



La Salle Course Advancement Policy 2023-2024 Admissions Season

La Salle College Preparatory no longer accepts any standardized test scores as a part of our admissions process.

One of La Salle College Preparatory's core principles is ***Inclusive Community***. In the spirit of this core principle, the administration team at La Salle has taken a deep, introspective look at the ways in which we can create an even more inclusive environment in all aspects of our school operations. In reviewing historical data and current trends, we have come to the following conclusions:

- **Standardized tests do not fully project student success:** We have found that grades and the rigor of classes are stronger predictors of academic readiness for high school.
- **Standardized testing adds undue stress and burden upon families:** Students and parents are pressured to participate in costly testing prep or other high-stress preparedness during their last year in junior high.
- **The HSPT did not provide La Salle with enough data for accurate course placement:** La Salle-developed tests for course advancement are a much more accurate tool in determining alignment with student schedules.

Based on the above conclusions, La Salle **will not be accepting any standardized test scores (HSPT, ISEE, etc.) for consideration or review** as a part of the admissions process. Test scores sent to La Salle will not be considered.

To supplement our holistic approach to evaluating admissions applications, the transcript, teacher recommendations, student/parent interview process, and admissions engagement opportunities have been elevated to ensure we are able to fully understand each student and family who applies for admission to La Salle College Preparatory. In lieu of standardized test scores, La Salle offers course advancement tests for students who would like the opportunity to start their academic journey at La Salle in more rigorous courses.

It is our hope that this new testing policy will positively impact each student and family considering La Salle College Preparatory for their high school experience. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to our Admissions Team at admissions@lasallehs.org.



Course Advancement Opportunities and Policies

With the changes to our standardized testing policy, La Salle will offer two Optional Priority course advancement dates in January, and three later test dates that will be incrementally more challenging to offset the increased knowledge expected in March, May, and July. Our course advancement tests have been developed by our faculty and will provide prospective 9th-grade applicants with the opportunity to place in advanced or honors courses if offered admission to La Salle.

Available course advancement tests will include English, Math, and World Languages. Prospective students will have the opportunity to register for one or more of the course advancement tests after submitting their admissions application. **Note that the course advancement tests will not be used as a measure or evaluation tool for the admissions application review process.**

Students who choose not to participate in the course advancement testing process will be placed in standard courses (Ex. Algebra 1, World Language 1, etc.) if offered admission to La Salle. Course advancement appeals will not be considered if a family chooses not to participate in the course advancement test process.

Material Covered

The course advancement test for each subject covers the concepts students will have learned from 6th grade through the first semester of 8th grade. Please find additional information about the format and coverage of each test below.

English

The English course advancement test consists of two parts. The first part is multiple choice questions. These questions cover grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension/literary terms from fiction, poetry, drama, informational texts, and argumentation. The second part is a writing sample, based on reading selections crafted by our English teachers.

Math

Math course advancement topics include Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, and precalculus. Results of the test will be evaluated by math department faculty and a recommendation for course selection will be provided.

World Languages (Chinese, French & Spanish)

The World Language Department course advancement test will reflect the concepts and skills of a standard 9th grade student based on the California World Language Standards. For any student placed into a level higher than level 1, they would need to demonstrate the knowledge and skills pertinent to the standards of that level.



The placement exam will cover grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension and will include a writing sample based on a specific prompt. Beyond the technical aspects of the language, the student will need to demonstrate an understanding of the culture and customs of the language.

Scoring

Course advancement tests are scored by the Department Chair of each respective subject. Scores are then communicated to the Admissions Office for communication and the Counseling Office for recording. Please find additional information about the scoring of each test below.

English

The English course advancement test puts students into a percentile ranking. A student is not expected to earn 100%; rather, students are rated against peers' achievement. With that, students earning in the top 10% are placed into AP Human Geography; students earning in the top 20% are placed into Honors Biology; and students earning in the top 30% and approval of their writing sample are placed into Honors English.

Math

Each problem on the placement test is worth 1 point. Students will receive a percentage based on the number of correct responses they earned on the test. Placement is based on their percentage.

World Languages (Chinese, French & Spanish)

If a student demonstrates an intermediate level, they will be placed into level two. If a student demonstrates an intermediate-advanced level, they will be placed into an appropriate higher level.



Placement Test FAQs

Is my child required to participate in the placement test process?

No, you do not have to participate in the placement test process. However, you will be offered standard freshman courses upon entry.

How does my child prepare for the placement tests?

The placement tests are a tool to gauge a student's readiness for advanced courses and higher levels of academic rigor. Advanced preparation is not needed and is not recommended.

If my child does not do well on the placement tests, will this impact their opportunity for admission?

No, placement tests will only be used for student course placement. Test results will not be shared with the Admissions Review Committee. Only course placement will be shared to ensure families are informed if they have been offered honors/advanced placement upon admission (if applicable).

If my child takes the placement test and doesn't perform well, can they take the test again?

No, students are not permitted to take any one placement test multiple times. This would provide the testing student with an unfair advantage over other students.

My child is applying for the Presidential Merit Scholarship. How will this new policy affect them?

Students applying for the Presidential Merit Scholarship are encouraged to participate in course advancement tests, as the number of honors/advanced placement courses they qualify for upon entry will be a factor in determining our top Presidential Merit Awardees.

My child is unavailable to attend the offered dates in January. Can alternative arrangements be made?

Please contact the Admissions Office to inquire about alternative arrangements.

Is my child able to advance by taking a course in Summer School?

Summer advancement must be approved by our Counseling and Academic Offices. For incoming freshmen, it is typically not permitted. Exceptions include students who achieve a certain score on the math placement tests and are allowed to take a math course in summer school for the purpose of advanced placement in the fall.

Are course advancement decisions final?

Yes, course advancement decisions are final after your child is enrolled and registered. If you have any questions about your child's placement prior to registration, please reach out to the Admissions Office.