



February 2017

Dear Parents and Students in grades 9, 10, and 11:

Planning courses is one of the most important aspects of the academic year. During February and March, students will meet with their guidance counselors to review teacher recommendations and select next year's courses. Teachers consider many factors when making academic level recommendations, including: student mindset, assessment performance, class participation, engagement in coursework and consistency in completing assignments. Likewise, families should consider a number of factors when selecting courses, including: student interests, overall course load, short and long-term goals, college and career plans, time demands and stress management issues.

Northern Valley students can enjoy the extensive range of our greatly expanded courses from which to choose – across all educational levels and in both academic and Related Arts areas. We have significantly increased dual-enrollment course offerings, introduced more independent study options and offer early college enrollment for seniors. With our recent adjustment to the master schedule, nearly all students are able to schedule **eight** courses each year. We believe the additional course choices offer a range of opportunities for a variety of student needs, such as taking an academic challenge, exploring career interests, developing an avocation, learning a new skill, relieving stress, qualifying for special college programs. We strongly encourage all students to consider this option for their own personalized needs. That being said, scheduling is a very individualized process to be considered in the context of the student's goals, interests, commitments and responsibilities. We appreciate that taking an additional course may not be an appropriate choice for all students. Parents have the opportunity to request that their student remain at 7 courses.

With all of these exciting opportunities, we urge all parents and students to engage actively in researching their courses. You are strongly encouraged to access the scheduling resources on our Guidance Department homepage, including: The Program of Studies, Course Selection Sheets, Four-Year Academic Framework and Career Pathways. Parents and students are also urged to attend our **Program of Studies Nights on February 8, 2017 at 6:45pm in NV Old Tappan or February 9, 2017 at 6:45pm in NV Demarest**, where we will review the scheduling process, program offerings, graduation requirements, the waiver process, and other scheduling topics. Please research our offerings and discuss course planning with your child. Parents are welcome to contact the student's counselor directly at 201-768-3200 (extensions listed below), and they are also welcome to attend the scheduling conferences. All course selections must be completed by March 24, 2017 and no schedule changes can be guaranteed after that date.

While teachers make level recommendations with the student's best interest in mind, a waiver process allows for the appeal of these recommendations. Students not recommended for certain Honors/Advanced Placement classes may qualify to use up to two waivers if they meet specific criteria and follow outlined procedures. We invite families to use this process only after careful consideration. **Parent AND student must attend a mandatory waiver meeting on either March 22, 2017 in NV Demarest or March 23, 2017 in NV Old Tappan if they are considering using a waiver. Waivers must be signed and returned to the guidance office by March 24, 2017.** (See reverse side of this letter for further details of the waiver process and of specific waiver meeting times.)

Sincerely,
Matthew P. Spatz
District Director of Guidance

<u>Guidance Counselors</u>	<u>Ext.</u>
Kerri Hubbard*	24100
Laura Cavanaugh	24120
Matthew Corso	24160
Amanda Fitzpatrick	24360
Heather MacRae	24380
Laura Rupp	24170
Kerstin Stewart	24110
*Lead Counselor	

STUDENT WAIVERS FOR HONORS/ADVANCED PLACEMENT

Students currently in 9th, 10th or 11th grade may be eligible to apply for a maximum of two waivers into an honors or advanced placement course, provided that they meet one of the following criteria:

- be in an **Honors** class but not receive teacher recommendation for the next level honors/advanced placement course and have a minimum cumulative grade of **C+** at the time of recommendation, including 1st and 2nd marking periods and midterm exam (S1) **and maintain that C+ average.**
- be in a **College Preparatory Enriched** class and have a minimum cumulative grade of **B+** at the time of recommendation, including the 1st and 2nd marking periods and midterm exam (S1) **and maintain that B+ average** without being recommended for the honors/advanced placement level.
- be in an **Honors/Advanced Placement** class, be recommended to move on to the next level course but receive final grade of **C** or lower. That student will be counseled either to exit the honors/advanced placement level or to sign a waiver to remain in the honors/advanced placement class.

Advanced Placement course waivers will be considered for the following courses:

AP Biology, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, AP Chemistry, AP Chinese, AP English Literature & Composition, AP French, AP Italian, AP Japanese, AP Physics 1, AP Physics 2, AP Physics C, AP Spanish, or AP United States History.

NOTE: Students must be enrolled in Precalculus Honors to waive into AP Calculus AB.

Students may not waive from Precalculus Honors into AP Calculus BC unless recommended to AP Calculus AB.

Students may not waive into both AP Calculus and AP Physics.

The following steps **must** be completed in order to receive a waiver. The student must:

1. Meet with guidance counselor to review recommendations, verify S1 grades and discuss potential outcomes of waiving. Complete the waiver form and obtain counselor's signature.
2. Obtain teacher's signature to verify that the student and teacher have discussed the potential outcomes of waiving.
3. **Attend mandatory evening meeting with parent conducted by the subject supervisor** of the content area for which waiver is being requested to review requirements of honors/advanced placement program. Bring waiver form to evening meeting for attendance verification. Meetings will be held as follows:

Wednesday, March 22, 2017 (Northern Valley Demarest Academic Theater)

Thursday, March 23, 2017 (Northern Old Tappan Academic Theater)

7:00 p.m.	Science	Mrs. Cusmano
7:20 p.m.	Mathematics	Ms. Vella
7:40 p.m.	English	Mrs. Paolucci
8:00 p.m.	World Languages	Mr. Buoye
8:20 p.m.	Social Studies	Mr. Romano

4. Submit the waiver form with the evening meeting attendance verification for each waiver requested (maximum of two per student) to the guidance office for Supervisor and Principal review.

In the event of limited space in the class, recommended students will have enrollment priority over waiver students.

Signature acknowledges: the requirements and demands of the honors/advanced placement course; willingness to enroll in the course without the recommendation of the faculty; maximum of two waivers per year; withdrawals from course follows standard parameters, including:

No transcript notation if withdrawn by end of Q1. Transcript notation of U (Withdrew Fail) or W (Withdrew Pass) if withdrawn by end of Q2. No withdrawal permitted after start of Q3. Earned grade and/or grade in progress travels with the student. Updated transcript will be sent to colleges in the case of any 12th grade course changes.

Placement into a new course:

1. Placement lower-level course if offered and if space is available (example: AP U.S. History to U.S. History 2; *CPE* or Algebra 2 H to Algebra 2 *CPE*); or
2. Entry in a new course in a different department pending the subject supervisor's approval providing that the request is made prior to 14 class meetings; or
3. Auditing of a ½ year elective followed by entry into a new ½ year elective for the second semester with the approval of the subject supervisor; or
4. Entry into a new ½ year elective in the second semester.

**ALL WAIVER FORMS MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE DIRECTOR OF GUIDANCE
BY MARCH 24, 2017**