

Middle School Recommendations

IOAPA

About

The Iowa Online AP® Academy provides free online above-level courses to Iowa students who do not have access to on-site versions of such courses.

Eligible high-ability middle school students can enroll in online, high school-level courses. The cost of the courses are covered for Iowa students by the Belin-Blank Center through the Iowa Online AP® Academy. Middle school courses are not AP courses; rather, they are AP-preparatory, intended to equip students with sufficient skills and background knowledge to be prepared for future AP courses in high school.



Requirements

Student Eligibility

RECOMMENDATION	MEASURE	GUIDELINE
Very important	Above-level test (6th grade: I-Excel; 7th-8th grade: ACT)	50th percentile or above
Very important	Any grade-level standardized tests taken within the last year (e.g. Iowa Assessments)	95th percentile or above in the course content area
Important	Teacher/parent confidence in student's readiness for challenging, independent, online, coursework	High confidence
Important	Previous relevant coursework within the past two years	Sufficient background knowledge/skills
Somewhat important	Additional test scores (e.g. CogAT, IQ)	Well above average

Working with your Administrators

Middle school teachers and students should consider future courses as they select an IOAPA course. For instance, if the student's online biology course is counted for high school credit, they may need to substitute a different science course for biology when they reach high school. Likewise, students should consider future plans for AP courses in these subject areas.



Assigning Course Credit

Again, teachers may need to work creatively to demonstrate that students are meeting the requirements necessary to pass both courses and teachers may need to provide additional educational experiences to fill in any gaps.

We encourage middle schools to consider these classes as an **upper-level alternative to a traditionally available class**, and we recommend that middle school students be given **high school credit** for these classes, since they are high school-level classes. In other words, they are not honors-level middle school courses. They are actual high school courses that we simply make available to middle school grades. Ultimately, schools have local authority to determine how credit is assigned.

We asked some of our schools how they handle this issue, and we compiled their solutions into this blog post: <https://belinblank.wordpress.com/2015/11/30/middle-school-ioapa-working-out-credit-concerns/>. Hopefully this will be useful for your school in determining how to assign credit.