





9th Grade Curriculum Night

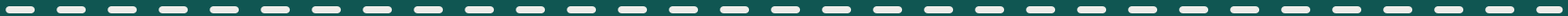


Thursday, February 15th 6:30pm

Tonight's Agenda



- Introduction and Welcome
- Curriculum Coordinators review offerings by department
- Overview of Program of Studies and scheduling timeline
- Course recommendation process through PowerSchool
- Q&A with coordinators



Future Freshmen Visit





Westford Academy



One of the Best Public High Schools in MA, NEASC Accredited School, 60+ Activities/Clubs, Division 1 Athletics (Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman teams), WATA, Leadership Opportunities, Capstone Program, School to Career Program, Avg. Class Size of 20, 17 Advanced Placement Courses, Dual Enrollment Program, Ghostwriter, Special Events, Dedicated and Highly Qualified faculty and staff, Community Service, Exchange Programs.....





**What is *important* to be
"successful" at WA?** - ►





The right balance! Things to consider:

- Values and Priorities
- Academic Course Load (Levels, interests, electives, challenging content, +Classes)
- Family, Cultural, and/or Religious Commitments
- Activities/Clubs (Participation/Leadership roles)
- Jobs
- Athletics (Level, quantity, length, non school athletics)
- Student competition amongst themselves
- Socializing/Attending Events etc.
- New peers/friends



Communication is key!



- Weekly Friday Principal Emails
- Facebook/X Social Media Accounts
- Well Established Communication Protocol with Faculty and Staff
- Responses to emails and phone calls within 24-48 hours
- Back to School Night
- Presentations for Parents



CURRICULUM COORDINATORS

World Languages: Stephanie
Grabowski-Devlin

Science/Math: Joe Barnas

English: Janet Keirstead

History/Social Studies: Adam Ingano

Health and Physical Ed.: Brian Roark

Visual/Performing Arts: Andrea Mejia

Student Support Services: Sejal Costa

Business: Dan Twomey

Counseling: Lauren Clark



Ms. Stephanie Grabowski-Devlin

Curriculum Coordinator
World Language Department

sdevlin@westfordk12.us



World Languages at WA



Students who **did not study a language in middle school** and students who wish to **change the language they are studying** or **add a second language** as an elective may choose from the following:

- French 1
- German 1
- Latin 1
- Spanish 1
- Mandarin 1

*Not all level 1 classes are offered each year so students must indicate a second choice when selecting one of these courses.



World Languages at WA



Students who wish to continue studying the language they started in middle school will be recommended by their teacher for one of the following courses:

- French 2 CP or Honors
- German 2 CP or Honors
- Latin 2 CP or Honors
- Spanish 2 CP or Honors



Students should consider honors if they ➡...

- Are curious about other cultures
- Enjoy communicating - speaking, listening, reading and writing - in another language
- Can learn independently and work collaboratively
- Will be an active participant in a fast paced Learning environment
- Have met the prerequisite grade listed in the Program of Studies and have the recommendation of their 8th grade teacher



World Language Graduation Requirement - ➔

Students must take two years of the same World Language in order to satisfy the graduation requirement.

Many of our students study the same language for 4 years at WA and some choose to study a second language as an elective.



Mr. Joe Barnas

Curriculum Coordinator

Science Department

Mathematics and Computer Science Department



WA Science: Grade 9 Offerings - ➔

Required:

Biology

(Biology MCAS in June)

Elective Option:

CP Intro to Engineering



Descriptions and prerequisites can be found online in the WA Program of Studies – Science Department

Biology Level Prerequisites



Placement into courses is based on teacher recommendation.

Biology Level	Prerequisite
412 Honors	95 Overall Average in 8 th grade Science
410 CP	75 Overall Average in 8 th grade Science
406 CP	Below 75 Overall Average in 8 th grade Science

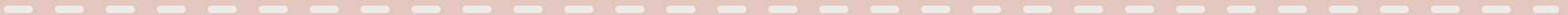
Students may override by ONE level only. For example, a student recommended for 406 CP may NOT override to the 412 Honors level.

Taking CP Biology does NOT disqualify students from AP courses later in high school (must have success in an honors level science course the year prior to enrolling in AP science).

Honors Biology Expectations



- Meets **Characteristics of Successful Honors Students**
- Content depth and pace is very rigorous, requiring ***advanced skill in scientific inquiry***.
- Students are required to complete an ***independent scientific research project*** as part of their final exam.
- Students will also be required to perform a ***year-long, extensive study of the local ecosystem*** including field observations, independent investigations, and formal reports.



Specific Grade Prerequisites for Incoming Freshmen for Math and Computer Science Courses



Suggested Course	Prerequisite
305 Algebra 1 CP	Less than 75 in 8th Grade Math
308 Algebra 1 CP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ At least 75 in 8th Grade Math➤ Less than 80 in Algebra 1
321 Geometry CP	At least 80 in Algebra 1
322 Geometry H	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ At least 87 in Algebra 1➤ Meets Characteristics of Successful Honors Students

Please note: Although a student may meet the grade prerequisite, the teacher may not recommend the requested course based upon the student's work habits.



Options for doubling up:



If you choose to double up, the options are:

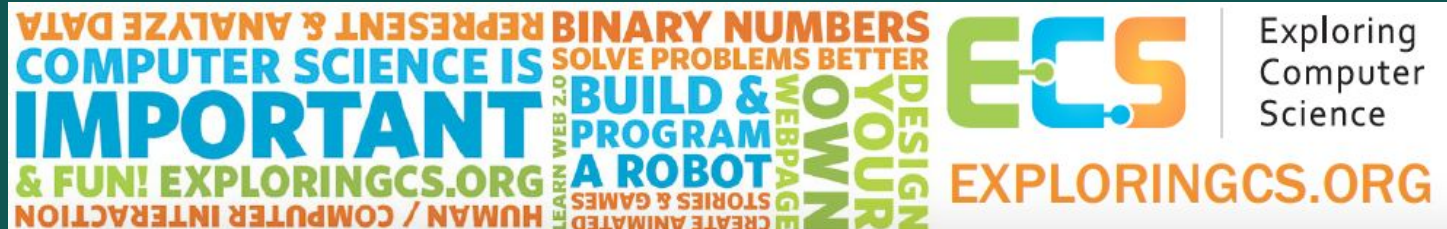
- 9th Grade: 308 Algebra 1 with 321 Geometry (Not Recommended)
 - Must be requested by student, will not be automatically recommended by teacher
- 10th Grade: Geometry with Algebra 2

Strongly discouraged in 9th Grade

- Consider 10th Grade option, if at all
- Algebra 1 knowledge applied in Geometry
- Second math would take the place of a 9th Grade Elective
 - Students encouraged to explore passions and interests in other areas of WA (art, music, business, CS)

***1 Math Course Required Each Year - **Doubling Up does not replace this**





(350) Video Game Programming

•Open to all Students

(351) Exploring Computer Science Part A (Semester)

•Open to all Students

(352) Exploring Computer Science Part B (Semester)

•Open to all Students

Must earn an 80 in ECS Part A

*These course offerings are in the electives section.

Advanced CS courses (grades 10-12):

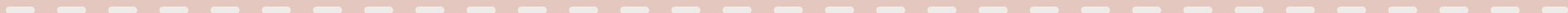
Honors Java Programming must be completed before enrolling in AP Computer Science.



**If you have any questions about your individual student,
please contact me via email:**

jbarnas@westfordk12.us

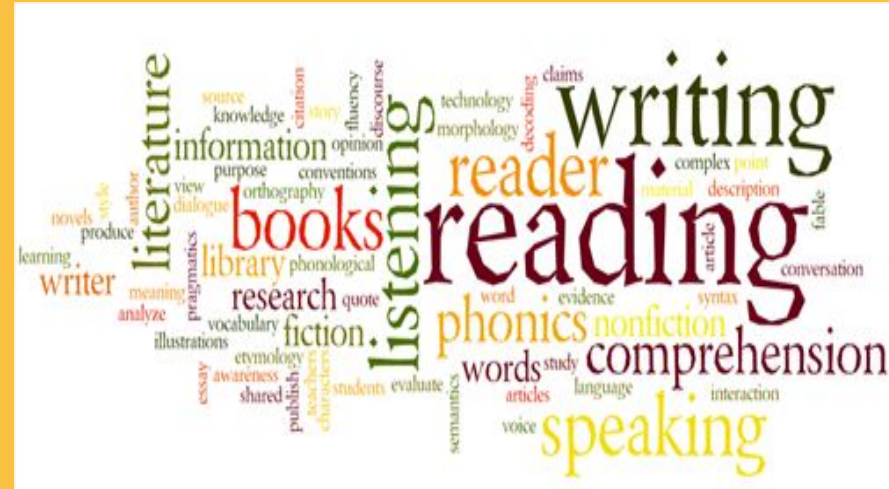
Thank you!



Ms. Janet Keirstead

Curriculum Coordinator
English Language Arts

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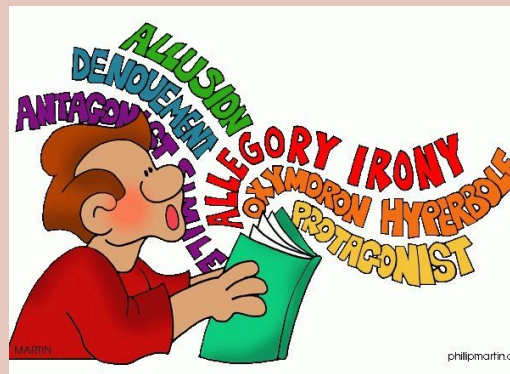


English



Required:
English 9

Elective:
Journalism I



Students should consider honors English if they:

- Have a passion for the content.
- Work well independently and are self-motivated.
- Can manage a fast-paced curriculum.
- Participate actively in class discussion.
- Read and understand complex text beyond literal meaning.
- Craft coherent, organized essays using proper grammar and mechanics.
- Use evidence to support a thesis.
- Possess strong organizational skills.
- Have the recommendation from their teacher.





Mr. Adam Ingano

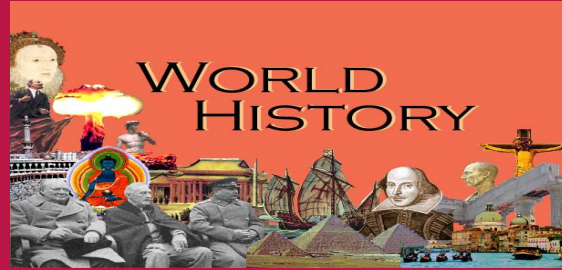
Curriculum Coordinator
History/Social Studies Department

aingano@westfordk12.us

History & Social Studies: Grade 9

Modern World History

- Starts at the French Revolution and goes through the 20th Century
- Content is challenging
- Extra focus on historical inquiry



Levels

- Honors
- College Prep
- Each year's grade determines eligibility for the next year



What is the difference between Levels?

All levels

- **Content:** French Revolution through the Cold War
 - May change levels from one year to next, no loss of info
- **Work** toward understanding
 - Primary source documents
 - Secondary works
- **Skills**
 - **Research & Writing:** Emphasis on skill development



Honors- *Greater Independence*

- **Content:** French Revolution through the Cold War
- **Read** Primary/Secondary Source Analysis...understand historical events as described by their participants or historians
- **Discuss** - come to class prepared to discuss material
- **Skills**
 - **Research & Writing:** identify and use appropriate evidence to support a thesis; citations

Mr. Brian Roark

Heath and Physical Education
Curriculum Coordinator, K-12

broark@westfordk12.us



Well-Rounded Educational Experience - ➔

*Health and Physical Education are an **essential component of a student's well-rounded educational experience** and provide the following benefits:*

- Prevention against negative consequences of stress
- Positive association with attention, concentration and on-task behavior
- Reduction of feelings of anxiousness
- Positive relationship with academic achievement
- Encourage lifetime healthy habits





Grade 9 Health and Physical Education - ➔

Grade 9 Year

- **Sem 1:** Health Education and **Sem 2:** Basics of Kin. in P.E. **or**
- **Sem 1:** Basics of Kin. in P.E. and **Sem 2:** Health Education
- Year long engagement with curriculum content and associated benefits

Deferring Physical Education

- Grade 9 is only year this available
- Requires enrollment in 5 Physical Education (P.E) credits during one of the subsequent years
- Basics of Kin. in Physical Education is a prerequisite for enrollment in all future P.E. courses

Health and Physical Education are WPS School Committee Policy and a graduation requirement.

Programming Goals

Health Literacy - “Ability to access, understand, appraise, apply and advocate for health information and services in order to maintain or enhance one's own health and the health of others” (SHAPE America, 2015).

Physical Literacy - “Physical literacy is the ability, confidence, and desire to be physically active for life” (SHAPE America, 2015).

Foundational knowledge and skills for leading an active life, as well as the ability to access, understand, and apply credible information when making health-informed decisions





Mrs. Andrea Mejia

K-12 Visual and Performing Arts
Curriculum Coordinator

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WESTFORD ACADEMY



MUSIC



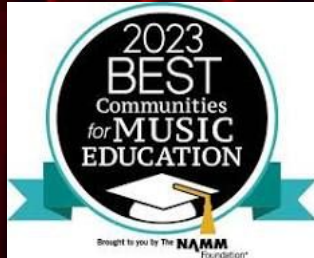
THEATER ARTS



VISUAL ART

**2.5 Credit Requirement =
1 semester**

About us...



Best Community for Music Education for the past 11 years



METG State Championship Winner



Scholastic Art Awards

**2022-2023: 26 Honorable Mentions
2 Silver Keys
9 Gold Keys**

Performance Music Ensembles for students in Grade 9

Semester or Full Year Options

Chamber Orchestra



Concert Band Concert Percussion



Concert Choir



***Applied Music courses available to students in Grade 9
(semester courses)***

Guitar I



Piano I



Ukulele I



Electronic Music I



Theater Arts courses available to students in Grade 9

Elements of Theater (Prerequisite)

****Semester Course***

Acting I

****Semester Course***

***Visual Art courses available to students in Grade 9
(semester courses)***

***Foundations of Art
(Prerequisite)***

****Drawing, Painting, Printmaking***

Digital Art (formerly Image Editing)

****Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop software***

Intro to Movie Making

****Adobe/After Effects software***

3D Animation and Modeling

****Blender software***

Can pair with:

***Drawing, Painting, Ceramics,
Photography***

Co-curricular opportunities available to students in Grade 9

Marching Band

Jazz Band

Pep Band

Troubadours (Strings)

WAcapella (Vocal group)

***WATA - Westford Academy
Theater Arts Main stage***

WATA - Black Box

Art Club

Movie Making Club

Student Support Services

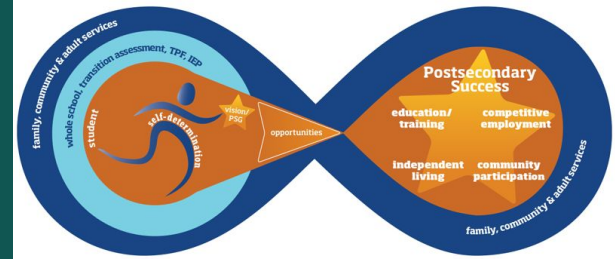
Ms. Sejal Costa

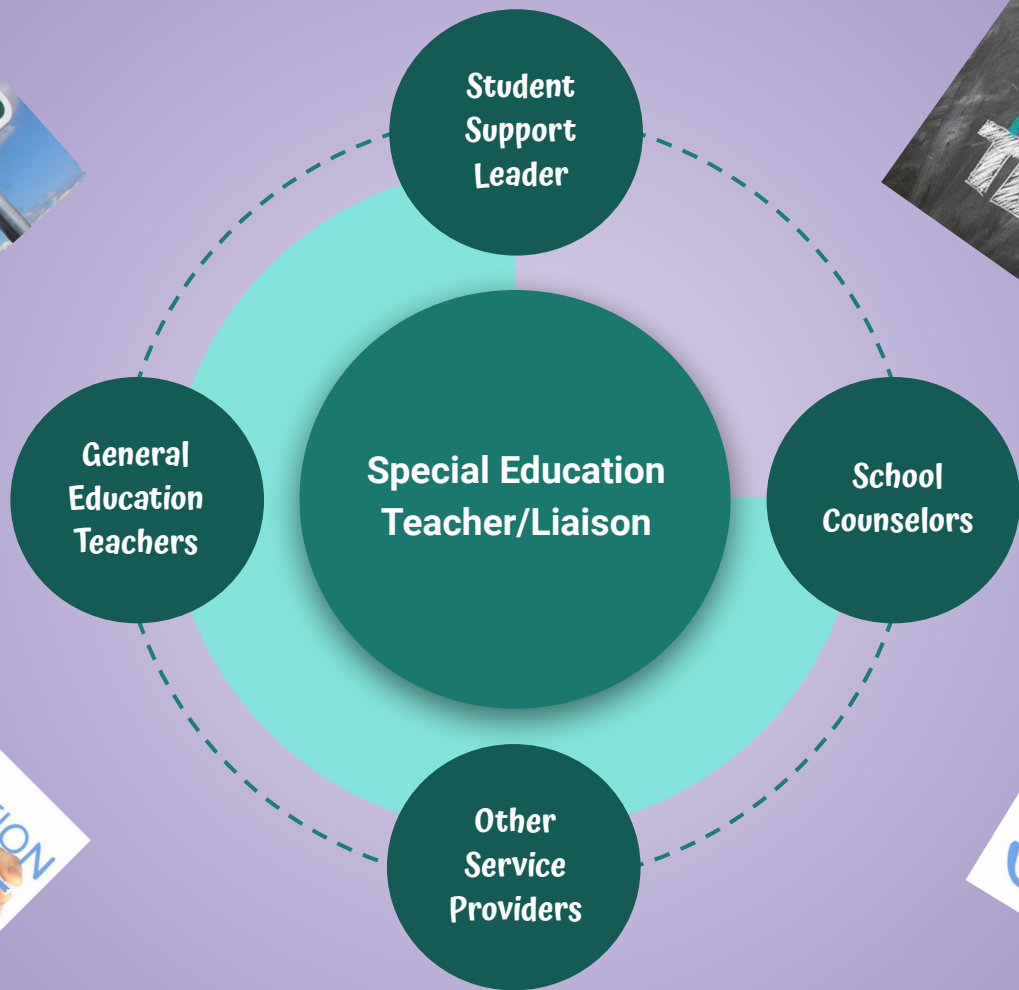
Student Support Leader

scosta@westfordk12.us



Massachusetts Student-Driven Secondary Transition Model





Schedule: What to Expect

- **1 cycle = 7 days**
- **7 blocks rotating schedule**
 - **Classes meet 5 times within 7 days**
 - **Not every class meets everyday, including study skills/academic support**
- **Services are provided by cycle**
 - **Ex: counseling 1 x 30 = 30 minute counseling session every 7 days**
 - **Services are the priority. If a service is being provided based on a set day/time, that service takes precedence over the class that is scheduled. The student is responsible for the work that they miss due to the service.**
- **Evaluations:**
 - **Students are evaluated during optimal times, as much as possible (i.e.-DLT, electives)**
- **Study Skills are for 9th and 10th grade students; Academic Support for 11th and 12th grade students**
- **Team meetings are scheduled based on planning periods for Liaisons and General Education Teachers, between 7:30-1:55. Meetings should occur within one block. Scheduling meeting can be tricky!**



Mrs. Lauren Clark

Director of School Counseling



laurenclark@westfordk12.us



A background image showing the upper and lower portions of four high school students. Two males and two females are visible, all wearing dark blue business suits or blazers. They are standing outdoors, and the image is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the text overlay.

WHAT IS DECA?

- **DECA is a Business Club/Competition** for high school students around the *globe with 200,000+ Members*
- DECA Members learn various business concepts and skills that prepare them for a professional career
- **DECA Prepares YOU to be a leader!!**
- WA DECA has over 300 members and is the **Largest Club at WA!!**

THE BUSINESS PROGRAM AND THE DECA CONNECTION

- DECA prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, sales and management in high schools and colleges around the globe
- DECA is the APPLICATION of the WA business classes content/skills to real world opportunities and simulations

WA'S BUSINESS PROGRAM

In order to participate in the DECA Club - you must take at least one business class at WA each year.

Classes to Choose from for your Freshman Year:

- Principles of Marketing
- Principles of Management
- Accounting
- Introduction to Business and DECA
- Webpage Development
- Microsoft Certified Application Specialist

Counseling Department



- 8 School Counselors
 - Split up by alpha
 - Students will know who their counselor is by June
- 2 School Adjustment Counselors





Communication is key



- **Counseling Newsletters**
 - Emailed to students & parents/caregivers every month
- **Instagram**
 - @WA_COUNSELING
- **WA Class of 2028 Google Classroom for students**
- **SCOIR emails**
- **Coffee with the Counselors series**
- **Presentation for freshmen families at Back to School Night**
- **Counseling Website**



Scheduling Resources:

- Please refer to the [Scheduling 2024-2025](#) and [Program of Studies](#) for everything scheduling!
- [Freshman Transition](#)
 - Full Course listing
 - Elective course composites
 - Co-Curricular Activities
 - Academic Planning Tools
 - Course Selection Worksheet
 - If you complete this worksheet in advance, the software piece is easy!

[Home](#) » [Westford Academy](#) » [Counseling Department](#)

Freshman Transition

[Welcome Class of 2028](#)

Welcome Students and Parent(s)/Caregiver(s) of the Class of 2028. I hope you will take some time to explore all the information that is available to you on this website. You will utilize the [Program of Studies](#) and [Freshman Course Listing](#) to create your Freshman course load. I cannot express enough the importance of placing value in your current teacher's course recommendations. Members of each department use data from prior years to develop their departmental guidelines, which are designed to ensure that students are set up for success.

This year, we look forward to having our 8th grade students visit WA for our Future Freshman Night. This event will be held on February 15th from 8:45-10:45am. We also would like to invite our 8th grade students to our Curriculum Night on February 15th at 6:30pm in our PAC.

Welcome to WA!

Lauren Clark

Director of School Counseling, Westford Academy

Time Management Activity

Time Management Activity

This activity is intended to help students anticipate the time they will need to remain balanced, healthy, happy and engaged learners.

Fill out for your BUSIEST Term:

School Day (5 Days x 7 Hours)	35
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Anticipated Hours of Homework*	Average Hours/Week
Honors & CP: .5 Hours x 5 nights weekly x # courses	
AP: 4 – 5 hours weekly x # courses	
Total School Hours:	

Extra-Curricular Activities	Average Hours/Week
Clubs/Interests/Hobbies	
Paid Job	
Community Service	
Sports/Physical Activity	
Music/Theater/Performance	
Other (Driver's Ed, SAT Prep, College Apps, etc)	
Total Extra-Curricular Hours:	

Daily Living Activities	Average Hours/Week
Sleep (7 days x 9 Recommended Hours)	
Necessities (Eating, Showering, Chores, etc)	
Travel to and from School	
Family Time	
Free Time (Friends, TV, Phone, Internet, etc)	
Total Daily Living Hours:	

School Day Hours	=	35		Available Hours/Week 168
Homework Hours	=	_____		
Extra-Curricular Hours	=	_____		
Daily Living Hours	=	_____		
YOUR TOTAL HOURS		_____	VS.	

*Daily homework amounts are estimates

Credits/requirements



Each full year course = 5 credits

Each half year (semester) course = 2.5 credits



Students must enroll in 32.5 or 35 credits each year.

PE & Health = Already added to PowerSchool for you



WA Graduation Requirements



- English: 20 credits
- Math: 20 credits
- Science: 15 credits
- Social Studies: 15 credits
- World Language: 10 credits
- Visual & Performing Arts: 2.5 credits
- PE: 10 credits
- Health: 2.5 credits
- Other credits needed: 22.5

Total of 117.5 credits

Scheduling timeline



- Part 1: Teachers adding recommendation
 - Throughout February: Teachers will be having conversations about recommendations with their students
- Part 2: Students review recs and add requests to PowerSchool
 - March 1st: PowerSchool portal and Override Link available/open after school
 - **March 8th: PowerSchool portal and override link closes at 2pm**
- Part 3: After all requests are put into PS and Master schedule created



How to select your courses...



Step 1 - Review the [Program of Study](#) to read course descriptions and graduation requirements

Step 2 - Log in to Powerschool (<https://westford.powerschool.com/public>) from March 1st-March 8th (closes at 2pm)

Step 3 - Click on the "Class Registration" button on the left side of the screen

Step 4 - Click the Pencil Icon on the right side of the screen under each subject to see your recommendation and/or select the courses you would like to take (for courses that require a recommendation, you can *only* select the course that was recommended for you.)

Step 5 - Review your selections and submit your requests.

Override Process



- Trust the recommendations that are in the system.
- Start with a conversation. Teachers make their recommendations based on departmental guidelines. This is not a subjective decision. Student should discuss the recommendation with their current teacher.
- There are limitations in place. Please follow our **OVERRIDE POLICY & PROCESS** for details of the process.
- Override google forms are due by 2pm on March 8th.

Override Process Questions:



If my child is filling out an override form, what do they do in PowerSchool?

- **Your child should mark what was recommended for them EVEN if they plan on overriding. After the portal has closed, the override note will be added to PS if it is approved.**

If a student is recommended for honors, can they request CP instead? Does that require an override?

- **Yes, they can choose CP instead. No, that is not an override.**



How will I know if my child's override was denied?

- **You would receive an email from the curriculum coordinator if the request was denied.**

How to help your student transition to WA:

Open Communication: Encourage open and honest communication. Encourage your child to share their experiences, and be supportive and understanding. Help them be self-advocates.

Discuss Expectations: Discuss study habits, time management, and the importance of staying organized.

Encourage Independence: High school brings more independence. Encourage keeping track of assignments, managing their schedule, and advocating for themselves when needed.

Explore Extracurricular Activities: This can help them make friends with similar interests and feel more connected to the school community.

Monitor Time Management: High school often comes with increased workload and more challenging classes. Help your student develop effective time management skills to balance academics, extracurricular activities, and personal time. Practice time management, study skills, self-advocacy skills

Address Social and Emotional Well-being: High school can be a time of emotional ups and downs.



Thank you and Q&A

- If you have any general questions for our curriculum coordinators, please join them in a various parts of the PAC!
- If you have very specific questions, please email the curriculum coordinators.
- You can meet with more than one coordinator... just hop around!



If you have more questions after tonight, please feel free to email us.

