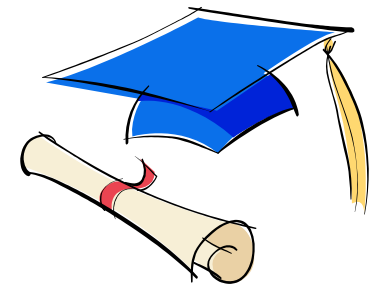


Preparing for High School and Beyond

2009 – 2010





The mission of the Bastrop Independent School District is to ensure the academic success of all students by fostering a commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.

Bastrop ISD Campus Numbers

Bastrop High School Main Campus	772-7200
Bastrop High School West Campus	772-7240
Bastrop Intermediate School	321-6023
Bastrop Middle School	321-3911
Cedar Creek Intermediate School	308-0702
Cedar Creek Middle School	332-2626
Bluebonnet Elementary School	308-1325
Cedar Creek Elementary School	332-0699
Emile Elementary School	321-4451
Lost Pines Elementary School	321-2086
Mina Elementary School	321-2565
Red Rock Elementary School	332-2670

Dear Parents and Students,

We have put this handout together for you, the parents and students of Bastrop ISD. The handout provides some important information about planning for the future as you move from intermediate to middle to high school to college or workforce training. Hopefully, the pamphlet can answer questions you may have such as, “What should my child be taking in school to prepare him/her for college or post high school training?” “Am I taking challenging coursework?” “What are the requirements to get a high school diploma?” “What are the real differences in advanced courses and regular courses?” “How important is scoring well on the state required TAKS tests?”

We have tried to give you highlights of some things you need to think about as you plan for next year and beyond. We encourage parents and students to read through all of the information very carefully. Please understand that it is impossible to address all of the issues and specific questions surrounding a student’s educational plan in this handout. If you have questions, please contact your school counselor.

Also, it is important that you keep in mind that the information contained in this handout is based on state and district laws and regulations in effect as of this printing. Laws do change and have over the years, so each year as you are planning for the next year, read through any and all of the current information you receive, such as updated handouts, course selection or course planning guides. Again, we encourage you to ask when you have questions. We are here to ensure that all children successfully graduate through our school system at every level and are prepared to enter college and/or work force training.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Bastrop ISD Counselors

For students entering grades 5 – 8

Curriculum and Coursework

The state requires school districts to follow a state curriculum – the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. The curriculum includes a foundation curriculum (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) and an enrichment curriculum (physical education, fine arts, health, technology applications, and to the extent possible career and technology education and languages other than English). Some enrichment courses are required by law; others are electives that students can choose. During spring registration each year, students will have the opportunity to sign up for required and elective enrichment courses.

English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies are required each year. An important decision that students need to consider is whether to register for a Pre-Advanced Course where available. The chart entitled, “OPTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE AND MIDDLE SCHOOL PRE-ADVANCED LEVEL CORE COURSES” shows which courses are available at a Pre-AP level.

There are four courses offered at middle school that are not required, however, if successfully completed in 8th grade, will count for required courses at high school – Algebra I, Spanish I, Communication Applications, and high school Health. The grades will be noted on a student’s high school transcript upon enrollment into 9th grade; however, the grades will not be calculated for class ranking purposes in high school (see class rank information in the section for students entering grade 9).

Pre-Advanced Level Courses

The chart shows pre-advanced level courses that are available to students entering grades 5 – 8. Pre-Advanced courses are designed to prepare students to take advanced level courses at the high school level including dual enrollment college courses offered on campus during the school day or in the evening and/or Advanced Placement (AP) courses available during the school day. Students who don’t participate in Pre-Advanced courses at the lower levels may not be prepared for the rigor of these college level courses.

How does the curriculum in pre-advanced courses really differ from regular courses? Regular courses follow a state mandated curriculum – Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Students who successfully complete a regular curriculum will get a good educational experience and be able to complete course requirements for graduation and attend post secondary institutions and/or training.

Pre-AP courses provide a curriculum which follows the TEKS and, in addition, provide more opportunities to participate in problem based learning activities and more in depth learning. Especially important to consider is the area of mathematics. Students who take advanced level math classes starting at 5th grade will be completing an accelerated curriculum to be prepared to take Algebra 1 in 8th grade. Students who do not participate in advanced level math courses prior to 8th grade may have a difficult time walking into an Algebra 1 class without the background needed to successfully complete the course. In addition, students in 8th grade who do not take Algebra 1 but do take 8th grade Pre-AP Science may have difficulty completing the sequence of advanced science courses in high school. It is highly recommended that a student speak to a counselor if considering this option.

What is the advantage of taking advanced level courses? All students should participate in active, successful, and challenging work. Advanced courses can provide that extra challenge. If a student feels that he/she can meet that extra challenge and be motivated to complete that advanced curriculum in one or more courses, then take the challenge! That challenge can pay off when preparing for high school and beyond.

OPTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE AND MIDDLE SCHOOL PRE-ADVANCED LEVEL COURSES		
Courses	Regular	Pre-AP
Language Arts 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th	√	√
Math 5th, 6th, 7th 8th Algebra I - 8th	√ √ √	√
Science 5th - 6th 7th - 8th	√ √	√
Social Studies 5th - 6th 7th - 8th	√ √	√

TAKS

All students are required to participate in the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) at grades 3 – 11. The chart shows courses currently tested starting at 5th grade. Please note that a new state assessment system will be implemented starting with the freshman class entering high school in the fall of 2011. It will be important to pay close attention as new tests and testing requirements for graduation become available to high school students.

Why should a student do well on TAKS? A student should try to do the very best on any test taken in school as well as the TAKS test. At grades 5 and 8, students must pass TAKS Reading and Math to be promoted to the next grade. At grade 11, students must pass TAKS English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies to receive a high school diploma. In addition, students in grade 11 need to score beyond a minimum passing score in order to be considered “college ready.” If college readiness is not demonstrated, students may be expected to take additional tests prior to entering college, and depending on the score, may be required to take remedial courses in college.

TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (TAKS)							
Content Tested	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
Reading	√	√	√	√	√		
Writing			√				
English Language Arts						√	√
Math	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Science	√			√		√	√
Social Studies			√			√	√

NOTE: End of course exams will replace TAKS at grades 9 - 11 beginning with freshman students entering high school in the fall of 2011. More information will be provided to parents as state regulations and guidelines become available.

Preparing for Life After Middle School

The goal of Bastrop ISD is to prepare all students to successfully complete high school and be enrolled and/or prepared to enroll in college or additional work force training. There are many things parents and students can do along that journey while in intermediate and middle schools.

- Work hard and attend school each day. Developing good habits now will help students be more successful as they transition into high school and college.
- Attend campus meetings about academic planning, financial aid, and scholarship opportunities.
- Check on the campus to see what types of college, scholarship and financial aid materials are available for students and parents.
- Visit colleges. All students in grades 7 and up will have the opportunity to visit a college campus each year.
- Students in grade 8 will take an interest and aptitude survey. The information from that survey can be extremely valuable when planning for high school courses – both the required and elective courses available to students.
- Attend high school information nights about college. Learn about entrance criteria, testing requirements, scholarships and financial aid information.
- Visit the middle or high school career centers. There is a lot of information about colleges, training programs, scholarships, and financial aid opportunities.
- Start saving now. Many of the schools have Bank of America on the campus for students to deposit money each week. You can also check with a financial institution about saving programs you can begin now.



For students entering grade 9

Students entering 9th grade need to carefully read and reread the course selection guide that will be passed out in late January or early February of each school year. The guide will provide critical information you will need to make good decisions about course selections. As you read through the information, there are some particular items you will want to consider as you develop your course schedule.

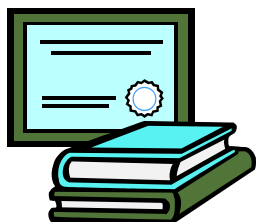
Four Year Plans

Students will be expected to complete a four year plan for high school in 7th or 8th grade. This plan will help them stay on track for graduation and take the appropriate courses that will prepare them for post high school education and/or training. The plan will be reviewed and updated each year with your school counselor.

Graduation Plans

Students in Bastrop ISD are required to successfully complete a total of 26 credits in high school. The chart outlines the state required recommended and distinguished plans for graduation. In the course selection guide, the specific courses required to be completed in each of the plans are carefully outlined. That section in the guide will help students work through their four year plans to ensure they have successfully completed all of the specific course requirements for graduation.

Special Note: Three graduation plans are outlined in the course selection guide – minimum, recommended, and distinguished. The state requires that students complete the recommended or distinguished graduation plans. Students who want to opt out of those plans and complete the minimum plan must receive permission from their parents, school counselor, and principal. Understand that under the minimum plan, additional courses are required by the district to meet the 26 credit requirement for graduation. Also, graduation under the minimum plan may restrict a student’s college education plans.



BASTROP HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION PLANS (4x4)		
Course	Recommended	Distinguished*
English Language Arts	4	4
Mathematics	4	4
Science	4	4
Social Studies	3.5	3.5
Economics	0.5	0.5
Physical Education	1.5	1.5
Languages Other Than English	2	3
Health Education	0.5	0.5
Technology Application	1	1
Fine Arts	1	1
Speech	0.5	0.5
Electives	3.5	2.5
TOTAL CREDITS	26	26

The state requires students to complete the recommended or distinguished plans. Exceptions to that state ruling can be made on an individual student basis.

*** The Distinguished Achievement Program requirements also include student achievement of four advanced measures and a third year of language other than English.**

Refer to the course selection guide for more information.

TAKS

Refer to TAKS information provided for students entering grades 5 – 8.

Class Rank/Grade Point Average

In the course selection guide, there is information about courses designated in high school as “weighted” courses. These “weighted” courses are designated as Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), college level courses (dual enrollment), and/or Advanced Placement (AP). As grades for those courses are earned, the grades are given a weighting which impacts GPA (grade point average). Grade point average impacts a student’s overall ranking in high school (class rank). It is important that students have a good understanding of GPA and class rank as that can play a very important role when considering colleges and universities. It is important for students to ask questions and get help from the school counselor when needed. The course selection guide specifies which courses are *currently* weighted. The chart below identifies courses that do not count for class ranking purposes.

Special note: There have been recent legislative changes that, in the next year or two, may substantially change which courses can be weighted, how they are weighted, and how courses fall into class rankings. It is important to read the course selection guide that is printed each year to ensure what new rules and regulations have been made that will have an impact on students, especially in this area.

COURSES WHICH DO NOT COUNT IN COMPUTING CLASS RANK/GPA

(GRADE POINT AVERAGE)

Athletics
 Cheerleading
 Correspondence Courses
 Courses taken prior to 9th grade
 Credit by Examination
 Credit for Acceleration
 Credit Recovery
 Independent Study
 Local Credit Courses
 Pass/Fail courses
 Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL)
 Student Council Leadership Class
 Summer School

AP / ACC Dual Enrollment College Courses

Students in high school are very fortunate to be able to enroll in college level dual enrollment courses through Austin Community College and BHS Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Dual enrollment courses are available on campus during the school day and after school. If taken on the high school campus, there is no tuition for those courses. Many students can earn enough college credits in high school through dual enrollment to be classified as a sophomore in many Texas colleges and universities. Advanced Placement courses are offered at the high school during the school day. Students who participate in these courses are required to take the AP exams at the end of the courses. Success on the AP exams can result in credit being awarded for courses at the colleges the students attend. It is important to work with the school counselor in making the decision whether to participate in dual enrollment courses and/or AP courses. The chart outlines current college level courses that are offered at the high school.

COLLEGE LEVEL COURSES	
BHS/ACC College Courses Available	BHS AP Courses
College Algebra	Art
Community Health (on line)	Biology
Composition I & II	Calculus
Economics	Chemistry
Introduction to Sociology	Economics
Introduction to Psychology	English III & IV
Personal Computing (on line)	Environmental Science
Speech Communication	Foreign Languages IV
U. S. Government	Government
U.S. History	Human Geography
	Physics
	Psychology
	Statistics
	U.S. History
	World History
<p>Additional college level dual enrollment courses are available on ACC campuses in Austin. Check with your school counselor to obtain additional information.</p>	

Advanced Level Coursework

The chart entitled “OPTIONS FOR REGULAR AND ADVANCED CORE COURSES” outlines specific core courses that can be taken as a regular, pre-advanced placement (Pre-AP), Advanced Placement (AP), and/or dual enrollment Austin Community College (ACC) course.

Pre-AP placement courses are designed to prepare students to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses at the high school level. AP courses follow a very rigorous college approved curriculum. Students who participate in these courses are required to take the AP exam at the end of the courses. Success on the AP exams can result in credit being awarded by the colleges the students attend.

Dual enrollment courses are also college level courses. High school and college credit are concurrently awarded upon successful completion of an approved dual enrollment course. Courses are taught through Austin Community College at the high school and can be taken by students during the school day or in the evenings. Keep in mind that ACC courses taken on the high school campus will not be charged tuition for the courses.

Students are encouraged to take advanced and pre-advanced courses at the intermediate, middle and high school levels. Students who choose not to participate in these classes may not be prepared for the rigor of these college level courses.

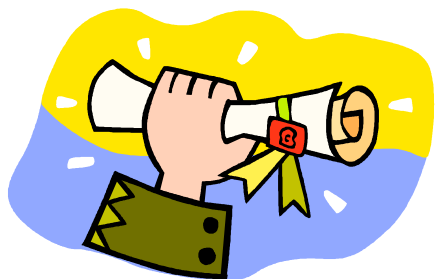


OPTIONS FOR REGULAR & ADVANCED CORE COURSES					
	Regular	Advanced	Pre-AP	AP	BHS/ACC courses
English (4 credits)					
1, 2	√		√		
3, 4	√			√	√
Math (4 credits)					
Algebra	√				
Geometry	√		√		
Math Models	√				
Algebra II	√		√		
Pre-Calculus	√		√		
Calculus				√	
Statistics				√	
College Algebra					√
Science (4 credits)					
IPC	√				
Biology	√		√	√	
Chemistry	√		√	√	
Physics	√		√	√	
Aquatic Science	√				
Scientific Research	√				
Anatomy & Physiology					
Environmental Sci.				√	
Soc. Stud. (4 credits)					
World Geography	√		√		
World History	√			√	
U.S. History	√			√	√
Government	√			√	√
Economics	√			√	√
Human Geography				√	
Languages					
Languages I, II	√				
Languages III	√		√*		
Languages IV	√			√*	
NOTE: Not all of these core courses are required for graduation. Review the high school course catalog to ensure you are taking the state graduation requirements for the recommended or distinguished plans.					
*French and Spanish only					

Sequence of Advanced Level Courses

Students who want to participate in Pre-AP & AP courses available at the high school need to look at the grade level and the sequence in which these courses should be taken in order to ensure that all the advanced level courses at the high school can be completed. The chart shows a possible sequence of courses for students to follow.

Please note that conflicts can occur because many Pre-AP & AP courses have prerequisites for enrollment. For example, in order to take Pre-AP Chemistry as a sophomore, the student should have previously completed Algebra I and Geometry. If a student chooses not to take Algebra 1 in 8th grade, then taking Pre-AP Chemistry will be extremely difficult because of the level of math skills needed for the successful completion of the course. The course descriptions in the course selection guide outline prerequisites for specific advanced level courses. Discuss any questions about course sequences with the school counselor.



EXAMPLE OF SEQUENCE OF ADVANCED LEVEL CORE COURSES				
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
English (4 credits) I II III IV	Pre-AP	Pre-AP	AP/ACC	AP/ACC
Math (4 credits) Algebra Geometry Math Models Algebra II Pre-Calculus Calculus Statistics College Algebra	(8th grade) Pre-AP	Pre-AP	Pre-AP	AP AP ACC
Science (4 credits) Biology IPC Chemistry Physics Aquatic Science Scientific Research Anatomy & Physiology Environmental Science	Pre-AP	Pre-AP	Pre-AP	AP AP AP AP
Social Studies (4) World Geography World History U.S. History Government Economics	Pre-AP	AP	AP/ACC	AP/ACC AP/ACC
<p>NOTE: Some, but not all of these courses are required for graduation. The course selection guide will provide specific state graduation requirements for the minimum, recommended or distinguished plans.</p> <p>IPC will not be considered a high school course beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.</p>				

Career and Technical Education

Students at the high school have many opportunities to participate in career and technology education courses and programs. Many of the courses are aligned into what is called a coherent sequence, whereby successful completion of the sequence can lead to certifications in high school and in post high school training. The chart gives the current certifications that can be earned in high school. The course selection guide can give more detailed information on career and technical education courses and requirements.

CAREER CLUSTERS LEADING TO CERTIFICATIONS	
Articulated Courses	Certification
Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources	Hunter Safety, Veterinary Asst.
Health Sciences	CPR, First Aid, Clinical Lab Assistant, EMT, Medical Assistant, Certified Nursing Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, Phlebotomist
Ag. Mechanics	Tractors and Machinery Certification
Ag, Auto Tech., & Building Trades	OSHA 10-hour Safety Certification
Building Trades	NCCER Construction Core Certification, NCCER Carpentry Certification
Food Preparation	Serve Safe

Local Credit Courses

There are courses at the high school that are not state approved courses but local credit courses. It is important that students work with the school counselor to ensure that students meet the 26 credit state requirement for graduation.

Transfer Credit from Nonaccredited Schools

It is very important to understand that students earn high school credits based on accredited state standards for state approved courses. Students who transfer from nonaccredited public, private, parochial, or home schools will be required to be tested using state approved credit by examination to ensure that the courses meet State Board requirements and standards. No high school credit will be awarded until successful completion of the required examinations.

Physical Education Substitutions

As students plan for high school, there are several options available to meet the 1½ credits required for physical education. The chart shows current courses that can be substituted for physical education. Specific course descriptions in the course selection guide can explain how much credit can be substituted for physical education.

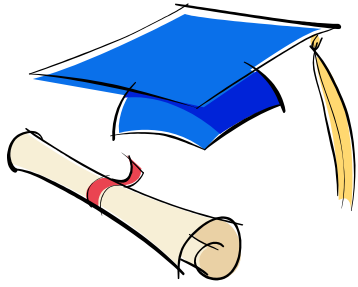
PE SUBSTITUTIONS
Athletics Winterguard Cheerleading Dance Drill Team Marching Band Naval Science (JROTC) 2-3 credit Career & Technology Work Based Training
NOTE: Check the specific courses listed in the course selection guide to determine how many Physical education credits can be obtained through physical education substitutions.

Preparing for Life After High School

The goal of Bastrop ISD is to prepare all students to successfully complete high school and be enrolled and/or prepared to enroll in college or additional work force training. There are many things parents and students can do along that journey while in high school.

- Work hard and attend school each day. Developing good habits now will help students be more successful as they transition into high school, college, and/or work force training.
- Visit colleges. All students in grades 9 and up will have the opportunity to visit a college campus each year.
- Attend high school information nights about college. Learn about entrance criteria, testing requirements, scholarships and financial aid information.
- Visit the high school career center. There is a lot of information about colleges, training programs, scholarship, and financial aid opportunities. Call or go by the high school and talk to the staff in the career center.
- Start saving now. Many of the schools have Bank of America on the campus for students to deposit money each week. Or, check with your financial institution about saving programs you can begin now.
- Meet with your counselor regularly to ensure you are on track for graduation and post secondary training. Take advantage of all the opportunities at the school to participate in a rigorous high school program.





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2009 – 2010

