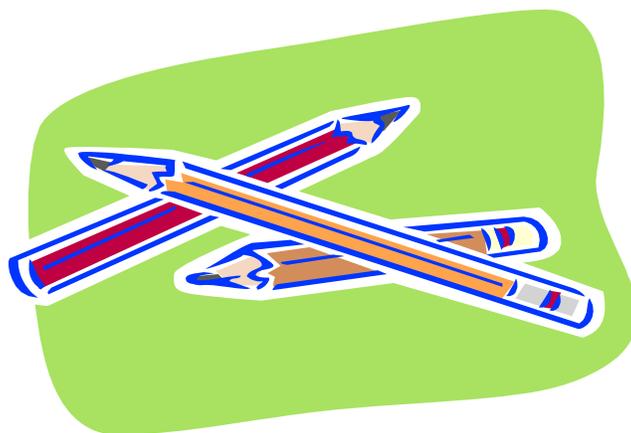


Welcome to Plattsburgh High School

PHS

Mini-Transition Handbook for
Incoming 9th Grade Students



Tips for High School Freshmen

The word “**transition**” is defined as, “passage from one form, state, style, or place to another.” The transition from middle school to high school marks **significant** changes in the way students and their families view education. Here are some things to keep in mind when you look at the next four years of high school for yourself. We want to help you to have a **positive** and **productive** transition into Plattsburgh High School. Welcome!

1) Select challenging courses during all four years of high school

(See the Academic section of the website for course planning worksheets and course descriptions)

2) Earn strong grades in each of your courses

3) Understand your high school records

- **High school transcript:** is a listing of a student’s final grades and credits earned in each course taken for the time the student attends Plattsburgh High School
- **Extra-curricular activities:** all in-school activities (sports teams and clubs) in which a student participates while he/she attends the high school (important for college entrance)

4) Create a “standardized testing portfolio”

- Most students will take a number of standardized tests in preparation for the college admissions process. Building a testing portfolio will keep you organized and allow easy access to this important information.

5) Be aware of the college admissions/ testing schedule

JUNIOR YEAR

- PSAT October of junior year
- SAT I March, May, or June of junior year
- SAT II (Subject tests) June of junior year-talk with your counselors and teachers
- ACT June of junior year

SENIOR YEAR (Discuss strategies with your school counselor for these exams)

- SAT I
- SAT II
- ACT

6) Consider other important aspects of your student profile

(See the Personal/Social Resources section of the website for a list of school activities you might want to join and guidelines from your student handbook)

- Outside commitments (keep a notebook of all school activities and outside commitments)
- Volunteer work
- Part-time employment
- Portfolio of student work from grade 9 forward including records of all academic and school related awards
- Attendance

7) Form strong student/teacher relationships

8) Set personal goals

- Develop study skills, disciplined habits
- Learn effective time-management and organizational skills
- Develop your independence, but also learn how to ask for help when needed
- Create a balance between studies, activities, fun and rest
- Enjoy high school!

GRADING SYSTEM

Grades of students are on a percentage basis with progress to marked quarterly.

HONOR ROLL

High Honors consists of a term grade report containing a percentage grade between 89.5 and 100.

Honors consists of a term grade report containing a percentage grade between 84.5 and 89.4.

This honor is posted in the local newspaper and near the main office each quarter. Hopefully we'll see your name on this list many times through out your high school career!!

HOMEWORK, TESTS AND QUIZZES

Most subjects will require study at home. While the amount of homework or preparation for a test/quiz varies on a nightly basis, an average of two to three hours per night is a reasonable estimate depending on an individual's schedule. In addition to regular assignments, students may need to set aside additional time for the completion of long-range assignments such as research papers, portfolios, projects, college essays, etc.

LOCKERS

All students will be assigned a locker with a combination lock. Should the lock become inoperable, please contact the main office for assistance. Please make sure that you are careful and do not leave valuables in your school lockers!

LOST AND FOUND

Students who find lost articles should take them to the office, where owners can claim them.

PASSES

To ensure the safety and security of students, all students in grades 9-12 are required to use passes to leave a classroom within a class period or to enter a classroom late from another class, nurse's office or counselor's office.

Please note that hallways are carefully monitored by administration, teachers, and staff, so be sure to have a pass on you at all times when in the hallways during class periods. Being in the hall without a pass may result in disciplinary action.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

In a democratic society, citizens have an obligation to help protect the rights and property of others. Students witnessing acts of vandalism or theft are encouraged to report such behavior to a staff member.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

RESPONSIBILITIES & EXPECTATIONS OF THE SCHOOL, STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Learning needs to be valued as an ongoing process that requires the daily interaction of students with their peers and teachers. Now, more than ever, student absences affect this learning process. While a student may make-up the paperwork missed, he/she can rarely duplicate the learning experiences lost by that day's absence. Absence from a class for any reason is academically detrimental to students. Since education is a cooperative effort and students gain from their interactive discussion with one another, their absences also hinder the class.

ABSENCES

Every student shall regularly attend all sessions. They should make good choices so as to not miss so much school that course credit is in jeopardy. However, exceptions may be made for:

- personal illness
- death in the family
- religious holidays
- medical or dental treatment
- other reasons of necessity if approved by the principal or assistant principal.
- Further exemptions can be found in the student handbook

They should keep record of absences in classes. Students should inform teachers about impending absences. When a student returns to school after having been absent, he/she is to have a note from his/her parent or guardian explaining the absence. This note should be taken to the main office within twenty-four hours of return to school. This documentation will be considered should a student appeal the loss of credit in a course.

Early Dismissal

Also be aware that a note from a parent should be submitted to the main office before first period noting that you have an appointment for the day (excused absence), if you plan to leave before the end of the school day. Note that you must sign out before leaving for that appointment.

For more detailed information and for a complete list of the guidelines you can refer to your student handbook.

What is Plattsburgh Pride?

PHS's Policy on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports

Plattsburgh High School implements and supports a behavioral model known as Plattsburgh Pride (a.k.a. PBIS). Plattsburgh Pride is a model which teaches positive behaviors, reinforces and recognizes students who are able to model these behaviors and has systems in place to support students who have a difficult time or may present with more challenging behaviors..

Approach:

Instead of using a patchwork of individual behavioral management plans, we have moved to a school-wide discipline system that addresses the entire school, the classroom, areas outside the classroom (such as hallways, restrooms, offices, cafeteria, playground/school grounds etc.). Every person who works in the school is aware of the behavioral expectations and works to ensure students are consistently getting the same message, regardless of the setting they are in or the adult they come in contact with.

What Plattsburgh Pride Looks Like at PHS:

1. Behavioral Expectations are defined. For example: Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Cooperative.
2. Behavioral Expectations are taught: Behavioral expectations are identified for various settings in each school. The behaviors are taught to all of the students in the school through direct teaching with the help of staff.
3. Appropriate Behaviors are acknowledged: Once appropriate behaviors have been defined and taught, they are acknowledged in various ways on a regular basis. Examples of reinforcements used are: Gold & Platinum Cards, Cheers for Peers, Kudos for Kids, Perfect Attendance Awards, Positive Office Referrals, Good Citizen Postcards, and Praise Hats.
4. Individual Support is provided for Students not responding to the School- Wide System: Each school has a system for developing plans for individual students who may have a difficult time and need more support in a school setting.
5. The entire school community is needed to be actively involved in order to make the system successful. Plattsburgh Pride is a district wide system for establishing a positive culture in each building.

How Can You Participate?

1. Know behavioral expectations- Plattsburgh Pride's behavioral expectations will be clearly outlined by teachers and in your classroom environment.
2. Set an example- Once you know the behaviors expected of you- model them for your peers. Be an agent of change and inspire your peers to work towards the behavior expectations of the Plattsburgh Pride model.
3. Learn from your mistakes- Lots of people make mistakes- but those who are able to learn from those mistakes are those who are less likely to repeat them.
4. Expect good behavior from your peers- Not only should you be a model in your own behavior but you can also encourage your friends and peer groups to engage in the same type of behavior.

Taken from the Plattsburgh High School Website: <http://plattsburgh.neric.org/phs/PBIS/WhatIsPBIS2.htm>

Adapted for this manual by: Erin Cannan, Plattsburgh High School Student Intern

Career/College Planning- Why Plan Now?

You are now entering into a period of your life where your responsibility is mounting and you have a million and one new challenges, so why would it be important to plan ahead for college or a career?

- 1. Planning for a career or to attend a college ahead of time can help motivate you to attain higher levels of academic achievement.*
- 2. Knowing which careers interest you will help you know which course selection is right for you. For example, instead of taking Child Studies as just another elective to fill your schedule, perhaps you might take web page design to fulfill the elective as you may be planning to pursue a degree in computers. Planning ahead is key. This might also be a time for you to dabble in course work that you might be interested in before you choose a college major. This might help you decide which career might be best for you in the future.*
- 3. Knowing what colleges you are interested in might help you to know what academic benchmarks are important for you to achieve (Some schools require a B average, some require an A average). Knowing the academic expectations of your college's admission counselor in your freshman year, will help you to begin your academic career with a goal in mind.*
- 4. Planning a career can help you plan a path for your future. Perhaps you plan to be an automotive technician or a police officer- planning ahead will allow you to consider all of your options such as two or four year colleges, or career/college preparation courses at CV Tech.*
- 5. Planning ahead is just a smart way to approach your educational future!! Giving yourself enough time to explore your career and/or college options will allow you to make a more informed and well-thought out decision in your junior and senior years.*

Career Planning Resources

- www.gacollege411.com - Information that assists students and their families to select a college, apply for admission, and plan to finance higher education.
- www.collegeboard.org - Information to aid in the transition from high school to college.
- www.nycareerzone.org - This website is used by many students as part of the career guidance curriculum.
- www.jobprofiles.com - Learn about a wide variety of careers from the people who are working in those jobs.
- <http://www.cves.org/CV-TEC/careers.htm> - Learn about career and educational opportunities offered by Champlain Valley Technical Services. Please see your counselor for more information regarding programs and scheduling course work into your junior and senior year plans.

**** Look at the Plattsburgh website for more information about career exploration websites and opportunities.**

<http://plattsburgh.neric.org/phs/Counseling/Counseling.htm>

**** Additionally, if you would like to explore options with your counselor, feel free to set up an appointment to discuss career opportunities and higher education.**

COUNSELING PROGRAM

The counseling program provides direct services in educational and occupational planning as well as personal development and adjustment. The primary function is to assist all students in assessing their abilities, interests and needs so they can make intelligent decisions concerning their education and future plans

School counselors link together the many people involved in a student's education. It is very important that students and parents/guardians communicate with the counselor concerning questions or concerns relating to school. Counselors make scheduled contacts with their students during the four years of high school. However, students are encouraged to meet with their counselor as often as is needed. This can be done by making an appointment before school, after school, during lunch, or between classes.

The counseling department is open to all students, parents, guardians and teachers from 8:00 AM to 3:20 PM and at other times by appointment. To speak with a counselor or leave a message, please call 518-561-7500. For Alan Feazelle you can use extension 5072, Amy Tisdale can be reached at extension 5074, and June Pernice will be available at extension 5073.

Services Offered:

ONE-ON-ONE AND GROUP COUNSELING

The counselors at Plattsburgh High School are available during walk in hours and also by appointment to help you with any personal or social needs or issues you may have. Please note that the guidance department and other counseling staff in the building are available for individual counseling though there is some availability for counseling in a group setting.

COLLEGE AND CAREER PLANNING

The counseling office serves as a storehouse for information concerning higher education and careers for future planning. Computer programs, higher education catalogues and occupational catalogues are readily available to students and parents/guardians. Career interest inventories are provided online or on an individual basis. The counseling department maintains a list of college open houses and local information. Additional information may be available at our Plattsburgh High School website. Also note that counselors are readily available to discuss colleges or college and career planning if needed.

CLASS SCHEDULING AND PLANNING

Your counselor will meet with you once a year to devise a schedule that meets your academic needs, adheres to standards and requirements of New York State, and appeals to your interests and future career plans.

OCCUPATIONAL/VOCATIONAL COUNSELING

The counseling staff offers information regarding the following programs:

Vocational School Opportunities- Champlain Valley Technical Center

Any student interested in pursuing a program in a vocational-technical school should contact his/her counselor for information and an application. Vocational course work can be arranged for Junior and Senior high school students through Champlain Valley Services.

Work Experience (Summer work program)

This program is designed to place students in supervised work sites that relate to their short- and long-term vocational interests.

Working Papers

All students between the ages of 14-17 must obtain working papers before beginning employment. These may be obtained from the main office.

Students ages 14/15 must:

1. Secure employment
2. Pick-up working papers in the guidance office
3. Obtain signature(s) from a.) employer, b.) physician/school nurse, c.) parent/guardian
4. Return forms to the guidance office
5. File copy at school - copy to employer

Students ages 16/17 must:

1. Secure employment
2. Complete forms in the guidance office
3. Copy filed at high school - copy to employer

REFERRAL TO COMMUNITY AGENCIES

The counselors are aware of, and in contact with, a variety of community mental health agencies specializing in individual and family counseling. Please feel free to discuss these resources with your counselor. Provided that no known violation of school policy has occurred, a student will receive assistance with issues. The school will create a climate and provide resources by which a student may seek and receive education, referral and/or counseling related to the problem. As with any medical condition, costs associated with medical treatment will be the responsibility of the student's family.

***** Please see the Plattsburgh website for more information about your Guidance Department. While you are there, check out other helpful resources for students as well. (Do note that the site is under construction, but will be updated in the first quarter with more and new information to help this transition to high school just a little bit easier!!)**

<http://plattsburgh.neric.org/phs/Counseling/Counseling.htm>

A QUICK NOTE ABOUT CYBER SAFETY:

It is important to realize that a majority of our lives as teenagers are spent on the phone or computers and because of that we are more at risk for cyber bullying (texting over the phone, Myspace blogs, and chatting on AIM), as well as the possibility of being a target of an online predator. Below we have briefly listed some websites you can visit to learn more about cyber safety.

<http://www.netsmartz.org/netteens.htm>

<http://www.mcgruff.org/Advice/cyberbullies.php?gclid=CjwOSugZUCFSASOQod5W5hIA>

<http://www.cyber-safety.com/teens.html>

http://www.cybersmart.org/downloads/pdf/cyber_security_tips_poster.pdf

http://www.dmoz.org/Kids_and_Teens/safety_teens.html

The Guidance Department welcomes you to Plattsburgh High School!!

Transition Handbook Created by: Erica Tobrocke, Ashley Mason, Julie Timmons and other students in the Plattsburgh State University, School Counseling Masters Program.

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