



# MINOOKA

## COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

District #111 [mchs.net](http://mchs.net)

*Mission: Strengthen **M**astery, **C**ollaboration, **H**igh Expectations, and **S**uccess for All Students.*

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Dear Honors/AP Students and Families,

The honors English program at Minooka Community High School is designed to offer you opportunities to foster the critical thinking and literacy skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—that are crucial to your success as a student and citizen. As a freshman and sophomore, you will be introduced to the discourse of English Studies, and continue the process of growing as a reader, writer, and thinker. You will benefit from this foundation your last two years. As a junior you will take Advanced Placement (AP) Language and Composition, and as a senior you will take AP Literature and Composition. Although there are many benefits to successfully completing AP courses and scoring well on the exams, some of the more significant benefits include opportunities for college credit, saving money on college tuition, and some studies have shown that students who earn college credit in AP will actually sustain higher GPAs in college.<sup>1</sup>

Again, because you are choosing to be a part of the honors English program, you should understand that each class is not meant to be viewed in isolation. In fact, each class is designed to build on the last, utilizing some of the same genres, authors, and writing assignments so that you can tangibly see your progress as a reader and writer as you advance through the program. To further clarify, at the freshman and sophomore level, a rigorous approach to English Studies is taken to begin preparing you for the AP courses—Language and Composition and Literature and Composition—that you will take as an upperclassman. In order to prepare you for AP where you will be expected to read difficult texts and communicate insightful ideas about them, we will spend time looking at some ways to gain *critical appreciation* for the texts that we read so that you learn how to enter the conversation and express your academic voice. In other words, you will have to *interpret* the texts. You will have to formulate the meaning or purpose of the texts we read, communicate an understanding of what the text is trying to do to/for the reader, all while looking at the choices that the author makes in constructing the piece.

In order to ensure a smooth transition into your honors/AP course in the fall semester, we encourage students enrolling in Pre-AP Honors English I, Pre-AP Honors English II, or AP Language and Composition to **choose a book from the corresponding list to read this summer**. As the capstone course in the English Program, students enrolling in AP Literature and Composition should **complete the corresponding assignment this summer**. We know that time away from school can have a significant impact on student achievement, but continuing to sharpen your skills over the summer will put you in a position to start the school year off strong.

It is extremely important to me that you have access to the book(s) you need this summer. If you have difficulty finding a book that you want to read, please reach out to me directly, and I will ensure that you receive a copy of the book.

Sincerely,

Sean Hackney

English Department Chair

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<sup>1</sup> See Leslie Keng and Barbara G. Dodd's "A Comparison of College Performances of AP and Non-AP Student Groups in 10 Subject Areas."