

UNDERSTANDING HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

A GUIDE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS
PURSUING HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

BY THE END OF THIS PRESENTATION YOU WILL....

- Understand key terms and definitions for high school academics
- Understand high school graduation requirements
- Know how to calculate Grade Point Average GPA
- Understand High School Rank

HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Support students in pursuing the programs and pathways offered in high school to fulfill Endorsement requirements. Crowley ISD allows and encourages middle school students to pursue high school credit classes in **7th and 8th grade**. (7th grade is new effective 2017-2018 school year)
- It is important for middle school students and their parents to understand high school academics before committing to take courses for high school credit in middle school.
- All high school courses taken in middle school become part of the official high school transcript. Whether it is a successful grade or a failing grade, it will be represented on the students high school transcript and calculated in the high school grade point average (GPA).
- Middle school students and parents need to understand the following:
 - Credits & Transcript
 - End of Course (EOC) exams
 - Grade Point Average (GPA)
 - Rank

HOW DOES MIDDLE SCHOOL AFFECT HIGH SCHOOL?

Middle school is a time for developing academic and social skills that make for a successful high school experience and beyond:

- Develop solid study habits in rigorous classes
- Learn effective time management
- Learn how to work successfully with authority
- Exploration of colleges/post-secondary training and future career interests
- Building relationships that add value to their lives

HIGH SCHOOL COURSES AVAILABLE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

HS COURSES AVAILABLE TO 7TH GRADERS

- Health
- Lifetime Nutrition and Wellness
- Digital Interactive Media
- Business Information Management I
- Interpersonal Studies
- Gateway To Technology (GTT) 1-4

HS COURSES AVAILABLE TO 8TH GRADERS

- Health
- Lifetime Nutrition and Wellness
- Digital Interactive Media
- Business Information Management I
- Interpersonal Studies
- Gateway To Technology (GTT) 1-4
- Professional Communications
- Spanish I
- Theater I
- Algebra I

HOW DO I GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL

KEY STEPS TO WALK ACROSS THE STAGE AT GRADUATION:

- Pass all required classes within your Endorsement
- Earn all state required credits (26 credits)
- Pass all 5 End of Course (EOC) exams
- Have good attendance at 90% or above

IMPORTANT TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The following terms you need to understand to read the report card and/or transcript which is crucial information:

- **REPORT CARD-** Where the final 6 weeks grades are posted each 6 weeks
- **MARKING PERIOD -** Length of time that a grade is earned. Each marking period is 6 weeks. There are 6 marking periods (six weeks) in a school year. Represented as MPI through MP6 on report card which stands for Marking Period I (1st six weeks) – Marking Period 6 (6th six weeks)
- **SEMESTER-** How a school year is divided. Each school year in CISD is divided into 2 Semesters. Fall Semester and Spring semester. Each semester has 3 marking periods or 3 six weeks terms represented as Sem. 1 and Sem. 2 on the report card. A semester grade is posted to the transcript for each course taken. The semester grade is an average of the 3 six week grades.
- **CREDIT-** Value assigned to each class taken in high school. Credits are earned at the end of a semester once you pass the class. Classes are either worth .5 or 1.0 credit. Classes worth a half (.5) credit is only a semester long class, classes that are worth one (1.0) credit is a year long class. Example: English is worth one credit and is taken all year, but the student will receive two semester grades to make up for the full 1 year credit. Health is worth .5 credit and is taken for one semester.

IMPORTANT TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- **Quality Points**-Point values assigned to letter grades. A detailed explanation can be found in the CISD Board Policy (EIC(Local) Academic Achievement – Class Ranking <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Search/1107?filter=gpa%20calculation>)
 - A 90-100 = 3.0-4.0 quality points
 - B 80-89 = 2.0-2.9 quality points
 - C 70-79 = 1.0-1.9 quality points
 - F 69 and below = 0 quality points
- **GPA-Grade Point Average**- The average of quality points earned based on final grades at the end of the semester/year.
- **GPA Scale**- The scale used to calculate the GPA is a 4.0 scale for regular classes; however, Pre-AP courses receive weight on a 4.5 scale, and AP, Dual Credit, and some Advanced courses receive weight on a 5.0 scale.
- **RANK**- A number representing each student's position in their class based on their GPA
- **TRANSCRIPT** - A grade report that shows your semester grades, credits earned, GPA, and class rank.

CREDITS

- In high school you need a certain number of credits to graduate-26 credits currently
- You earn a credit by passing a class. Credits are earned in a half credit unit (.5) per semester
- Each class is assigned a credit depending on how long the class is. Some classes are a full year long (2 semesters) such as English, some are only one semester long such as Health.

Current grade-level classification for students in grades 9-12 are determined by course credits earned.

CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS

Freshman (9th grade)	0 or more credits
Sophomore (10th grade)	6 or more state graduation credits
Junior (11th grade)	12 or more state graduation credits
Senior (12th grade)	19 or more state graduation credits
GRADUATE	26 or more state graduation credits

END OF COURSE EXAMS

- To graduate High School students must take and pass 5 End of Course (EOC) state assessments based on core content (English, Math, Science, Social Studies)
- What students are learning in middle school core subjects is prerequisite knowledge for these content exams.
- **3 of the 5 EOCs are taken in 9th grade** so make sure you are paying attention in class now to get the foundational knowledge necessary for successful completion of GRADUATION REQUIRED EXAMS!!
- You will take 5 EOCs to graduate:
 - English I – 9th grade
 - Algebra I – 9th grade (OR 8th grade if you are in Algebra I)
 - Biology – 9th grade
 - English II – 10th grade
 - US History – 11th grade

GRADE POINT AVERAGE-GPA

- To calculate your GPA you need to know average grade for each class, quality points, and # of classes you are in.

Grades	Quality Points (QP)
- A 90-100	4 quality points
- B 89-80	3 quality points
- C 79-70	2 quality points
- F 69 below	0 quality points

Sample Report Card:

<u>Course</u>	<u>MPI</u>	<u>MP2</u>	<u>AVG</u>	<u>QP</u>
ENGLISH	76	81	79	1.9
MATH	76	83	80	2.0
SCIENCE	96	89	93	3.3
SOC STUD	91	88	90	3.0
ART	100	98	99	3.9
PE	100	100	100	4.0
SPANISH I	88	92	90	3.0

21.1 qps/7classes

Formula to calculate GPA:

Add Quality Points divide by # of classes

GPA equals a 3.0

RANK

- Students are given a class Rank based on their GPA in comparison to other students GPA in their same grade.
- If there are 400 8th grade students, the rank will be a number from 1 to 400 based on where students fall according to GPA. One being the highest GPA and 400 being the lowest GPA in the 8th grade class
- In high school, most students strive to be in the top of their class based on academic rank really driven students strive for the #1 spot (Valedictorian)
- Many Academic Performance based Scholarships (free money for college) are given to the students in the top 1-25% of their class. The higher the GPA, the higher the rank, chances of earning these scholarships increase.
- Students can increase rank and improve GPA by **making better grades, and taking advanced courses** such as Pre AP and AP courses (Pre -Advanced Placement and Advanced Placement)

WHAT IS PRE-AP, AP COMPARED TO GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

- **What is Pre-AP?**
 - Pre advanced Placement classes are on-grade level academically advanced courses designed to challenge motivated students to understand rigorous content. The coursework requires students to
 - engage in independent and analytical assignments.
- **What is the difference between a Pre-AP and a General Education class?**
 - The curriculum for both Pre-AP and General Ed courses are built on the core academic curriculum following the Texas Education Agency guidelines for each course. This curriculum is called TEKS,
 - or Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Students enrolled in Pre-AP should expect a faster class pace, more depth in classroom discussion, increased amount of reading, and overall greater academic expectations on assignments and time management.

- **Why should my child take a Pre-AP class?**
 - Pre-AP middle school courses are designed to prepare students for high school Pre-AP and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. AP courses are college-level courses taught in a high school setting. At the end of each AP course an AP Exam is given. Qualifying scores on the AP Exams can possibly enable students to receive college credit and/or advanced standing at a university or college. Students taking Pre-AP courses should expect additional demands on time, personal organization, and commitment.
- **In determining if a student is a match for Pre-AP courses consider the following:**
 - Teachers, parents, and students should work together to choose the most appropriate classes for student success. Students that are successful in Pre-AP courses tend to have some or all of the following characteristics:
 - Strong study skills and self-motivation
 - Proficient oral and communication skills
 - Self-discipline to plan, organize, and carry out assigned tasks
 - Good performance on STARR tests in the related core subjects
 - Above average grade in the previous year related content area

7TH GRADE REQUIRED COURSES & ELECTIVES

- Four Core Classes in General Education or Pre-AP –
 - 7th Grade English or Pre-AP English
 - 7th Grade Math or Pre-AP Math
 - 7th Grade Science or Pre-AP Science
 - 7th Grade Texas History or Pre-AP Texas History
- Two Required Elective Credits – one must be from PE or Athletics; the other is College and Career Readiness. The other 1.5 elective may be selected from the following:

Art

Band

Choir

Theater

Exploratory Spanish

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Health

Lifetime Nutrition and Wellness

Digital Interactive Media (DIM)

Business Information Management I (BIM)

Interpersonal Studies

Gateway to Technology 1

Gateway to Technology 2

Gateway to Technology 3

Gateway to Technology 4

Junior Cadet Corps (JCC)

8TH GRADE REQUIRED COURSES AND ELECTIVES

- Four Core Classes in General Education or Pre-AP –
 - 8th Grade English or Pre-AP English
 - 8th Grade Math, Pre-AP Math, or Algebra I
 - 8th Grade Science or Pre-AP Science
 - 8th Grade American History or Pre-AP American History
- The 3 remaining elective courses may be selected from the following:

Art

Band

Choir

Theater

Theater I

Exploratory Spanish

Spanish I

Health

Lifetime Nutrition and Wellness

Digital Interactive Media (DIM)

Business Information Management I (BIM)

Interpersonal Studies

Professional Communications

Gateway to Technology 1

Gateway to Technology 2

Gateway to Technology 3

Gateway to Technology 4

Junior Cadet Corps (JCC)

AVID