

HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL



Guidance & School Counseling Department

Developmental Model

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In accordance with Hamilton-Wenham School District's mission "to educate students to become young adults who are of good character and demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills needed to be successful members of our global economy and engaged citizens of the 21st century", and the Massachusetts School Counselors Association Model, the Guidance & School Counseling Department of Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School has created the following developmental model to help guide students throughout their high school career. By working to reach their greatest potential, Hamilton-Wenham students will learn to: live as lifelong learners, express themselves effectively, acquire essential knowledge and skills, respect themselves and others, and navigate within a variety of communities.

8th Grade

The importance of a smooth transition from middle school to high school is essential to a student's academic, developmental and emotional well-being. In order to facilitate this transition and alleviate issues of stress/anxiety that can become impediments to optimal progress the counselors will:

- Meet with the 8th grade students in a large group setting in February to explain the importance of selecting the most appropriately challenging high school core courses and electives beginning in the ninth grade within the context of fulfilling graduation requirements. At this assembly the high school administration conducts a power point presentation in the MRMS multi-purpose room that explains various courses that are available to freshmen and introduces them to the Aspen scheduling module. After breaking into smaller counselor-led groups attention is paid to creating a four year plan that will maximize each student's post-secondary options. Counselors stress the need for each student to dedicate themselves to putting forth their best effort throughout high school thereby increasing their options upon graduating from HWRHS.

- Join the administration, at an evening event, speaking to parents about the course selection process for parents of incoming ninth graders, and also addresses matters pertaining to the high school experience.
- Coordinate information sessions for students who are attending eighth grade at either private schools or other public school systems and are considering entering Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School in the ninth grade.
- Meet with the eighth grade school counselors and administration to review eighth grade students who will be transitioning to high school.
- Coordinate the annual “Move-Up Day” for eighth grade students at the high school that provides them with an opportunity to meet and hear from “essential people” at the high school, watch a student produced video and ask questions of high school personnel and tour the building.
- Support an annual evening program in the Fall for parents of eighth grade students which addresses the role of the high school counselor, matters of successful transitioning, involvement in co-curricular activities, and select matters from the Student Handbook,

9th Grade

The demands of the first year of high school require students to consistently improve upon their study skills, organizational skills, time management skills and work habits. Freshmen benefit from guidance on academic and personal matters, while striving towards developing their own independence, accountability and personal style of learning. Students discover that the amount of time they invest is directly related to their success both within and outside of the high school classroom. They grow to realize that they are solely responsible for their decision-making and eventual outcomes. In order to better guide these new high school students through this transitional phase counselors/director will:

- Join the Associate Principal during Freshman Orientation to present a session on academic expectations at HWRHS on a rotating basis to small groups of freshmen students.

- Meet with students in small groups early in the first quarter of the school year to re-introduce themselves, explain the threefold function of the school counselor, review the appointment process & graduation requirements, as well as co-curricular activities. Freshmen will also take a department survey online through Google Classroom.
- Organize and host a morning information session as part of the annual “Coffee with Counselors” program in the early fall that provides interested parents with a “refresher” course on how high school works. Successful strategies that families and students can implement to promote a positive transition.
- Meet with freshmen individually to establish a relationship with the student.
- Meet with each freshman on a 1:1 basis in March to review the course selection process in light of the student transcript, and verify that each student is enrolled in or scheduled for the appropriate classes regarding levels and graduation requirements.

10th Grade

During the sophomore year, students should continue to enhance their future options through a series of appropriate choices surrounding their high school day both, within and beyond the classroom. By doing so, sophomores can come to better assess their personal interests and strengths, as they give consideration to their future choices. By continuing to foster a positive relationship with their counselor and by the exploration of Naviance, the student will come to understand and explore his/her own individual strengths and interests. Insight will be gained into the education or training that will be necessary to achieve future goals. Each student will begin to identify potential careers and post-secondary areas of interest. In order to better guide these second year high school students through this developmental phase counselors will:

- Strongly encourage sophomores to take the PSAT exam in October. Those who take the exam will participate in a classroom discussion of the results of the exam in terms of college and career readiness.
- Invite interested students to apply to the Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership seminar held over three days in June. One student from the sophomore class is chosen to attend the seminar. Historically, HOBY has worked diligently at helping young people make a difference and become positive catalysts for change.
- Present the Naviance College & Career System to all sophomores in February. A pre-presentation and post-presentation survey is administered to students.
- Meet with sophomores to continue to reinforce the lessons that were gained through the Naviance presentation.
- Organize and host a morning information session as part of the annual "Coffee with Counselors" program that provides interested parents with an introduction to the Naviance College and Career program.
- Meet with each sophomore on a 1:1 basis in March to review the course selection process in light of the student transcript, and verify that each student is scheduled for the appropriate classes regarding levels and graduation requirements.

11th Grade

Post-Secondary Planning is the primary focus of the counselor and student during the junior year. Students, working in concert with their counselor, strive to identify post-secondary institutions and careers that align with their personal preferences, skills and educational background that have been explored during their freshmen and sophomore years. The

importance of assuming responsibility for their own search and the importance of planning, organizing and adhering to a timeline is essential and repeatedly stressed by the counselor to the student. In order to insure that each junior remains focused and organized while working toward these goals, the counselors will:

- Strongly encourage all juniors to take the PSAT exam in October of junior year.
- Organize and host a morning information session as part of the annual “Coffee with Counselors” program that provides parents with pertinent college planning information.
- Meet with each junior in a classroom setting in December to return and review their PSAT results and make recommendations for test-taking schedules and strategies.
- Meet with juniors in a small group setting in February-March to review topics that are essential to the college search, visitation and selection processes.
- Provide students and parents with the annual HWRHS Post-Secondary Planning Guide designed to provide students and their parents with essential information on an array of timely topics for juniors in high school.
- Sponsor the annual “College Panel” evening for juniors and their parents with admissions representatives from six varying colleges. Matters pertaining to the post-secondary search & admission processes are discussed by the experts.
- Meet with each junior on a 1:1 basis in March to review the course selection process in light of the student transcript, and verify that each student is schedules for the appropriate classes regarding levels and graduation requirements.

- Distribute electronically the Guidance & School Counseling Newsletter and the College Impressions Newsletter on a monthly basis. Both provide timely and pertinent information relative to post-secondary planning topics as well as other relevant high school topics.
- Work with the department's secretary to facilitate the Junior Book Award Assembly. The event consists of contacting college representatives, organizing a faculty selection process, and writing speeches which culminate in the annual school-wide ceremony held in June.

12th Grade

Post-secondary planning continues to be the primary focus with additional attention paid to the financial aid process and scholarship opportunities. Seniors are regularly reminded to assume the responsibility of adhering to their application deadlines, and are also provided with constant support by the counselors, as well as the secretarial staff of the Guidance & School Counseling Office. Since their junior year, students are encouraged to secure letters of recommendation from classroom teachers, as well as seek input from their English teacher regarding their college essay. The post-secondary selection and application processes are initiated well before the school year begins in September and continue through May. In order to assist members of the senior class in balancing the myriad of tasks required of them prior to graduation the counselors will:

- Provide two monthly newsletters that reiterate pertinent information covered during the school year, as well as post reminders to families concerning standardized testing dates, scholarships and other important information.
- E-mail and tweet regular reminders of essential events, opportunities and due-dates to students and their parents.
- Organize and host a morning information session as part of the annual "Coffee with Counselors" program that provides parents with pertinent college planning information.

- Meet with seniors in small classroom settings and individually early in the school year to review timely information including: Transcript Release Authorization, process to sign up to meet college representatives, review of the Post-Secondary Planning Guide, College Search/Compare/Scattergrams in Naviance, Teacher Letters of Recommendation, etc. The counselors will explain in detail the department's process for sending official copies of transcripts to post-secondary institutions.
- Facilitate college admission representative visits with seniors at HWRHS in a small group setting. Survey representatives with an updated annual questionnaire.
- Sponsor an Evening with "Seniors and Their Parents" in September during which time matters relative to the college application & admission processes are discussed. It serves as a follow-up to the annual College Panel held the previous spring.
- Host a Financial Information Night at HWRHS in November to explain the FAFSA and address the financial aid process.
- Administer the AFL-CIO Labor Scholarship exam to interested students in February.
- Publish the Common Scholarship Application & the Scholarship Information Listing in each senior's Naviance account & on the Department's webpage. Disseminate information in a classroom setting.
- Meet with seniors throughout the school year on an individual basis in order to assist the student with finalizing their college and career plans and forward any necessary documentation to the post-secondary institution.
- Participate in closure seminars during Senior Week.