



## Miramonte High School Counseling Office

### Frequently Asked Questions for new students and parents

#### **How do students sign up for courses?**

The Miramonte counselors will provide students with registration information and course planning materials. Students have a chance to review the material with their parents and make choices before registration and course selection forms are collected. New students who are from outside the area should contact the registrar in the counseling office to get a registration packet and schedule an appointment. Counselors will meet with new students after they have completed the residency verification and enrollment process.

#### **What courses should a student take in 9<sup>th</sup> grade?**

The Counseling office will give you a list of all courses available for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. Some are required for graduation and all ninth grade students will enroll in those classes. Other courses are electives that students may choose based on interest and ability. A typical 9<sup>th</sup> grade schedule includes ENGLISH 1, WORLD HISTORY, MATHEMATICS, FOREIGN LANGUAGE, PHYSICAL EDUCATION and AN ELECTIVE.

#### **Do any courses require a teacher recommendation or prerequisites?**

The high school counseling office works closely with the middle school to make the transition from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade go as smoothly as possible. To help select the best course for your student in mathematics and some other classes, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers make recommendations based on demonstrated knowledge in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. There are recommended prerequisite courses for many math, foreign language and science classes. Advanced performing arts classes may require an audition. We strongly encourage students to follow the recommendations of their teachers and the recommended progression of coursework.

#### **Is there a placement test for mathematics?**

At this time, there is no placement test for mathematics courses. Students are placed in classes based on teacher recommendations and demonstrated knowledge in prior coursework.

#### **Can my student take Biology if they are in Algebra 1?**

The recommended course progression is that students take biology concurrently with geometry. Students can override that recommendation and chose to take biology concurrently with algebra 1, but the faculty finds that those who are in geometry or higher have demonstrated the necessary academic readiness for the course.

#### **Does my student need to take 7 classes in order to graduate?**

No, passing six classes each year will equal the required 240 credits for graduation.

#### **If my student plays a sport, do they still have to take PE in high school?**

Yes, every student must take PE for two years in high school, even if they play a sport.

#### **If my student plays a sport, will they have 7th period PE?**

7<sup>th</sup> period PE is NOT guaranteed. Over 70% of students are involved in sports and there is no way to fit every athlete into a PE 7<sup>th</sup> period.

#### **How does my student get into leadership?**

The leadership course is a class for those who are elected as class officers or student body officers. Students may also interview for a few appointed positions. Clubs are another opportunity for student leadership.

**How does my student find out about clubs?**

A club fair is held during the first two months of school and students can sign up to join at that time. Students can join a club or apply to start a new club.

**If my student changes their mind about classes, will they be able to change their schedule in August?**

Students should choose carefully in the spring because space is limited and classes will be very full, thus it is very difficult to change classes in August. If there is an error in the schedule (ie, student was placed in wrong math or English class) forms will be available at MATS Day to request a correction. We do not grant requests for teacher changes. Other requests will be considered on a space-available basis.

**What sports do you offer and how does my student get involved? Is it hard to get on a team?**

There are three sport seasons and several sports each season are offered. At least one sport each season is a no-cut sport. Try-outs, parent meetings and pre-season work-outs are announced in the bulletin and the weekly Matador News email. The Miramonte Boosters site has more information. There is a link from the main webpage. Students must have a physical exam and turn in required forms and permission slips before attending practice.

**Will you have to study differently in high school?**

As a general rule, students taking a college-prep schedule need 2-3 hours per day for homework and studying. Reviewing concepts even when there is no specific homework assigned is crucial for success. Students are expected to develop their abstract thinking and critical thinking skills. Students may find that they need new strategies to learn the material on a deeper level. Homework is always important, but as students progress through high school, more emphasis is placed on tests and other assessments. Students will have to balance completing short-term assignments while also preparing for tests and making progress on long-term assignments. There is little opportunity for extra credit work, so students should not count on extra credit to make up for missed work. When absent, it is the student's responsibility to make up the work or make arrangements with the teacher to make up the test.

**How do students and parents find out about activities on campus?**

Information about school activities is available on the school website [www.acalanes.k12.ca.us](http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us). Click on the Bulletin button. Also, the Matador News is emailed out weekly and gives up-to-date information about important schools news and activities. The daily bulletin is also posted in the offices and in many classrooms.

**How do parents receive progress reports?**

Report cards are mailed home at the quarter and at the semester. The mailing dates are in the student handbook and on the website. Students will receive a grade in every class for quarter and semester report card. Progress reports are mailed half way through each quarter. Teachers are only required to send a mid-quarter progress report to students in danger of failing so students may not receive a progress report. Only semester grades are recorded on the official high school transcript and are the most important. Fall semester ends in January and spring semester ends in June.

**When do students start planning for college?**

You may certainly ask questions about college planning at any time. Counselors review college entrance requirements along with schedule planning and course selection every year. Counselors plan grade-appropriate college and career planning topics to cover each year. Students will meet with their counselor individually during the year and have a college and career planning activity in class each year. Parent information nights: Watch the Matador News for dates and times. Parents Club coordinates informational meetings for each grade level and there are also district-wide events on topics such as financial aid. The College and Career center also has up-to-date information on when college representatives will be visiting our campus or holding events in the area.