Blue Valley High Schools

Kristi Dixon, Guidance Counselor, BVSW
Jen Johnson, Gifted Education Teacher, BVHS
The Preface

- District-wide perspective—the broad view
- Consistency with caveats
- Personalized approach from each high school
- Transition experiences already planned
  - School-wide
  - Gifted education
- Specific questions directed to home middle or high school
Integration of Naviance Family Connection

- College and career readiness activities integrated into students’ school experiences from 6th through 12th grades
- Parents can set up personalized accounts in program to review student work for beneficial conversations
- Students create a freshman year plan based on their enrollment choices
- Preview of the four-year planning process for high school
- Consult counselors in specific school to access account information
Graduation Requirements

> 24 credits required for graduation
  • English Language Arts
  • Math
  • Science
  • Social Studies
  • Electives
> Any classes taken beyond the basic requirement become elective credits
> Refer to the Course Description Guide for your freshmen (published in January)
Electives

> Total required—7.5 credits

> Create room for additional Science, Math, World Language, and/or other interests (Music, Debate, Art, Business, or CAPS)
9th Grade Enrollment Overview

> December-January
  • Communication from MS/HS about transition activities

> January-February
  • Counselors visit middle schools to explain enrollment

> Late January-Early February
  • Schools host academic and activity event(s) for MS parents and students

> Early February
  • HS counselors help 8th graders enroll in freshman year classes
English Language Arts (ELA)

- 4 Credits required
  - ELA 9 or Honors ELA 9
  - ELA 10 or Honors ELA 10
  - ELA 11 or AP English Language
  - ELA 12, Contemporary Communications, or AP English Literature
Math

- 3 Credits required
  - Algebra
  - Geometry or Honors Geometry
  - Algebra II or Honors Algebra II
- Regents Colleges require 3 or 4 years
- One class beyond Algebra II or a 22 on the ACT
Science

- 3 Credits required
  - Biology or Honors Biology
  - Physical science course
  - Science elective
- Regents colleges require 3 years of science (including Chemistry or Physics)
Social Studies

- 3 Credits required
  - History of the Western World or AP European History
  - US History or AP US History
  - American Government or AP Gov (1 semester)
  - Social Studies elective course (1 semester)
Physical Education

• 1.5 Credits required
  • General Physical Education
  • Health (semester)
Arts

> 1 Credit required
> • See Appendix B in the Course Description Guide
> • Select from
>   - Visual Arts
>   - Music
>   - Performing Arts
>   - Industrial Technology
>   - Family & Consumer Sciences
Computer Technology

- 1 Credit required
  - See Appendix C in the Course Description Guide
World Language

- World Language is not required to graduate
- 2-3 Years recommended by in-state colleges
- 3-4 Years recommended by out-of-state colleges
- Some colleges or majors have different requirements
Other Credit Information

> Selective colleges typically require or highly recommend 3-4 years of a world language
> Departments or schools within a university may have different credit requirements for admission
> Academic performance in a rigorous schedule is just one part of college admissions
  • Consider involvement in school activities, involvement in community service, and leadership opportunities
9th Grade Enrollment Overview

> Choose classes carefully in January/February
> Changes to schedules dependent on space available
> Many students in gifted education can handle the honors/AP classes of freshman year
> If you’re unsure, try the harder class
  > Easier to adjust to a move from an honors to on-level
  > Take the courses that match the student’s needs
  > Recommendations are suggestions
  > Staff members change
Advanced Placement Classes

- Opportunity to earn college credit while in high school

- AP Exams
  - 5 point scale (5 = “extremely well qualified”)
  - 3 or better eligible for credit at many colleges
  - English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Math, World Languages

- College NOW
  - Agreements with JCCC and Baker University
Online Courses—Virtual Education

- May offer flexibility when scheduling
- Self-directed learning required
- One class period or an “8th hour” for additional fee
- Includes limited AP courses
The Center for Advanced Professional Studies

> The Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) programs offer opportunities for students to engage in unique curricula and real world business/career experiences.

> Each family needs to make the best choice for the student’s current and future needs.

> CAPS courses can be embedded into students’ junior/senior year schedules. Most often students who enroll in CAPS have to take some courses online, and they have to make choices between the courses or activities in which they participate.
Junior Planning Meetings

- Family meeting with counselor during 11th grade
- Discuss post-secondary options
- Utilize Naviance Family Connection
  - Career Interests
  - College Research
Gifted Education Class—Personalizing Options

- Gifted Education course provides time and support to accomplish significant, meaningful work in an environment that supports individuality and personal growth.

- Personalized approach for each student

- Support for future planning
  - Four-year planning support
  - Building a résumé
  - Post-Secondary planning
    - Career and college investigation
    - Scholarship investigation

- Balancing life while in high school and preparing for a busy life after high school
Gifted Education Class

> TheGifted Education classroom is a great place to accomplish a wide variety of tasks

- Complete the gifted education curriculum/unit of focus
- Investigate individualized topics
- Explore colleges, careers, and scholarships
- Learn about college applications and essays
- Prepare for high stakes tests
- Develop scholarly habits
- Pursue IEP goals
- Many other personalized options
Sample Individual Activities in Gifted Education

- Create a college research portfolio
- Complete a career inventory
- Complete a practice ACT exam
- Develop a list of stress management strategies
- Create a study skills plan of action
- Watch a TED talk about creativity
- Complete a perfectionism inventory
- Discuss tone and body language
- Analyze characteristics of influential leaders
- Discuss current events beyond the KC Metro area
Enrollment in Gifted Education Class

- Can enroll as often as needed and preferred
- IEP remains active even if the student is not always enrolled in the Gifted Education course
- Consultative services when students are not in class
- Students in gifted education can visit their gifted education teacher anytime for assistance
General Education Classes

> What classes should students who are gifted take?

Typically, most 9th graders who are gifted do well with the honors and Advanced Placement courses that are offered at their grade level. However, each family needs to make the best choice given the needs of the student (organizational ability, extracurricular involvement, etc.).

> What makes honors and AP classes different from the regular classes?

Honors and Advanced Placement courses move at a fast pace, and they typically cover more content and at greater depth.
Accelerated Students—What Happens Later

> When students have been accelerated, they are at least a year ahead of peers in either specific subjects or a whole grade. Students may reach the highest level course offered via Blue Valley earlier than other students, so they have options for courses to enroll in when the time in their schedule is more flexible. Student choices vary when making these decisions.

> The student’s team will discuss possible future options when acceleration is done in general education.

> Students in the past have elected to complete an online course, take an elective course, and/or choose another option that meets his/her needs.
Beyond Academics

> Many learning opportunities are available outside of the classroom

> School clubs/activities are another way to pursue a passion area that may not be cultivated during the school day

> If a club of interest does not currently exist, ask about ways to form a new club at that school
Seeking Balance

- Maintain a balance that ensures success in all areas of student life.
- Consider all the aspects of the student’s life.
- Make the best choices for the individual.
The Gifted Education Approach

> The gifted education classroom provides a safe place to be smart, and the teachers offer direction and support in navigating life as a gifted individual in a non-gifted world.

> Gifted education teachers focus on the needs of the whole student with ALL his/her strengths, talents, and challenges, not just the intellect.
Student Support Network at School

- IEP Team
- Gifted education teacher
- Counselor
- General education teacher(s)
- School psychologist
- Administrators
- Others
Parent Support During High School

4+4 College & Career Readiness Video Series

- Video series to assist parents with the processes and procedures of college and career readiness
- Videos targeted toward specific school years, but accessible anytime
- Supporting documents and links available on the website
- Work on the site is ongoing
Communication for Individual Questions

> Visit school’s website via district main school list
> Communicate with current counselor first (MS)
> • If questions cannot be answered, contact HS counselor
> List of counselors on counseling page for each school
> • Identify counselor based on portion of alphabet served
> Communicate with MS gifted ed teacher first
> • If questions cannot be answered, contact HS gifted ed teacher
> MS gifted ed teacher can provide names/contact for HS gifted ed teachers
> • On high school website, typically listed under special education department
Other Questions?