

# Welcome to the Sioux Falls School District High Schools!

Dear Students,

We welcome you and your parents/guardians to the Sioux Falls School District High Schools. We believe that high school can be full of wonderful experiences that you will remember the rest of your life. It is a journey that you, with your parents/guardians, will experience together. We are excited to have you in our high schools.

Our District High Schools expect personal excellence from their students, their teachers, and their school community. We believe that the true measure of success is knowing that you have done the best you can with the talents and abilities you have been given. It is our mission to help all students be prepared to succeed in a changing world.

This handout has been prepared to give you an understanding of our District's high school program and provide information that is important for you to know as you begin your high school experience. We are here to assist in every way to make this experience positive and successful.

We hope you enjoy your year and know that you will add to the quality and reputation of our District and community.

High School Principals, Teachers, and Staff

## Questions and Answers About High School

### 1. How is high school different than middle school?

One of the biggest changes is earning credits for your semester classes. There are no quarter classes. All classes are based on a semester. If you don't pass a semester class, you won't earn credit toward graduation and you would need to retake the semester class. You could have classes with upperclassman, or students in other grades. There are more students in each grade at high school and the buildings are much larger (except New Technology High School). You have more responsibility in high school. Being organized and keeping up with assignments is really important so you don't fall behind.

### 2. How would you describe a high school student?

Although high school students like to do a variety of things, they all have the same goal—to move forward academically and prepare for post secondary training or the world of work. During their four years of high school, individuals find a place, find a group of friends, enjoy the socializing and face day-to-day challenges. Along the way, students gain a sense of themselves as citizens and individuals as they move into the world of young adults.

### 3. Will the upper classmen pick on me?

A good thing to remember is that upper classmen were also freshmen at one time. They are asked to be the leaders in the school and make the freshmen students feel welcome. We don't want any students in high school to feel like they are picked on. If you feel that way, please tell a teacher, counselor, or someone in the school. Your concern will be addressed.

#### 4. Will I get lost?

The high school building is big. It is bigger than the middle school that you attended. To make it easier for you to find your way around the school, we would ask that you visit your school before you begin classes. Your high school will send you information on an orientation time for you to visit. You are always welcome anytime, just check in at the office if you come at an unscheduled time.

Before you start school, we would suggest you do the following:

- ✓ Find your locker and open it.
- ✓ Find your classrooms so that you feel comfortable with where you need to go. Then you will know how long it takes to get from one class to another.

#### 5. What is a sweep?

A sweep is when a student is tardy to class. The consequences for a sweep are as follows:

- ✓ Students in a sweep lose all academic credit for that period.
- ✓ On the first sweep students will be “swept” into the cafeteria where their name and teacher name (from the class missed) will be recorded. Students will be seated in the study hall and expected to study. Students will receive one detention.
- ✓ The second time a student is swept will result in the student being assigned to two detentions.
- ✓ The third time a student is swept will result in the student being assigned to three detentions.
- ✓ The fourth and fifth time will result in the student being assigned one day of Suspension After School.
- ✓ The sixth time will result in Out of School Suspension.
- ✓

The important thing to remember is: don't be late to class.

#### 6. Will I have time to get to my locker between classes?

There are 5-6 minutes between classes. That is not enough time to go to your locker. In the morning you should take all of the books you need before lunch with you. Before and after lunch you will have time to go to your locker. You can then drop off your morning books before you go to lunch, and pick up your afternoon books after you eat lunch.

#### 7. How will I get to the Career Technology Education Academy or to New Technology High School if I plan to attend those schools?

If you attend the Career Technology Education Academy or New Technology High School, you may find your own transportation or you can take a shuttle which will leave from the high school in your attendance area.

#### 8. Can I take a course that is offered at another high school than the one I attend?

Yes, high school students can take a course that is not offered at their home high school at a high school that does offer the course. In this situation, students must provide their own transportation.

## Questions and Answers About High School

### 9. Where do I find out about school activities and how do I get involved?

Get involved in school activities right away! There will be information sessions at your high school before school starts that you can attend and opportunities for you to sign up for activities. Don't wait for someone to ask you to join an activity; just come forward on your own. Anyone can be involved and we encourage all of you to do so. If you weren't involved in the middle school activities, that's ok. Your interests will change as you get older. You are encouraged to be involved in high school.

School activities include, but are not limited to: athletics, band, cheerleading, clubs, dances, debate, drama, dance team, National Honor Society, oral interpretation, orchestra, student council, vocal music, and many other student activities.

### 10. How much time do I have for lunch? Where do I find my lunch on my schedule?

Lunch is a part of your daily schedule. It is a half of a class period. If you look on your schedule you will find that it is in the middle of the day and has another class, club, group, or study hall opposite it. During lunch you will be with students of all grades, not just freshman. There are a variety of food choices that you can pick from in a cafeteria line, or you can bring your own lunch from home.

### 11. Will I fail if I don't come to school and if I don't do my homework?

Yes, most likely, you will fail if you don't come to school and don't do your homework. The best way for students to be successful in high school is to come to school everyday, complete and turn in their homework, do their very best in all classes, and become actively involved in school activities.

## High School Graduation Information

### 1. What is a high school credit?

One credit is granted for a course that meets daily for one period the entire year. Students receive a half credit (.5) when the course meets for less than one entire year. Credits are awarded on a semester basis for all classes.

### 2. How many credits do I need to have to graduate?

Students from the Sioux Falls School District need 22 credits to graduate from high school.

### 3. What is the grading scale in high school? What is a GPA and why is it important?

Our high schools have the A-F grading system. The numeric scores for grading are:

A = Excellent 93-100;  
B = Above Average 85-92;  
C = Average 76-84;  
D = Below Average 65-75; and  
F = Failing 64 and Below.

GPA stands for Grade Point Average. The cumulative GPA is an average of all grades that a student receives. The cumulative GPA is used to determine class rank and is computed at the end of each semester.

Your GPA is important because it is a summary of grades that you have earned in the classes you have taken in high school. It is a record that is used by colleges, universities and technical schools for admission.

### 4. What happens if I fail a class?

If you fail a class that is a requirement to graduate, you must repeat the class or you will not graduate. Any failing grade remains on your transcript.

## **High School Specialized Programs**

### **New Technology High School**

Sioux Falls New Technology High School (NTHS) opened in the Fall 2010 for 115 incoming 9th graders. Each year an additional 115 9th graders will be added. The high school will serve as a model - in the community the state, and beyond - of innovative public education that is based in strong partnerships and focuses on educating and inspiring students to develop 21st Century Skills. It is a project-based learning school which teaches exploration and inquiry while students engage in smaller learning communities to master all South Dakota graduation requirements. See your school counselor for additional information on NTHS.

### **Academy of Finance**

The Academy of Finance (AOF) is a program sponsored by the National Academy Foundation. AOF is located at the Career and Technical Education Academy. The 2 or 3 year national program is designed to prepare students with practical skills to enter the world of business and finance. Interested students should apply during their freshman or sophomore year. In order to graduate from the AOF program, a summer internship is required. Up to 17 college credits can be earned by successfully completing high school courses and summer opportunities; including the paid summer internship. Financial support for the program is provided by Citibank and numerous local internship sponsors.

### **Advanced Placement Program**

Advanced Placement (AP) program provides students an opportunity to take college-level courses in high school in the areas of math, science, social studies, English, fine arts, computer science and world language. Students in AP courses prepare for a national AP exam. If a student earns a score of 3, 4, or 5 on the exam, many colleges and universities will give the student college credit. In addition to possibly earning college credit, students who take AP courses will learn strong study skills and knowledge on a specific topic.

### **Career and Technical Education Academy**

The Sioux Falls District operates the CTE Academy to provide students an opportunity for hands-on, advanced training in a variety of career areas. Academy programs are available to 10th, 11th, & 12th grade students, while introductory level courses are available to 9th grade students at their regular high school. A student attends the CTE Academy for a 2 hour block during their regular daily schedule. The student's enrollment remains at their home high school and students continue all extra curricular activities through their home high school. Optional transportation for students is provided by the district.

Programs offered at the academy include: Media Production, Health Science, Biomedical Sciences, Carpentry, Hospitality & Tourism, Culinary Arts, Engineering, Auto Tech., Auto Body, Manufacturing, Welding, and Human Services. All programs are state CTE approved courses that fulfill certain graduation requirements.

## Junior Reserve Officer's Training Corp. Program (JROTC)

The JROTC program is located at Lincoln High School (Marine) and Washington High School (Army). The program provides young cadets an opportunity to learn leadership traits, citizenship, respect for authority, goal setting, American military history in relation to the United States development, the ability to market oneself for a job, and demonstrate a high level of self confidence. Students have no military obligation associated with the program. Weekend activities, weeklong summer camp, drill team and color guard are optional.

### Learners to Leaders

The Sioux Falls School District has developed Learner to Leaders, a post-secondary initiative which supports a hands-on, interactive learning environment. Students select a program in an identified career pathway with the goal to complete their high school diploma and Associate in Applied Science Degree or Diploma program through Southeast Technical Institute. Students apply during their 11th grade, and after acceptance, complete a summer course. In their 12th grade year, students spend half of their day at their high school and half of their day at Southeast Technical Institute. The program is supported annually through a grant from Smithfield Foods, Inc., the parent company of John Morrell & Co.

### Online Coursework

Online courses are a good option for high school students to take either during the school day or after school. These courses provide students increased accessibility and flexibility. Courses are available in English, Math, Science, Social Studies and elective courses. Students taking an online course during the school day report to the designated online classroom. Students taking high school courses online after school hours provide their own computer and Internet access. If you are interested in registering for a virtual/online course, you should see your high school counselor.

### Credit By Exam

Students have an opportunity to earn credit by taking an exam. According to policy/regulation IKF-R, the District shall offer credit by exam for the following high school classes:

Algebra I	Biology	Government
Geometry	Chemistry	Modern US History
Algebra II	Physics	World History
Physical Science	World Geography I	Personal Finance

In order to receive credit, student exams can only be taken one time and must be passed at 85% correct proficiency. Credit By Exam is offered during the school year at the District alternate sites and traditional high schools and in the summer at Central Services 1101 N. Western Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57104.

<b>Semester One</b> (First 2 weeks) Contact your high school counselor	<b>Semester Two</b> (First 2 weeks) Contact your high school counselor	<b>Available All Summer</b> (Closed Fridays) Call Central Services at 367-6112 to reserve a spot
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## High School Classroom Supplies

Teachers will have a list of supplies you will need for your classes. You will find out what these supplies are during your orientation with your teachers. For the first day of class, it is important for you to come with something to write on and something to write with.

School is a busy time with many assignments and activities. High School students use student planners to keep them organized. Your school provides a student planner for all 9th grade students.

## Activities

High School is a fun time. It will provide you with some of the best times of your life. We encourage you to get involved in activities in your school and make new friends. **Even though you may not have been in activities in middle school, students are encouraged to get involved and join an activity—take a risk.** You can be in activities in high school that you were not in during middle school. There are many more activities from which to choose including: drama, music, athletics, and other clubs.

Students involved in athletics must have a physical. There is a fee if you have a physical at school. You will receive information from your school on the dates of physicals, which are held at your high school in the spring.

## Selecting Freshman Courses

The classes you take in your freshman year are a part of a bigger plan to get you to the 22 credits that are required for graduation. You need to sign up for a minimum of 6 credits your freshman year. It is very important that you do your best from the very beginning. Everything really counts. If you fail a class, you have to take it over.

Here is a list of the courses that many freshman students will take.

English	English I Speech or Debate—taken as either a freshman or sophomore
Math	Algebra I or Geometry
Social Studies	World Geography I
Science	Biology
PE	PE
Fine Arts	Band, Chorus, Orchestra, Drama, Art
Electives	Other courses of interest

Some freshman students are in different courses that their teachers and parents/guardians have recommended.

There is a comprehensive high school course information book for you to use in selecting courses. Your teacher and counselor will help you to complete course registration.

***Remember to always come to school and do your very best work in your classes from the very beginning of your high school career.***

## **The High School Counselor**

The counselor at your high school will work with you individually and in groups to help with your personal, social, career, and educational development. The counselor provides the following services:

- Enrolling students
- Scheduling and advising students on course selections
- Confidential counseling on personal problems
- Guidance and information on post-secondary options
- Parent/guardian conferences regarding student development and academic progress
- Group work to support students on a variety of topics

Students may stop by the counselor's office before or after school, or throughout the school day, or by requesting a pass from a teacher. Parents/guardians desiring a conference should call for an appointment.

## **Career Planning**

After you finish school, you'll probably spend more time at work than you will with family, friends, or hobbies. Whatever you select, it is very important that you like what you do. Your high school courses will give you the skills for a wide range of careers. We encourage you to take courses that will give you the greatest opportunity and success after high school. It's not too soon to begin planning by developing a Personal Learning Plan.

## **Personal Learning Plans**

### **1. What is a Personal Learning Plan?**

A Personal Learning Plan serves as a roadmap to a student's high school career. The plan is developed based on the student's skills and interests, with a focus on development of 21st century skills. It identifies the specific coursework a student needs in order to reach his or her academic and career goals.

In developing a Personal Learning Plan, students access career guidance software at [www.SDMyLife.com](http://www.SDMyLife.com). At this site, students also complete a career interest survey in 8th grade and an aptitude assessment in 10th grade. You will also find an example of a Personal Learning Plan at this website.

### **2. Why should I have a Personal Learning Plan?**

A Personal Learning Plan helps a student give thought to their future and develop a focus and plan to make sure he or she can reach their fullest potential.

### 3. How do I begin?

- ✓ Review the registration materials and graduation requirements
- ✓ Rough out a paper and pencil draft of the required classes for graduation
- ✓ Determine which Career Cluster best fits your interests (the Matchmaker Interest Survey on [www.SDMyLife.com](http://www.SDMyLife.com) can help you with this)
- ✓ Talk with your counselor, parents/guardian and teachers about your career goals and the courses you would like to take.
- ✓ Review the list of electives that fit your career cluster (found in the high school registration booklet)
- ✓ Pencil in the remainder of the elective courses you need based on your ability level and career interests
- ✓ Log in to your account on [www.SDMyLife.com](http://www.SDMyLife.com) (your school counselor has your username and password) to complete the electronic version of a Personal Learning Plan

Participate in career activities while you're in high school, including small group/individual discussions with your counselor; writing a career interest report, career research paper, resume, letter of application, and thank you letter; job shadows, and internships.

## **What classes do I need to take to go to a South Dakota University?**

Most SD Public Universities require the following for admission:

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of Social Studies
- 1 credit of Fine Arts
- 3 years of advanced Mathematics (Algebra I and above)
- 3 years of Laboratory Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Physical Science)
- Demonstrated proficiency in Computer Science
- AND 1 of the following: 2.6 high school GPA, an ACT composite score of 18, or top 60% of your graduating class

Generally, students will need to have a “C” average or higher in these courses for admission. Check with your university for specific admission requirements. South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and University of South Dakota have different admission requirements than stated above.

## **Advanced Placement Scholar Program**

The Advanced Placement (AP) Scholar Program offers AP Scholar Awards to recognized high school students who have demonstrated college achievement through AP courses and exams. Five possible awards are recognized. Information can be found at <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/scholarawards.html>

## South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship

The State of SD has established a scholarship for students interested in attending a State University. This program awards a \$5,000 scholarship over four years to qualifying high school graduates.

### Students Entering High School After July 2013

All recipients must receive a C or higher on all coursework including:

- 4 Units of English
- 4 Units of Algebra or Higher Mathematics
- 4 Units of Science including 3 units of an approved lab science (biology, chemistry or physics)
- 3 Units of Social Studies
- 2 Units of either of the following or a combination of the two:
  - ✓ Approved career and technical education courses
  - ✓ Modern or Classical Language (includes American Sign Language)
- 1 Unit of Fine Arts
- 0.5 Unit of Personal Finance or Economics
- 0.5 Unit of Physical Education
- 0.5 Unit of Health or Health Integration (students entering high school after July 2013)

Additional information can be found at [www.sdbor.edu/OpportunityScholarship/sdos.htm](http://www.sdbor.edu/OpportunityScholarship/sdos.htm).