



ust The FAQs: A Survivor's Guide to High School

The NPHS Counseling Department has compiled a list of the most Frequently Asked Questions posed to us by parents. However, it is not a comprehensive account of all the departments and resources at Newbury Park High School and we strongly encourage both parents and students to explore more fully all that NPHS has to offer.

Classes/Credits

Q: What is the block schedule?

In a school with a “traditional” schedule, such as Thousand Oaks High School or Westlake High School, students typically enroll in 6 classes a day, each about 55 minutes long, every day, from September to June. At Newbury Park High School, on the other hand, students typically have 3 classes a day, each about 95 minutes long, every day from September through January. This is the Fall Semester. From February through June, the Spring Semester, students will have three different classes, each about 95 minutes long. Over the course of the entire school year, NPHS students will take – and receive credit for – 6 classes.

Q: What is a Period 1 class?

There are a few co-curricular (e.g. Student Government) and academic classes that are held during Period 1. Period 1 classes meet from 7:10 to 8:05 every day, from September to June. They differ from block classes (period 2, 3 and 4) with a shorter class time each day, but the class extends the full school year. Numerous CP-level classes are offered during Period 1. Final exams are in January and June for Period 1 classes. Grades from these two marking periods will appear on the permanent academic transcript. Once enrolled in a Period 1 class, students may not switch to the same block schedule class (period 2, 3 or 4). Students can choose from the Period 1 classes listed on the course request.

Q: How can I be sure my child will select the right classes to prepare for college?

For every student, counselors monitor course selections and progress toward both high school graduation and college admission. Classes at the College Prep (CP), Honors, AP and IB levels meet those standards.

Q: How does my child register for classes for the upcoming year?

In the spring, each grade level will attend an orientation during the school day where students will be given instructions and handouts about choosing classes for the next year. Students should discuss available offerings and their selections with parents and complete a course request form. Review the Course Directory given to students during orientation for a description of classes, prerequisites and flowcharts for math and science. Consider your choices carefully, keeping in mind your goals, to eliminate the need for changes to class schedules. Then each student will meet individually with his or her counselor to review the course request. After students meet with their counselors, parents may have follow up questions and should call the Counseling Office for clarification.

Q: How can my child change the academic level of his or her classes?

In the spring, when students meet with counselors to review course selection for the next school year, they should ask their counselors about the possibility of changing from standard- or CP-level courses to honors- or AP/IB-level courses. The student will be given an academic petition to complete and submit for consideration by a review committee comprised of faculty and administration. Students will receive an answer to their petition, whether approved or declined, in time to make any necessary changes to their course selections for the following year.

Q: How does my child change a class?

Schedule changes are accomplished by students. Prior to the start of the school year, students pick up their preliminary schedules. Schedule changes at this time are made through Schedule Adjustment Request Forms, which are available in the office. Students complete the form, including parent signature, and return it to the

Counseling Office. Students are notified if the change cannot be made (i.e., the class is full, the prerequisite has not been met, etc.) Requests to stay in the same class with a different teacher are not honored. If the change can be made, the new class will appear on the official schedule, which students receive on the first day of school.

Approximately 7 school days after the start of each quarter (subterm) is Permanent Program Day. This date is announced and printed in the bulletin and in *Panther Pursuits*. During this time students may change from one elective class to another. There are Schedule Adjustment Forms on the counter in the main office for students to complete with as much detail as possible and submit with a parent signature by Permanent Program Day. Several choices of electives should be listed on the form as the first choice may not be available. Requests to stay in the same class with a different teacher are not honored. Students should remain in the original class until or if they are notified the request for change was granted. Office staff is available at the counter to answer questions. It may be appropriate for students to make a counselor appointment for other questions or problems regarding their schedule.

Q: How does my child make an appointment to see his or her counselor?

Students go to the Counseling Counter in the main office either before school, break time, lunchtime or after school -- not during class time -- to make an appointment. Someone in the Counseling Department will confer with the student to find the first available appointment time during the school day that works best for him or her. The student is given an appointment slip with the date and time of the appointment. The appointment slip serves as a reminder of the appointment and also as a pass to leave class. After the student is given the appointment slip, no other reminders are sent. Students are expected to show the appointment slip to the teacher on the day of the appointment and come to the office at the scheduled time.

Q: How does my child drop a class?

The last day to drop a class without an “F” appearing on the permanent record is announced and printed in the bulletin and *Panther Pursuits*. It occurs approximately 4-5 days after the first report card (mid-term report card) is given to students in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 (Subterm 1 and 2) of the fall term and Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 (Subterm 3 and 4) of the spring term. Students who feel

they are in danger of failing and want to drop a class should make an appointment to see their counselor. Students will be given a Program Change form, and will obtain both the teacher’s and a parent’s signature in order to drop the class. Once a class is dropped, students forfeit credits earned for that class in that quarter and report to study hall. Credits are not earned in study hall. If the class is dropped in Quarter 1 or Quarter 3 (Subterm 1 or 3), students in study hall should make another appointment to see their counselor near the end of the Quarter (Subterm) to schedule a class for credit in Quarter 2 or Quarter 4 (Subterm 2 or 4).

Q: How and when can my child sign up for summer school?

Summer school is primarily used to remediate a “D” or “F” grade earned in the preceding school year and counselors will enroll students via priority registration for that reason. Students needing to remediate should go to the Counseling Department beginning in late March to make an appointment.

Health classes are available for those students who want to move ahead at a cost to parent/guardian. No honors or AP level classes are offered at summer school. Registration for those wishing to move ahead is held in April. A lottery system will be used for classes where there are more requests than seats available.

Summer school is divided into two semesters. Those who need to repeat a class would take only the semester(s) they must remediate. For a move ahead class, students must take both semesters in order to earn the credits for the class.

Summer school for 2010 is held at Thousand Oaks High School. The best way to get detailed information about summer school -- including dates and times, classes offered and registration schedule -- is from the CVUSD website (www.conejo.k12.ca.us) in April. Flyers are also available in the main office at NPHS at the same time -- but not before -- the information appears on the CVUSD website.

Q: What are the classes and credits required for graduation?

A complete description of classes, credits and other graduation requirements can be found in the CVUSD Course Directory. Every student is given a current Course Directory along with registration information each Spring. The Course Directory can also be located on the CVUSD website (www.conejo.k12.ca.us)

Q: How can my child earn Physical Education credits?

Of the 20 P.E. credits required for graduation, 10 credits must be earned in a P.E. class. All freshmen take a P.E. class. The remaining 10 credits may be earned by:

- Enrolling in another P.E. class,
- Competing on one of the many sports teams at NPHS that compete in the Marmonte League,
- Enrolling in the dance class offered at NPHS,
- Participating in Marching Band,
- Participating in Color Guard, or
- Enrolling in an off-season conditioning class available for many of the sports at NPHS.

Each team sport, Marching Band, and Color Guard earns 5 P.E. credits. Participation in an off-season class earns up to 5 P.E. credits. No credit is earned for competing on club or AAU teams.

Q: How can my child sign up for a sport?

Students must tryout for a place on a sports team. Tryout periods for each sport will depend on whether the sport competes in the fall, winter or spring season. Contact the NPHS Athletic Office for detailed information about any of the athletic programs including additional requirements, such as physicals, and transportation fees. After tryouts, the coach will give a copy of the team roster to the Counseling Office and to the Athletic Office. At that time the sport is added to the student's schedule. Students may participate in, and receive credit for, only one sport per season, but participation in more than one sport throughout the year is encouraged.

Communication Between School and Home

Q: How do I get an emergency card and information about the upcoming school year?

In early August you will receive the Summer Mailing Packet for each of your NPHS students. In it will be forms and information covering many topics from cost of P.E. clothes for freshman to student parking passes and off-campus lunch passes for juniors and seniors. It will also include schedules for report cards and marking periods, freshman orientation, and picking up preliminary class schedules. **Parents are strongly encouraged** to review all the information in the summer mailing prior to the start of the school year.

Q: How can I contact my child's teachers?

The best way to meet your child's teachers and learn their classroom policies is to attend the two Back-to-School Nights that take place in early September for the Fall Semester and early February for the Spring Semester. Information about Back-to-School Nights can be found on www.nphs.org.

Many teachers prefer to communicate by email and will have their address posted at Back-to-School Night. You can also obtain a teacher's email or voicemail from the receptionist or the Counseling Office. If you have a question or concern about your child's grade or progress in a class or any classroom issues, contact the teacher.

Q: When should I call the Attendance Office?

The Attendance Office has a dedicated, 24-hour automated line to report any absences, whether full day, coming late, or leaving early. Detailed information from the Attendance Office will be included in the summer mailing. You should also contact the Attendance Office with any changes of address or phone numbers for home, work, or emergency contacts.

Q: How can I contact my child's counselor?

Email is the quickest and most efficient way to obtain specific and/or detailed information from your child's counselor. Go to www.nphs.org > Counselor's Corner to find your counselor's name and email address.

If you do not have access to email, or would like to make an appointment, have a general question, or have a concern that would be better addressed in a conversation, call the main number for the NPHS office, 498-3676. Ask the receptionist for the Counseling Office or choose the option for the Counseling Office in the automated voicemail system. When the Counseling Office is handling a high volume of calls, you may reach the automated voicemail. Your call will be returned more quickly and efficiently if you leave a detailed message.

Q: What is the difference between report cards and progress reports?

For each quarter (subterm), four times in each school year, students are given grade reports to take home.

- Mid-term report cards – given to students midway through each quarter. All grades (A through F) are reported by teachers.

- Progress reports – posted on Zangle Parent Connect about two weeks later. Copies are not sent home with students.
- Final report cards – given to students about a week after final exams. These grades will appear on student transcripts.

A schedule of marking periods and report card distribution is included in the summer mailing. Ask your student for his or her report card and keep them in a file for instances such as good student driver discounts on car insurance. Only the report card for the final grades in June is mailed home.

Q: How can I get forgotten items to my child, such as lunches, homework, books, gym clothes, etc.?

Parents may leave items at the reception desk for students to pick up. In addition to academics, it is our hope that students also learn responsibility and preparedness. It is their responsibility to remember homework, books, projects, etc. Set up a plan with your student at the start of the school year so he or she knows to check with the receptionist for items you might drop off. These items will not be sent to the classroom and students will not be notified that items are waiting for them. Please do not have flowers or balloons delivered to the NPHS office. Students will only be able to pick them up at the end of the school day and space to hold them in the office is limited.

Available Resources

Q: Are there workshops or seminars for parents and students?

Every spring the NPHS Counseling Department offers a Sophomore Counseling Conference for sophomores and their parents. This on-campus presentation reviews graduation requirements and gives an overview of the college planning process by introducing the requirements for college admission, entrance exams, etc.

Also in the spring, Juniors and their parents are invited to attend a College Awareness Workshop. This presentation goes into more detail about researching colleges, admission requirements and testing.

In the fall, Seniors and their parents are invited to three College Application Workshops. The first one is an overview of the application process, including letters of recommendation and writing a personal essay. In the second workshop, NPHS counselors go online to the Cal

State website and go through the online application line by line. In the third workshop, they do the same for the UC application.

In January there is a Financial Aid Workshop for Seniors and their parents. Many aspects of financial aid and scholarships are covered including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Cal Grant.

At each workshop there are many supplemental materials and handouts for parents and students to take home to review.

Q: What is the College & Career Center?

Where students and parents can get:

- Tutor list,
- Work permit,
- Job listing,
- Community service opportunities,
- Scholarship opportunities,
- Register for PSAT in the fall,
- Register for AP tests in the spring,
- College catalogues,
- Help with researching colleges, and
- Hear college representatives

Q: Are there any online resources?

www.nphs.org is a source for calendars, announcements, seminars, including:

- Power Point presentations of workshops conducted by the Counseling Department.
- *Panther Pursuits* – newsletter published 5 times a year containing detailed calendar, workshops, news from Athletics Department, Counseling Department, student activities, the Principal, the Instruction Office, and many academic departments.
- *Panther Tale* – thrice-weekly bulletin announcements containing upcoming events and deadlines for the current week.
- Pages for the NPHS library, Counselor’s Corner, Career/College Connection, Clubs and Organizations and Athletics

Parent Connect through *Zangle* is a way for parents to check on attendance and grades with a unique PIN. For assistance or to obtain a PIN, contact NPHS Counseling Office.

Classroom websites – Many teachers have created a website where they post homework, upcoming tests and long-term assignments. Teachers will mention their website, if they have one, at back-to-school night. Those classroom websites can be accessed from www.nphs.org.