

## Course Selection Process

Counselors at the Middle School will work with eighth grade students selecting ninth grade courses. High School Counselors will work with all students currently at the high school to select courses for the next academic year.

These meetings are part of the NYS mandated academic review that ALL students must have with their certified school counselor. This meeting is an important time where the counselor and student can spend time discussing future plans with students. We always welcome parent input, but we also want to hear the student voice. This is a great opportunity for students to build their self-advocacy skills and use honest self-appraisal to make choices. Counselors also work on the state mandated career plan with students during these course selection meetings.

## Course Selection Meetings

Typically, counselors start meeting with students to discuss courses for the next school year in January or February. Counselors will continue these meetings through the beginning of April. Course selection is based on courses required for graduation, student interests, career goals and post-secondary plans. Factors such as the student's past achievement, teacher recommendations, and the availability of classes have an impact on student schedules.

Course selection is just that, selecting the courses you would like for next academic year. It is not setting up a schedule for the next school year. We cannot specify a specific period or teacher for a class with any student during this meeting. By selecting courses, we are gathering the data used by our building administration to make decisions on the number of class sections we need to offer for each course, and if necessary, which classes must be cancelled due to low enrollment or staffing limitations.

It is very important to know that request to have classes or lunch scheduled in a specific semester, period or with a specific teacher will not be honored.

Student schedules are created over the summer months. Students will not receive their schedules until the first day of school.

## Freshmen Restrictions

One benefit of the intensive block schedule used for the high school is that students can accelerate their course of study by taking two classes in the same academic area during the same school year. Freshmen are restricted from accelerating in more than one subject area, or what is often referred to as "doubling up." The restriction is due to staffing limitations at the high school.

## Class Conflicts

A conflict occurs if a class that a student selected during the spring meeting will not fit in the course schedule. If a student has a conflict with a course, a counselor will contact that student over the summer to find a resolution. It is important that we have up to date contact information so that we can reach any student over the summer that may have an issue with their class schedule. If you do not receive a phone call or email, then the courses selected with your counselor have been successfully scheduled.

Please note, your counselor will ask you to pick an alternate selection for all half credit courses. If your first choice half credit elective does not schedule, we will use the alternate and not contact a student over the summer.

## **Minimum Number of Courses**

As there are no study halls at Horseheads High School, every student must have a full schedule.

## **Lunch**

Each student is scheduled to have one lunch period at the High School. Students may not leave the school during their lunch period.

Some students may request to give up their lunch period to be able to schedule a class. We require any student electing to not take a lunch period to have a request form signed by the parent. This form will be given to the student at the time of course selections if requested.

## **Activity Period**

Each student who does not take a music ensemble (band/choir/orchestra) class or learning lab, is scheduled to have one activity period at the High School opposite their lunch. Students will be assigned to a classroom for the period, and they must report to the classroom each day. For a student to leave their assigned activity room, they must have a pre-signed pass.

## **Schedule Changes**

Schedule changes are NOT permitted at the high school due to the intensive block schedule. Students cannot change from one class to another simply because they do not like the class. Therefore, students should be thoughtful in selecting classes and abide by the deadline dates for any course changes.

As a semester begins, the only changes to schedules that are allowed are for level changes. A level change is only used in an academic class that has an alternate level available. This type of change is only made after conversation with the teacher, student, counselor, and parent have occurred and all agree that it is the best academic plan for the individual student to make a move. Level changes can only be made if the alternate class has space and if it will work within the existing schedule with minimal disruption to other courses. Students cannot change from one curricular area to another as a level change. Level changes can only occur within the first five weeks of the semester.

## **Early Release from School**

Horseheads High School offers a wide selection of courses and encourages students to take full advantage of course offerings. Therefore, we do not encourage an early release from school. However, seniors may petition for an early release from school for employment or alternate learning opportunities.

Requests for early release are conditional upon a student's individual schedule and will only be honored if approved by the parent and principal. Seniors who need to be on school grounds after school hours (sports, clubs, etc.) are NOT eligible for early release. Seniors who request this privilege must follow the part day pass procedure and must be able to complete the courses required for graduation. Seniors may not drop classes after the semester has started for early dismissal.

## **Rescheduling of Courses Failed**

Every attempt should be made on the student's part to successfully pass each course and seek out resources for help when they have difficulty. A student who fails a course which is required for graduation must repeat the same course or a comparable course to meet the requirement.

Courses may be repeated through an area summer school program if available and if the student is eligible. Students are not eligible for summer school if they have below a 50% numeric average for the failed class, if they exceeded the Horseheads class attendance policy, or if they have not met the state laboratory mandate for any lab science.

Courses may be scheduled in the following academic semester only if there is space available in the class. We encourage completion of a failed course in a summer school program if possible in order to avoid scheduling issues in the student's remaining high school years. Students will not be allowed to move on in a progression of courses if the prerequisites have not been passed.

## **Important Deadlines**

As our principal's introductory letter stated, we do not allow changes to courses past specific dates. Please take note of these dates and proceed accordingly. All course change forms require parent signatures for approval.

- ❖ After your Course Selection meeting in the spring, changes can be made through your school counselor through the last day of classes. The form mailed home with the course scheduling packet can be used for this change.
- ❖ From the Monday after graduation through July 31<sup>st</sup>, course change requests must be made through the petition process (blue form) at the high school. This form is available on the high school website and in the Counseling Office.
- ❖ After July 31<sup>st</sup>, no course change requests are allowed. Students will not be able to change first semester classes.
- ❖ Once school starts, students can request to change second semester classes ONLY. This deadline is the LAST day of first semester classes.