ❑ E-School
- ❑ Email (make sure email addresses are kept up to date with the school office)
- ❑ Parent/Teacher Conferences
- ❑ Assignment notebook (agenda)
- ❑ Teacher website
- ❑ Phone calls



# E-School

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- ❑ Each family assigned unique log-in and password
- ❑ Access to student grades for every class 24/7
- ❑ Please keep in mind it takes time to get assignments graded
- ❑ More info coming from school/district at beginning of school year

# **HOMEWORK**

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# Not more, just different

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- ❑ Intellectually challenging for that desired grade
- ❑ Awesome opportunity for creative outlet
- ❑ Ability to cater to needs of students
- ❑ Compacted, differentiate, and multiple objectives can be covered/mastered



# Student Responsibilities

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- ❑ Recording homework
- ❑ Keeping track of ongoing assignments
- ❑ Asking for help and clarification
- ❑ Keeping track of personal items
- ❑ Coming prepared with all necessary items
- ❑ Taking ownership of personal learning
- ❑ Creating an independent relationship within the school community
- ❑ Checking e-school to make sure grades are accurate

# **Student Commentary**

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# 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

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Danielle: "The work is more challenging but we know it'll be worth it in the long run."

Jesse: "It's really fun and you get to make really strong friendships because you're always together."

Catherine: "I love the philosophical discussions!"

Emily: "The work is harder but it's at a pace that's right for you."

Katie: "It's nice to be with people that think like you do."

Sangami: "It's worth the challenge and we learn at our own pace."



# **Eric - 8<sup>th</sup> grade student**

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“Over the past 3 years, I felt that the program has furthered my quality of work, and learned lessons that pertain to world-life lessons. I have appreciated my time in HAL as I have made many friends.”



# Kat - 8<sup>th</sup> grade student

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“Over the past 3 years, I think the HAL was beneficial to me in the academic sense. I was bored my entire elementary life. 6<sup>th</sup> grade was a great year for me and the teachers made the transition really easy for us.”



## **Jenna - 8<sup>th</sup> grade student**

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“I’m glad that I joined the HAL program because the people in it push me to get better grades and I don’t have to do group projects by myself, which was often the case before. I think that the HAL program is really good to be in because it’s more challenging than regular classes, but it is nowhere near impossible and I feel that it prepares students better for high school.”