



West Islip High School

Course Selection Handbook

2009 – 2010



**West Islip High School
2009-2010 Course Selection Guide**

Table of Contents

Art.....	10
Business.....	12
Dance.....	19
English.....	20
Family and Consumer Science.....	27
Health/Physical Education.....	31
Mathematics.....	32
Music.....	38
Science.....	40
Social Studies.....	45
Technology.....	51
World Language.....	56

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to help you choose courses for next year. Read it carefully before selecting a tentative program in preparation for your scheduling conference with your counselor.

Parents are welcome to be present when students are scheduled, or to telephone a counselor for information about course selections. The Counseling Office telephone numbers are listed below.

Students will complete a final course selection sheet during the scheduling interview. This must be signed by a parent and returned PROMPTLY to the Counseling Office. Since we plan teacher assignments and course offerings on the basis of student course selections, **students may revise their choices up to but not after the first week in June.**

High School Counseling Office.....631-504-5830/5831

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GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Regents Diploma

Regents w/Advanced Designation Diploma

Required Courses	Credits	Required Courses	Credits
English	4	English	4
Social Studies	4	Social Studies	4
Math [a]	3	Math	3
Science [a]	3	Science	3
World Language	1[b]	World Language	3[c]
Art/Music	1	Art/Music	1
Health **	.5	Health **	.5
Physical Education	2	Physical Education	2
Sequence/Electives	3.5	Sequence/Electives	1.5
TOTAL (minimum)	22	TOTAL (minimum)	22

Required Exams

Required Exams

[All exams require a score of 65 or above] *

[All exams require a score of 65 or above]

English Comprehensive Exam	Regents English Comprehensive Exam
Regents Global Studies Exam	Regents Global Studies Exam
Regents U.S. History Exam	Regents U.S. History Exam
Regents Science Exam	2 Regents Science Exams
See chart below for Math Requirements	
	Regents World Language Exam [c]

New Regents Exam Requirements for Math
[All exams require a score of 65 or above]

REGENTS DIPLOMA				REGENTS DIPLOMA WITH ADVANCED DESIGNATION			
Students entering Grade 9 in:	Math Units of Credit	Course/ Regents exam options*	Math Regents exams	Math Units of Credit	Course Options	Math Regents exams	Regents exam options*
September 2006, 2007	3	Math A, Math B,	1	3	Math A, Math B	2 or 3	Mathematics A <u>and</u> Mathematics B or Algebra 2/Trigonometry
		----- Integrated Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2/ Trigonometry			----- Integrated Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2/ Trigonometry		----- Integrated Algebra or Mathematics A <u>and</u> Geometry, <u>and</u> Algebra 2/Trigonometry
September 2008	3	Integrated Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2/ Trigonometry	1	3	Integrated Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2/ Trigonometry	3 or 2	Integrated Algebra or Mathematics A** <u>and</u> Geometry, <u>and</u> Algebra 2/Trigonometry
		----- Mathematics A**, Mathematics B**			----- Mathematics A** <u>and</u> Mathematics B** or Algebra 2/Trigonometry		
September 2009 and thereafter	3	Integrated Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2/ Trigonometry	1	3	Integrated Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2/ Trigonometry	3	Integrated Algebra or Mathematics A** <u>and</u> Geometry, <u>and</u> Algebra 2/Trigonometry

- [a]** An integrated course in mathematics/science/technology may be used to satisfy the requirement for a third unit of credit in mathematics or science.
- [b]** Students are required to have completed two units of study in World Language by the end of their 9th grade year. One unit of credit is earned either by passing the state World Language proficiency exam or by earning a unit of commencement (high school) level credit in a World Language.
- [c]** Students acquiring 5 units of credit in one of the following may be exempt from the requirement: Art, Music, Business, Family & Consumer Sciences, and Technical Education.

** All students are required to complete one credit of Health between grades 9 and 12, for any diploma used.
(local requirement)

All seniors must carry a minimum course load of 6.0 credits and sufficient credits to graduate.

* The New York State Department of Education has adopted new graduation requirements phasing-in the score of 65 on required Regents exams. The phase-in schedule is as follows:

- **For students entering grade 9 in 2005:** General education students must have at least two scores of 65 or above on the five required Regents exams and all scores at 55 or above.
- **For students entering grade 9 in 2006:** General education students must have at least three scores at 65 or above on the five required Regents exams and all scores at 55 or above.
- **For students entering grade 9 in 2007:** General education students must have at least four scores at 65 or above on the five required Regents exams and all scores at 55 or above.
- **For students entering grade 9 in 2008:** General education students must pass all five required Regents exams with a score of 65 or above.

Students who complete all coursework and testing requirements for the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation in mathematics and/or science and take and pass three regents examinations in each academic discipline with a score of 85 or better earn a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation, with an annotation on the diploma that denotes mastery in mathematics and/or science (*local designation*)

SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES - Office hours – 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. – (631) 504-5830

The West Islip School District offers a comprehensive program of school counseling services to all students, their parents, and members of the school community. At the high school, the school counselors are trained to guide students through all phases of the secondary school experience. Assistance in decision-making and problem solving helps students realize their personal, academic and social potential. Services also include post-secondary educational planning, course scheduling information, and group guidance instruction. The counseling program emphasizes a developmental approach to life and career planning.

Counseling services are diversified and address the special needs of each grade level. Keeping individual students in mind, every effort is made to maintain program continuity. Each student is assigned to a school counselor who works with the student and monitors their progress throughout the school year. Whenever possible, student conferences are scheduled during lunch or study hall to avoid interruption of class work.

The counseling staff is also available for the following services:

- Provide counseling to individuals and small groups of students.
- Act as a source of referrals to community service programs and organizations.
- Coordinate parent-teacher-student conferences.
- Assist in the preparation of referrals for psychological evaluation and other special services.
- Interpret standardized test scores.
- Administer interest inventories.
- Provide vocational and career counseling.
- Plan an annual review of each student's progress and future plans.
- Introduce new students and their families to the school and community.
- Assist students in maintaining the appropriate academic schedule.
- Provide a comprehensive program for post-secondary planning.

Parents are encouraged to call the counseling office to schedule an appointment with their child's counselor.

CLASS RANK COMPUTATION

For the purpose of computation of rank, courses are assigned a weight according to their level of academic difficulty.

Course weights are assigned as follows:

- a) Advanced placement courses and college level courses – a weight of 1.15
- b) Honors courses (including those completed in eighth grade for which high school credit is awarded) – a weight of 1.05
- c) All other courses – a weight of 1.0

Courses applicable to class rank are those that are within the five major academic areas (English, social studies, math, science, and foreign language), as well as all additional honors, advanced placement and college level courses in any discipline.

TRANSCRIPTS

All courses taken, including summer school or repeated courses, will be listed on a student's transcript. For courses taken more than once, only the highest grade received will be used for ranking purposes.

RANK FOR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

Rank for college application purposes is calculated at the beginning of the senior year and mailed home to students in October.

RANK FOR VALEDICTORIAN/SALUTATORIAN/OTHER HONORS

Rank is calculated once again after the third quarter of senior year to determine the Valedictorian/Salutatorian, as well as for any other honors that may be based on rank.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

To be considered for Valedictorian/Salutatorian a graduating senior must have spent at least four (4) semesters at West Islip High School. A grade conversion chart will be applied to grades of students who transfer from a school which uses an alternate grading method.

UNWEIGHTED AVERAGE

A student's *unweighted average* is the numerical average of those courses included in the ranking process. No weight factor is involved. (When courses are repeated, the highest grade will be included in the average.)

HONOR SOCIETY

Students are elected to the Honor Society by the Faculty Council. Applicants may first apply as juniors. Any student may apply who has a cumulative average in grades 9 and 10 of at least **eighty-eight (88) percent**. For this purpose a student's average is the mathematical average of all courses except *physical education*. No weighting factor is used. Successful applicants must have demonstrated qualities of *leadership*, *service* and *character* as well as *scholarship*. Students who **do not** meet these criteria as juniors may apply as seniors.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

Advanced Placement (**AP**) is a term used to describe college level courses offered in high school. The main purpose of Advanced Placement courses is to offer the capable student a more challenging classroom experience, thereby better preparing him or her for college. West Islip offers the following AP courses: *American History, Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, Environmental Science, European History, French Language, Italian Language, Physics B, Physics C, Spanish Language, Statistics, Studio in Art and US Government and Politics*. Students who enroll in AP courses are expected to take AP examinations. ***Pursuant to Board Policy 8242-R, students who choose not to take the related Advanced Placement examination for a course will have their final transcript amended to read "no exam taken"***. Examinations are prepared and graded by the Advanced Placement Program, a division of the College

Entrance Examination Board in Princeton, New Jersey. Students are responsible for the payment of required fees. Financial aid is available for students of high achievement who are unable to pay the required fees.

Colleges vary in their policies concerning the granting of college credit or placement for specific grades earned on AP examinations. A student must check the college catalog to determine the policy of any specific college.

DROPPING COURSES

The intended goal of the school course selection process, which begins in the early spring of the preceding school year, is to best serve the educational needs of each student. Discussions take place among counselors, teachers, parents and students which take into account graduation requirements, as well as each student's interests, abilities and goals. Students have the opportunity, in the succeeding months, to review their schedules with their parents and counselors and to make any necessary adjustments. The next step in this process is to build a master schedule based upon the course choices which students have made. Teacher schedules are developed based upon student enrollment in each course.

However, we do recognize that there are sometimes circumstances that occur that require changes to a student's schedule. In such cases, students are to request a change in writing within the first ten days of class, stating the reason for their request. Those reasons include the following:

1. The student failed a course and needs to retake the course in order to graduate.
2. The student is adding a class in place of a study hall.
3. The student has the same teacher with whom they received a failing grade during a prior year.

Please note that schedules will **NOT** be changed to accommodate a request for early release. Also, lunch period changes will **NOT** take place without a doctor's note. Any schedule changes must be recommended by each student's counselor and approved by their parent, teacher, and the director/lead teacher of the department. Students must continue to attend the class until a determination has been made. Students may obtain a course change request form from their counselor and are responsible for obtaining all required signatures.

Any class dropped after ten days and prior to five weeks will result in either a "withdrawn passing" (WP) or a "withdrawn failing" (WF) appearing on the student's transcript. Dropping a class after five weeks will result in an automatic "withdrawn failing". There will be an opportunity for a student to appeal should extenuating circumstances exist.

HIGH SCHOOL INDEPENDENT STUDY

The following statement summarizes The Board of Education Policy regarding high school independent study:

“In unusual circumstances a student may wish to pursue study in a subject area of particular interest or importance to him/her that is not available in the regular course offerings or which scheduling conflicts preclude. With the permission of the school counselor, the subject area supervisor and the principal, such students may, on their own initiative, attempt to arrange to take such coursework on an independent study basis. It will be the student’s responsibility to establish his/her eligibility for such coursework and to seek out a teacher who is willing to facilitate the project. Such independent study will only be conducted subject to the availability of both student and teacher for common meeting times and subject to the willingness of a qualified teacher to undertake the project. Independent study meetings shall occur before or after school, or during study or lunch periods, but may *NOT* occur during times when the student or the teacher are scheduled for regular classes. No assurance can be made that any independent study coursework will be provided”.

NOTE:

All independent study courses ***must*** be approved by the Superintendent. It will be the responsibility of the high school Principal to notify the Superintendent of a proposed independent study course. A list of such approved courses will be provided to the Board of Education as an information item.

Criteria for Entrance to Honors Level

Two out of three of the following:

- New York State Assessments – Level 4 (8th grade)
 - ELA – English, social studies or science placements
 - Math – Math placements
- Final subject area unweighted grade of 93 or better
- Teacher recommendation per district format

Criteria for Continuation at Honors Level

- Final unweighted grade of 93 or better
- Final unweighted grade of 88 or better, plus teacher's recommendation per district format

Procedures

- Students will be tentatively scheduled for honors classes based upon midyear subject area unweighted grades as delineated above.
- Final grades will be reviewed in June to confirm eligibility. The district reserves the right to reschedule students based upon end-of-year grades.
- Should a student fail to meet the eligibility criteria, any interested stakeholder (parent, teacher, or counselor) may request that a hearing be held by a review panel, consisting of the appropriate department head and two impartial teachers appointed by the Principal. The panel may deny or approve a student's placement in an honors class; however, in all cases the panel's decision will be final.

Criteria for Entrance to Advanced Placement Level

- Successful completion of a prerequisite course at the honors level
- Grades which would meet the criteria for continuation at the honors level

Procedures

- Same as for honors level
- Students who choose not to take the related Advanced Placement examination for a course will have their final transcript amended to read "no exam taken".