

# Course Selection & Four-Year Planning

An Information Session for Parents  
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# THE WHS COUNSELING TEAM

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# FRESHMAN COURSE SELECTION

- **Materials needed**
    - Course Selection / 4-YR Planning Sheet (2-sided)
    - Course number folder
    - Time Management Sheet
    - Course Guide \*
    - Elective Courses Open to Freshmen (optional) \*
  - **Counselors help students enter course requests into Skyward**
    - 2/16 & 2/17 – **WRMS**
    - 2/22 & 2/23 – **HCMS**
    - Deadline to return course selection sheet is February 27.
    - **You must sign the 4-Year Plan side**
- \* Found on the [counseling website under “Course Selection”](#)

# HIGH SCHOOL CREDITS TAKEN IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

- These credits appear on the high school transcript with a numeric grade but are **not used in calculating GPA.**
- Only courses taken **at Westlake** during the **regular school year** are factored into a student's GPA

# A LEVEL “PLAYING FIELD”

School Board policy states that Westlake students must take a minimum of **four non-weighted credits** during high school to be used in the calculation of GPA and the determination of the ranked ten percent.

Three of these four required non-weighted credits must be complete prior to the beginning of senior year.

# WEIGHTED COURSES

- A weighted course means that there is a multiplier used in calculating a student's GPA (and rank).
  - PreAP or Honors courses have a 1.1 multiplier and are designated with a Q on the transcript
    - A grade of 92 = 101.2 in calculating GPA
  - AP courses (and other advanced classes) have a 1.2 multiplier and are designated with a P on the transcript
    - A grade of 92 = 110.4 in calculating GPA
- See Page 9 in the Course Guide (online) for a list of classes in each category

# GPA AND CLASS RANK

- GPA is reported on a 100-point scale. Students first learn their GPA in the spring of their sophomore year.
- Westlake is a non-ranking high school.
- Except, Texas public schools are *required* to rank the top 10% of the students in each graduating class.
  - Guarantees admission to a TX public college or university (except UT).
    - By spring of your junior year, UT will stipulate the percent cutoff they will use for your class.
  - Must have an endorsement and distinguished level of achievement

# REGULAR vs. PREAP vs. AP

- Pace of instruction
- Depth of study
- Volume of homework
  - Reading
  - Writing
- Level of teacher guidance
- Expectation for organization, maturity and self-direction

# WESTLAKE GRADUATION PLAN

- All Westlake students start high school on the **Foundation Program + Multidisciplinary Endorsement** with the **Distinguished Level of Achievement**
- Which means ...

# WESTLAKE GRADUATION PLAN

for the Class of 2018 and beyond

ENGLISH	4 credits
MATH	4 credits
SCIENCE	4 credits
SOCIAL STUDIES	4 credits
WORLD LANGUAGES	2 credits
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	1 credit
FINE ARTS	1 credit
HEALTH	.5 credit
ELECTIVES	5.5 credits
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>26 credits</b>

# ENDORSEMENTS

- Allows students to pursue in-depth study of interest
- There are 5 endorsements; you can find details on the outside of the course number folder
- All students start with the *Multidisciplinary* endorsement, but are free to add or change endorsements beginning spring of Sophomore year.
- In terms of college admission, the specific endorsement does not matter.

# MULTIDISCIPLINARY ENDORSEMENT

Four credits in the core subject areas

**AND**

Four “advanced” courses

- These are indicated by a ^ on the inside of the course number folder
- All courses not required

**OR**

Four credits in Advanced Placement (AP) or Dual Credit selected from English, Math, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, or Fine Arts

# BUILDING A SCHEDULE AND FOUR-YEAR PLAN

- How many advanced courses (PreAP or AP) are right for YOUR student? Consider:
  - Outside activities
  - Areas of strength/weakness
  - Organizational skills
  - Family/church/social commitments
- Be sure to select alternate courses – no guarantee that all courses listed will actually be offered
- Don't panic about planning for 4 years – this is NOT a permanent commitment. Students revisit their plan annually and are free to make changes. Having a personal graduation plan on file IS the law, which is why we make you do it. **And sign it.**

# FYI: A FEW COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

- Beginning Guitar (1 credit)
- Broadcast Journalism (1 credit) – **NEW**
- Classical Mythology (1/2 credit)
- Roman Cultures (1/2 credit)
- Video Game Design (1 credit)
- Computer Science PreAP (1 credit) – Algebra 1 prerequisite
- Digital Graphics & Animation (1 credit)
- Film Production (1 credit)
- MAPS – study skills (1 credit)
- Principles of Business, Marketing, and Finance (1 credit)
- Principles of Health Science (1 credit)
- Journalism – Newspaper or Yearbook (1 credit)
- Creative Writing 1 & 2 (1/2 credit each)
- Debate (1 credit)

# EARNING A PE CREDIT

## Enroll in a Westlake class

- Foundations
- Team & Individual Sports
- Cheerleading
- Dance
- Marching Band
- Color Guard
- Athletics
  - Full year of the same sport
  - Fall sport / spring sport
- Summer School PE

## Outside of Westlake

- PE Waiver (1 credit only)
  - Application process
  - Certified instructor
  - 90 hours per semester
  - Log sheet
  - Off Campus PE Instruction is for sophomore year; no credit
- Correspondence Course
  - TTU or UT high school programs
  - Online, self-paced
- Dual Credit: ACC
  - Variety of courses to choose from
  - Full tuition

# ARE THERE ANY AP COURSES OPEN TO FRESHMEN?

- AP Computer Science (student must have completed Algebra 1 PreAP)
- AP Art History
- AP Human Geography

# AP and COLLEGE ADMISSION

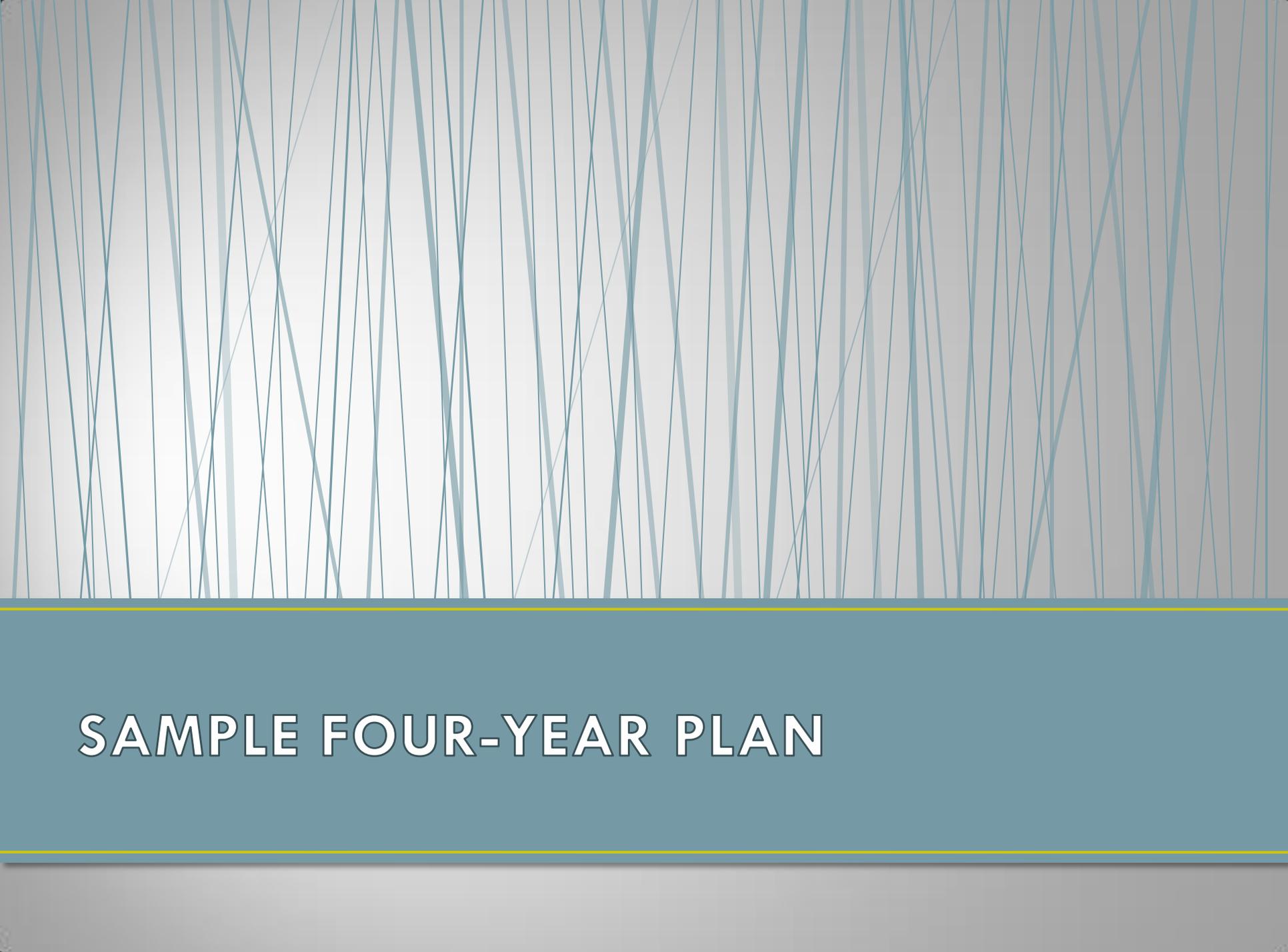
- Potentially better prepares students for the college classroom (critical thinking and writing skills)
- Shows colleges that the student is willing to challenge himself/herself academically – does NOT mean all courses should be PreAP or AP
- **MAY** result in college credit
  - Texas public universities are required to award credit for a 3 or better
  - Some schools may limit credits awarded or simply allow you to place out of introductory classes
- Most important consideration in choosing classes is **BALANCE**. There is no magic number of AP classes that a student “should” take.

# THE OTHER EDUCATION

- Ways your students grows outside of an academic setting
  - Involvement in clubs and/or extracurricular activities
    - Over 100 clubs at Westlake
    - Interests outside of high school offerings; hobbies
- The ultimate goal is not just to prepare students for college – but to prepare them for life and the world of work.
  - Colleges and employers see the need for young people who have “soft skills”
    - Problem-solvers
    - Effective communicators
    - Collaborators
    - Adaptable to changing situations

# LAST WORDS

- High school is about more than credits and GPA.
- Encourage your student to get to know his or her counselor. We like working with people more than papers 😊
- Now, let's look at a Four-Year Plan. Counselors will be around to answer questions; feel free to leave when you need to.



# **SAMPLE FOUR-YEAR PLAN**

Credits earned in Middle School	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade [2016-2017]	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade [2017-2018]	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade [2018-2019]	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade [2019-2020]	Outside credits earned (summer, dual credit, CBE, correspondence)
Spanish I	ENGLISH 1 PAP	ENGLISH 2 PAP	ENGLISH 3 AP	ENGLISH 4 AP	PE - (.5) Summer School
Health	ALG 1, GEOM, ALG 2, PCAL ALGEBRA I	GEOM, ALG 2, PCAL, CALC GEOMETRY	ALG 2, PCAL, CALC, OTHER ALGEBRA 2	PCAL, CALC, OTHER PRE CALCULUS	PE - (.5) Corres. - Foundations
	BIOLOGY	IPC or CHEMISTRY	CHEMISTRY or PHYSICS	PHYSICS or 4 <sup>TH</sup> SCIENCE SCIENCE	
	W. GEOG. AP HUMAN GEO	WORLD HISTORY AP	US HISTORY AP	GOV'T / ECON AP REG.	
<p>In the spaces below, place the remainder of your graduation requirements: Fine Arts (1 credit), Foreign Language (2 credits), Health (½ credit), electives (5.5 credits) which may satisfy an endorsement; all courses that go above graduation requirements are considered electives – i.e. 5<sup>th</sup> year of math, additional fine arts or athletics credits + 1 YR. PE</p>					
<b>My Endorsement(s):</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multidisciplinary <input type="checkbox"/> STEM <input type="checkbox"/> Business & Industry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arts & Humanities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Services	CHOIR I	CHOIR 2	CHOIR 3	CHOIR 4	<b>My Post-Secondary Plan:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4-year college <input type="checkbox"/> 2-year college <input type="checkbox"/> Technical school <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Work Force <input type="checkbox"/> Other
	SPANISH 2	SPANISH 3 PAP	SPANISH 4 AP	AP SPANISH 5 + MENTORSHIP	
	PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH SCI.	MED. TERM + CERT	PSYCHOLOGY AP	OR HEALTH SCIENCE PHLEBOTOMY	

Automatic admission to a Texas public college or university is granted to students who are in the top 10% of their graduating class\* and who complete the distinguished level of achievement (4 years of study in core areas, including Algebra 2), plus an endorsement.

\*except for UT

Select at least one Career Cluster below to provide direction for your course of study. See the Course Guide online for a complete list of courses, including those that are articulated for college credit.

- Arts, A/V Technology, Communications
- Business, Management Administration & Marketing; Finance
- STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Math
- Information Technology
- Education & Training
- Health Science
- Human Services
- Other

Sample

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature (required) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your time  
and attention.**

**The counselors welcome  
your questions.**