



## **Norwood High School First Year Academy**

### **Frequently Asked Questions for Grade 8 Students and Families**

#### **Q: What is First Year Academy (FYA)?**

A: The First Year Academy at Norwood High School is designed to ease the transition into high school for incoming ninth graders by providing more academic, behavioral, emotional, and procedural support. By building strong partnerships with teachers, counselors, and families, the FYA provides personalized support and lays the foundation for academic success. Grounded in our Portrait of the Graduate framework, the Academy helps students develop into collaborators, communicators, critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and responsible citizens. Through this collaborative effort, the FYA ensures that students gain ownership of their learning and set paths for success throughout high school. The FYA will help students transition into tenth grade and beyond.

#### **Q: What is the structure of the First Year Academy?**

A: FYA will incorporate all ninth grade students split among three distinct teams. Team staff will have weekly student-support meetings and plan for skill interventions based on group needs. Each team will have one English, History, Science, Math, and Special Education teachers, as well as a designated assistant principal and a student support staff member.

#### **Q: When do students find out what “team” they are on? How do First Year Academy “teams” affect a students’ schedules?**

A: Students will receive draft schedules in early summer. In August, all students will receive final schedules with teacher names, class times, and team assignments.

#### **Q: Does the Academy impact a student’s ability to take electives or participate in any other programs or pathways?**

A: FYA does not change the number of courses ninth grade students take or the opportunities for which they are eligible.

**Q: Is there summer work before ninth grade?**

A: Incoming ninth graders are responsible for Summer Reading. Please see summer assignment information [here](#).

**Q: What materials will students need for high school?**

A: Teachers will let students know what they need when students come to school in September. Here is a [list](#) of recommended supplies.

**Q: How long are classes? How much time is between classes?**

A: Classes are about 57 minutes; students have four minutes of passing time between classes.

**Q: How long is the school day? When does school start?**

A: The building opens at 7:50 am. The warning bell rings at 8:10 am, and students must be in class by 8:15. Classes start promptly at 8:15 and continue until 2:50.

**Q: What is the procedure if a child is absent, tardy or needs to be dismissed?**

A: If a student needs to be out due to illness, a family emergency, or an extenuating circumstance, proper documentation should be submitted to the main office. If a student is late to school, the student should check into the main office to sign in. If a dismissal is needed, parents/guardians should send a note at the beginning of the day or come into the school in person to dismiss their student. Please speak to the FYA assistant principal with any questions regarding attendance.

Consistent student attendance is critical for academic success. Unexcused absences (even from a single class due to being tardy or dismissed) can hinder progress and result in loss of academic credit or retention.

**Q: How do students join clubs and sports?**

A: There is an activities fair in the fall to learn about the many clubs and activities at NHS. For a list of activities/clubs offered in the 2024/25 school year follow this [link](#).

Athletics has a registration period for each season. For information about registering for sports, follow the link to our [Athletics' page](#).

**Q: When will students get locker assignments? Do they have to use lockers?**

A: Students will get locker assignments at New Student Orientation. Using a locker is not mandatory, but it can be helpful.

**Q: How does lunch work at the high school?**

A: NHS has three lunch periods (1st, 2nd, and 3rd), which are assigned based on the teacher you have during the 4th block of the day. You might have a different lunch each day. Each lunch includes students from all grade levels (9-12), and everyone must eat in the Dining Hall.

**Q: How do I get help for my Chromebook if it breaks or it doesn't work?**

A: At the end of grade 8, all students turn in their middle school Chromebooks. In August, incoming grade 9 students pick up a new Chromebook. We will announce these dates soon. If you need more information about our 1-1 Chromebook program or need a Chromebook repair, please email [mustangtechsupport@norwood.k12.ma.us](mailto:mustangtechsupport@norwood.k12.ma.us)

**Q: Whom can I contact for more information?**

**Guidance Department** : Please go to the link [here](#).

**ASPEN portal**: Please email [npsaspensupport@norwood.k12.ma.us](mailto:npsaspensupport@norwood.k12.ma.us).

**Chromebook Support**: Please email [mustangtechsupport@norwood.k12.ma.us](mailto:mustangtechsupport@norwood.k12.ma.us).