

January 2026

Dear Eighth Grade Students and Parents/Guardians,

Hello and Happy New Year! On behalf of our entire faculty, administration, and students, we are excited to welcome and introduce you to the Staples community. We would like to provide information to you in preparation for the course selection process for your first year at Staples. We hope you will find it helpful and want to assure you that we are here to do all we can to make this transition as smooth as possible.

- The [2026-27 Staples High School Program of Studies](#) is live on the Staples website. Here you will find descriptions of the many Staples course offerings as well as detailed information to guide you in your decision making. You are also encouraged to use our [Ninth Grade Course Selection Worksheet](#) as a reference to focus your options.
- Soon, eighth grade and Staples counselors will review the *Program of Studies* and present course selection information to students in their developmental counseling lessons. Eighth grade teachers will make individual course recommendations for each student. These recommendations will be viewable through PowerSchool starting Friday, February 6.
- *Staples High School Transition Night* will be held on Tuesday, February 10 from 6:15-8:45 p.m. Starting in the high school auditorium, students and parents/guardians will receive a welcome from the principal as well as a general overview of the scheduling process, academics at the high school, and the importance of maintaining balance and well-being. Following the overview, there will be presentations for students and parents/guardians by Staples teachers and department coordinators regarding their specific courses and curricula, all geared toward ninth grade and the transition to high school. This program serves as an opportunity to explore and learn about academic and elective course offerings, aspects of life at Staples, and be introduced to our staff and students. ***Attendance is strongly encouraged for all eighth grade students and their parents/guardians.***
- Following the February break within their teams, eighth grade students will pre-register for courses through PowerSchool (BMS on February 25, CMS on February 26). Specific instructions for students to follow will be provided at that time. All students will then meet individually with middle school counselors throughout the month of March to discuss plans and finalize all selections, including alternate choices for electives. The deadline for all changes to course requests and to override a teacher's course level recommendation is Friday, March 27 in order to provide sufficient time in April and May for the administration to create the master schedule.
- In June, all students will receive verification of their scheduled ninth grade courses, without teacher names or class periods. High school counselors will meet with each of their assigned students one-on-one to review the courses and resolve schedule conflicts.

In August, students will be able to view their complete ninth grade schedule online through PowerSchool. It is expected that schedules will remain firm and students are committed to their scheduled courses for the full school year.

- Eighth grade students will visit Staples in the spring for a short class assembly, opportunity to learn about our many clubs and activities, and tour of the school building. In August, there is an orientation program with our Link Crew upperclass student mentors and staff.

We recognize that you may be experiencing a range of emotions regarding the transition to Staples. Rest assured that many of your peers feel similarly to you. Each year, despite some understandable nerves early on, we witness our new freshmen manage to find their way in the building, explore varied interests, engage in wonderful academic pursuits, maintain friendships and forge new ones, and truly develop as human beings in our community. We wish you all the best for the remainder of eighth grade and look forward to fostering a relationship with you through four years at Staples High School.

Sincerely,

Stafford Thomas  
Principal

Christine Cincotta  
Assistant Principal,  
Class of 2030

William Plunkett  
Director of School Counseling