

Transition to High School

A guide for parents



**ANOKA-HENNEPIN
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
2013-2014



**ANOKA-HENNEPIN
SCHOOLS**
A future without limit

Welcome to high school!

Starting high school is a time of great excitement for students and their families. For many teens, entering high school is a defining moment. They may feel grown up and ready for independence. At the same time, they may be concerned about how they will fit in with a new group of people and how they will cope with increased academic expectations. They may worry about that first day of school. The building is new to them, teachers are unfamiliar, and those juniors and seniors are an unknown quantity. Will they be friendly, or will they make life difficult for the new students?

We work hard to make sure that your child feels at home when he or she joins our school next fall. Every high school in the Anoka-Hennepin School District welcomes students with a program designed to make freshmen feel comfortable in high school and start them on the road to success.

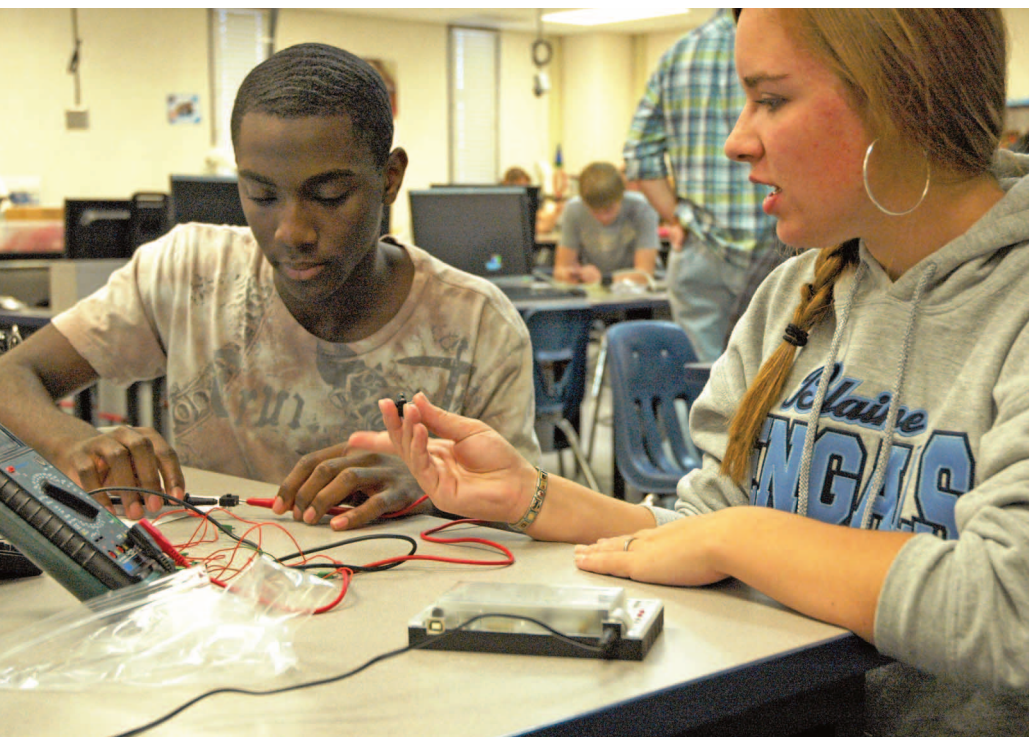
New students will be welcomed to school orientation by student leaders who are trained juniors and seniors. The leaders meet periodically with freshmen for academic support and social activities throughout



their first year of school. The leaders help students learn school expectations, traditions, appropriate behavior, good study habits, and how to get involved in co-curricular activities. Leaders create a welcoming atmosphere at school that helps new students begin to relax and begin the work of high school.

Parents and guardians play an important role in supporting young people as they make the transition to high school. This brochure includes tips on how you can help your child be successful in high school.

The following pages contain information about high school including schedule, curriculum, activities, communication, homework and more.



The high school schedule

The school day in all Anoka-Hennepin high schools is divided into five class periods of 67 minutes each with seven minute passing times between each class and a 30-minute lunch break. The school year is divided into trimesters of approximately 12 weeks each. You may hear this referred to as the "5 by 3" schedule.

Students earn a full credit for each two-trimester course and a half credit for each one-trimester course.

Advisement or focus periods

Advisement or focus periods are similar to what many parents experienced as “home room.” A group of students meets regularly with a teacher who is their adviser. This period is an opportunity for teachers to help students with study skills, share important information and provide opportunities for students to get extra help if needed, or to explore something new through an enrichment activity.

What to expect in the classroom

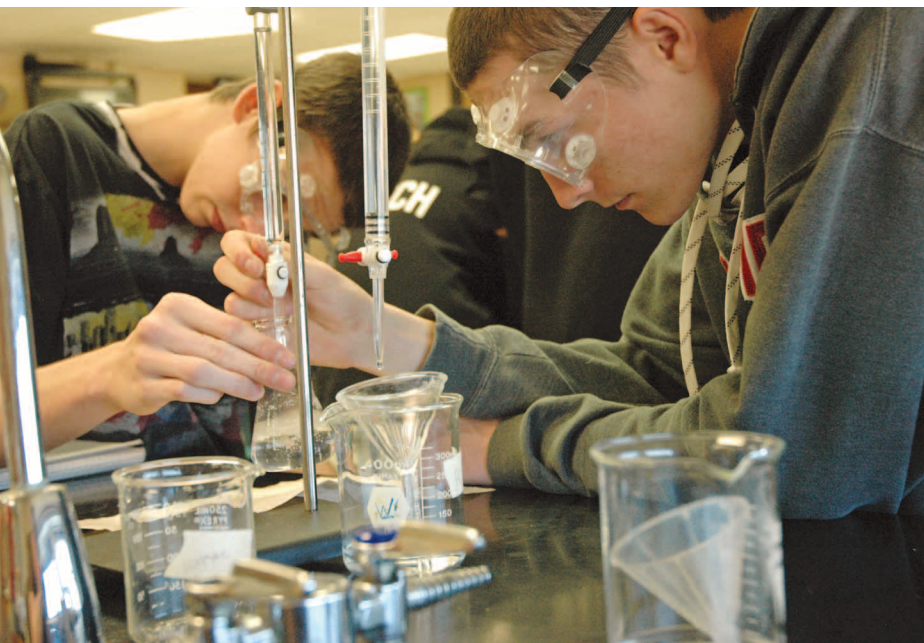
Each teacher gives students a course syllabus at the beginning of the course. It outlines the course content and expectations, and indicates how often teachers will post grades online through A-HConnect.

In general, students can expect to be in classes with an average of 38 students. Class periods often include a mix of activities including discussion, small group activities, projects and lecture.



Homework

Students receive more homework in high school than they did in middle school. Teachers expect that all assignments will be completed and turned in on time. Students need to be organized and keep up with their work on a daily basis. Organizational strategies such as keeping an assignment planner similar to the one they learned to use in middle school will help. Most student schedules do not include a study hall so students must do most homework after school hours. Teachers are available before and after school to help students who need it. Parents are encouraged to check the status of their child’s homework completion by using A-HConnect (see page 6).



Credits count!

High school is the first time students must earn credits. Students must pass required and elective courses as well as state tests in reading, mathematics and writing in order to earn a high school diploma. Retesting is available to all students who need it.

The school district provides opportunities for students to retake courses they fail through summer school and evening school. Students are allowed to make up only 1.5 missed credits per year.

Curriculum

Offering more than 300 courses, Anoka-Hennepin high schools are designed to meet the interests and abilities of all students. Students are encouraged to take the most rigorous courses possible with the goal that all students will be prepared to enter college or other post secondary programs if they so choose. A variety of Honors, Advanced Placement, College in the Schools and

career and technical courses are available, many offering students the opportunity to earn college credit while in high school. Advanced offerings are open to all students willing to work hard.

Students in the class of 2017 are required to successfully complete the following courses during their four years of high school:

<u>Curriculum</u>	<u>Credits</u>				
● English 9	1	● Health	.5	● Electives	10.5
● English 10	1	● Physical Education I	.5	● Mathematics - 3 credits	
● English 11	1	● Physical Education II	.5	Typically met by one of the following course sequences:	
● English 12	1	● Science Courses 3 credits		● Geometry, Algebra with Quadratics, and Statistics and Probability	
● Social Studies courses:		● Physical Science 9	1	OR	
● Government 9	1	● Science Choice	1	● Geometry, Algebra with Quadratics, Algebra II, and Statistics and Probability	
● US History 10	1	(Chemistry is the recommended science elective)			
● Global Studies 11	1	● Biology I	1		
● Economics/ Politics and Law 12	1	● Arts Choice	1		

For complete details, see the Registration Guide 2013-14 that your child received last winter prior to registration for grade 9.

Response to a question most ninth graders ask – Yes! Anoka-Hennepin high schools offer a complete Driver Education program with behind-the-wheel training.





Athletics and other activities

All students are strongly encouraged to participate in co-curricular activities. Numerous studies show that students who participate in activities receive better grades in their coursework, have higher self-esteem, feel more connected to their school, and are more successful after high school.

Students can choose from a wide variety of activities including: adapted sports for students with special needs, baseball, basketball, debate, football, marching band and color guard, Math League, newspaper, Science Olympiad, skiing, soccer, speech team, swimming and diving, tennis, theatre, track, volleyball, yearbook, and many, many more.

Student fees cover a portion of the cost of co-curricular activities. Students who qualify for free meals can participate at no cost. Students who qualify for reduced cost meals pay half the normal fee. There is an individual and family cap that may reduce the cost for students who participate in several activities. There is no fee for students who participate in school clubs.

Buses are available in late afternoon to provide transportation for students who stay after school for activities or help with academic work.

Important note!

Practice begins Monday, August 12 for fall sports seasons: cross country running, football, soccer, girls' tennis and volleyball. Some schools require students to register in advance, others conduct registration the first day of practice. For information on fall athletics call the activities secretary at your high school.



School spirit

Students find school more enjoyable and develop school spirit when they participate in activities and attend school events, such as games, concerts, dances, plays, etc. Students can get a significant discount on event tickets by purchasing punch passes. Each high school sponsors significant social activities, such as Homecoming Week, a special winter week, and a spring prom, which is open to juniors and seniors. Freshmen and sophomores may attend prom only if they are guests of a junior or senior.

Career planning

It is never too early to encourage your child to think about a career. All students take the PLAN test their sophomore year. It gives them a picture of their academic progress and helps them determine what types of careers might be of interest to them and what high school courses will create a pathway to those careers.

All high schools have career centers with a wealth of information about careers and colleges.



Helping all students succeed

- Using scores on state tests, schools identify students who are not performing at a proficient level and help students develop plans to improve their skills. This may include trading an elective course for a remedial course, working on reading and math skills during advisement periods, and tutoring.
- Before- and after-school programs are available for students who need help with homework or help understanding their coursework.
- Teachers are available before and after school to help students. Some teachers offer study sessions on a regular basis.
- The EXCEL program is available to all high schools to help motivate students with low grade point averages and to teach them strategies to be more successful in school such as time management, goal setting, and test preparation. Some schools offer additional tutoring programs as well as special programs to help prepare students for college.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are available for students who are learning English.
- Special education services are available for students with special needs.
- A chemical health coordinator, school psychologist, student learning advocate and a variety of support groups are available to meet with students and deal with concerns as needed.
- Counselors are available for all students at each high school to talk about everything from academics to personal issues.

Keeping students safe

- Each school has a police liaison officer.
- All schools have security cameras and a security guard during the day. Most exterior doors are locked.
- Visitors to schools must sign in and out.
- School parking lots have attendants.
- All high schools have peer mediation programs to help students settle conflicts with each other.
- The Student Discipline Policy is strictly enforced. You will receive a copy of this and other important policies in the Secondary Handbook. Please review the policy with your child.

The Anoka-Hennepin School District does not tolerate bullying or harassment. Please encourage your child to report to any staff member incidents of bullying or harassment regardless of whether they are a victim or bystander. All situations reported are investigated and students who bully or harass others will be disciplined appropriately.



Communicating with families

As your child enters high school, communication with the school is even more important than in elementary or middle school. This is because high school age children are making important decisions that can have lasting impact on their lives. Don't hesitate to call the school if you have questions or concerns. In general, for questions related to emotional issues, grades and course schedules, contact your child's counselor. For questions related to discipline and concerns about your child's behavior, contact your child's assistant principal. If you have questions about your child's performance in a particular course, contact the teacher. Students are assigned to a specific counselor and assistant principal based on the first letters of their last name.

- Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled once each trimester. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend. If you are unable to attend, feel free to contact your child's teachers for a phone conference.
- Parents/guardians can access a variety of data about their students using a secure website called A-HConnect. User names and passwords will be mailed to all parents before school starts. For help call 763-506-HELP (4357).
- Principals provide a brief update on important school news to parents regularly through ParentLink automated phone calls and more in-depth information in regular e-newsletters put out every two weeks.
- Each high school maintains a Web site with information on school activities and events.
 - Many teachers have web pages with news and information about their classes, including class assignments. Teacher web pages are accessed through the school's website.
 - Some high schools have electronic newsletters. Subscribe to these through the link on the school or district Web site.
- Get news and information about the school district in a variety of formats. Visit the A-H Newsroom for links to district news publications: www.anoka.k12.mn.us/ahnews.



Opportunities for parent involvement

At school

- Each high school has a volunteer services coordinator who links parents with volunteer opportunities. These include such things as chaperoning a field trip or dance, shelving books in the media center, arranging display cases and bulletin boards, serving as a guest speaker, coaching a Destination ImagiNation creative problem solving team, and many more. For more information, call your school's volunteer services coordinator.
- All schools have either a formal parent-school organization or schedule group parent meetings. Parents are encouraged to attend these meetings.
- Many co-curricular activities have active parent booster groups.

At home

What can I do to help my child adjust to high school?

- Be interested in and enthusiastic about your child's move to high school.
- Encourage your child to participate in freshmen orientation. It alleviates a lot of anxiety for students. Orientation typically includes an opportunity for students to get their course schedules in advance, tour the school, follow a mock schedule, find their lockers, get their lunch PIN, meet staff and student leaders, and learn about clubs and activities.
- Your child may express worry about coping with the increased demands of high school or about not fitting in, or seem lonely and unhappy. Listen carefully, be supportive and encouraging. Reassure him or her that it is normal to feel confused or unsure. As students become familiar with high school and get involved in schoolwork and activities, these feelings usually go away.
- Learn about typical behavior of high school age children so you will have realistic expectations and will know how to handle any bumps in the road.



(continued on page 7)



Parent involvement

(continued from page 6)

- Anoka-Hennepin Community Education offers a variety of parenting classes and workshops. Find course descriptions and online registration in the Community Education section of the Anoka-Hennepin website, www.anoka.k12.mn.us, or call 763-506-1260 for more details.
- Excellent parenting books, audio and video materials are available for loan at the district Parent Involvement Resource Center, 2727 N. Ferry St., Anoka. Call 763-506-1567 for more details.
- Be involved in your child's education. Research shows that when parents are involved, their children do better in school. Attending parent-teacher conferences, monitoring your child's homework, and attending school events are a few of the many ways to show your child that school is important.
- Encourage your child to participate in co-curricular activities and student clubs and to attend school events. High school is an important time to try new activities and explore interests and talents.
- Use A-HConnect to check your child's completion of assignments, test scores, grades and more.
- If you suspect your child is having behavior problems, is not completing homework, or seems uninterested in daily activities, contact your child's assistant principal for help.

High Schools

Andover High School	763-506-8400
2115 Andover Blvd. N.W., Andover, MN 55304-3407	
Anoka High School	763-506-6200
3939 Seventh Ave. N., Anoka, MN 55303-1299	
Blaine High School	763-506-6500
12555 University Ave. N.E., Blaine, MN 55434-2199	
Champlin Park High School	763-506-6800
6025 109th Ave. N., Champlin, MN 55316-3488	
Coon Rapids High School	763-506-7100
2340 Northdale Blvd., Coon Rapids, MN 55433-3097	
Crossroads Alternative High School	763-506-7400
1313 Coon Rapids Blvd., Coon Rapids, MN 55433-5362	
Crossroads West Campus	763-506-4500
12439 Champlin Dr., Champlin, MN 55316-1907	

Anoka-Hennepin Schools
2727 N. Ferry St.
Anoka, MN 55303
www.anoka.k12.mn.us

If requested, this brochure will be provided in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in another language for individuals whose primary language is not English. A minimum of three days notice is needed. Please call the Family Welcome Center at 763-506-7928 to request an alternate format or language.



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