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Dear Parents and Guardians of 8th Grade Students,

This memo is designed to inform you about the timeline regarding the transition process from Bedford Middle School (BMS) to Staples High School (SHS); please carefully review the information contained in this letter.

Key transition-to-high-school events:

- ★ **“Special Education Night”** held at SHS in the faculty dining room on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 starting at 7 pm (this parent-only event is for parents of students with IEPs; snow date is January 21, 2016, same time)
- ★ **“Eighth Grade Parents’ Night”** held at SHS in the auditorium on Thursday, January 28, 2016 starting at 7 pm (this event is for parents and guardians only; snow date is February 3, 2016, same time and location)
- ★ **“Curriculum Open House”** held at SHS on Thursday, February 4, 2016 starting at 7:00 pm (this event is for students, parents and guardians; snow date is February 11, 2016).

JANUARY 2016

- The 2015-2016 [SHS Course Catalog](#) is available online; the 2016-2017 SHS Course Catalog will become available later this school year. You can also access the SHS Course Catalog by visiting the [SHS Homepage](#); click on the “Students” menu header, and then click on “Course Catalog.”
- January 11th (7:45 am - 12:10 pm): Secondary Department Chairs and High School Counselors meet with the BMS 8th Grade Guidance Counselor in the Staples High School Guidance Office.
- January 29th (2:00 - 2:45 pm): During the school day, Karyn Morgan, the SHS Assistant Principal responsible for next year’s incoming 9th graders, SHS Director of Guidance Elaine Schwartz, and SHS Counselors will meet with all 8th grade students at BMS to share information and answer questions. Students will be strategically grouped with the SHS counselor they will be assigned to for the duration of their High School experience. The team from SHS will be accompanied by current Staples students who will assist in sharing their experience from a student point of view and to answer our 8th graders’ questions.
- January 28th: “Eighth Grade Parents’ Night” held at SHS in the auditorium starting at 7:00 pm (this event is for parents and guardians only; snow date: February 3rd). At this event, Assistant Principal Karyn Morgan, Director of Guidance Elaine Schwartz, the SHS counseling team, and the Eighth Grade

counselors will present information regarding the transition to high school process including a timeline of important events and dates.

FEBRUARY

- Wednesday, February 3rd at 4 pm: Grade 8 core academic and World language teachers' course recommendations are shared with grade 8 students, parents and guardians through Home Access Center (HAC) online.
- Thursday, February 4th: "Curriculum Open House" held at SHS starting at 7:00 pm (this event is for both students and parents; snow date: February 11th). In this event, designed for both students and parents, the team from Staples will present a broad overview of the entire educational program in all academic and elective areas. The team at Staples will not discuss your child's specific course recommendations or individual schedule at this event; this event is to provide a broad introduction to the overall program at Staples High School.
- Starting in February, the BMS Grade 8 counselors will meet with all grade 8 students individually to present the SHS Course Catalog, review their grade 9 academic course recommendations (teacher course recommendations will become available Feb. 5th), review the elective course offerings, and explain the course selection/schedule building process.
 - Together, each student and counselor will enter their grade 9 elective course selection directly into HAC; the academic course recommendations are automatically entered into HAC.
 - These meetings will run from February 8th through the end of March. Please note, the date of each meeting will have no impact on enrollment potential into students' requested high school courses and electives; all incoming Freshman enrollment data from both middle schools are entered into the high school's scheduling system at the same time. To be clear, the last 8th grader to meet with our counselors at the end of March 2016 will have equal opportunity for grade 9 course enrollment as the very first student who will meet with our counselors starting in February 2016.

MARCH

- Students continue to meet individually with the BMS Grade 8 Counselors to discuss, select and enter into HAC their high school elective courses for 9th grade; the student and counselor will enter this information directly into HAC.
- A course waiver form (override) may be completed for a core academic or World Language course recommendation; all waivers must adhere to the established parameters set by SHS. Students and parents can obtain a copy of the SHS course waiver form by visiting the BMS website. Completed Course Waiver Forms are to be submitted to Kelly Warner, the BMS 8th Grade Counselor by Thursday, March 31, 2016; late waivers will not be accepted by SHS.
 - **COURSE WAIVER FORM DEADLINE:** Thursday, March 31, 2016 is the deadline to submit a course waiver form directly to Kelly Warner, BMS grade 8 counselor, no later than 3 pm on 3/31/16. Staples High School will not accept a course waiver form after 3/31/16. A course waiver form is only needed to waive into a higher level course than what was recommended by the grade 8 teacher; a course waiver form is not needed to request a lower-level course.
- Starting in March and lasting through June, PPT and 504 transition meetings are held at Staples High School.

JUNE

- SHS counselors will meet with our 8th graders in small groups at SHS to explain how the high school schedule functions, review individual schedules and resolve conflicts. The BMS staff will walk over to SHS with our students for this event; exact dates and times will be determined and shared with students and parents.

AUGUST

- “Freshman Orientation” at SHS; all students and parents will receive details of this event later this year directly from SHS.

We recommend reviewing the substantial [SHS Course Catalog](#) with your soon-to-be high school student; please assist your child with the identification of academic and elective courses that interest them. In general, enrollment into elective courses goes to upperclassmen first; our BMS Counseling Team will work with our students to identify elective courses that are likely to be available and also appropriate for freshmen. In some limited cases, our counselors will help students identify alternate elective courses in case their primary request is unavailable. This will help prepare your child for the individual high school scheduling meeting they will have with the BMS Grade 8 counselors in February or March. Questions regarding grade 9 course recommendations are to be directed to the grade 8 subject area teacher making the recommendation.

Students applying to private high schools must still go through the process of building a schedule for SHS.

Thank you for helping to prepare your student for the transition to high school. Please contact us via email or phone if you have any questions or concerns.

Warm Regards,

Adam Rosen, Principal

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