

# **SHS PTA Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (2025-26)**

Welcome fellow SHS parents!

We hope this living document helps answer questions you may have about the Scarsdale High School experience. It is the collective wisdom of parents who have been in your shoes. Wherever possible, we have included links.

The first rule of thumb is, do not hesitate to contact your student's dean. The [high school web](#) page is a great resource as well.

The High School years pass by in a flash, before long, you will be sending your high schoolers to their college dorms. Good luck and enjoy the ride!



**Brewster Road Entrance**



**Post Road Entrance**

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# **Q: What do I need to know about travel to and from school and parking?**

- **Bus**
  - If you qualify for the District school bus, you will receive an email from the District telling you where your child's bus stop is and the pick up time in the morning.
  - Depending on how far you are from the school, pick up times can be from around 7:10 am to 7:40 am.
  - Bus stops are usually at an intersection, where a group of students will board the bus.
  - The buses drop students at the Athletic Entrance (entrance next to the SHS gyms).
- **Drop-off/Pick-up**
  - Students may be dropped off or picked up only at designated spots on school grounds. Do not use Dean field's District parking lot.
  - SHS Traffic and Parking rules can be found [here](#). These rules will be strictly enforced to ensure the safety of everyone on the High School campus.
- **Parking**
  - There is very limited parking on and around the campus. SHS Traffic and Parking rules can be found [here](#).
  - Students who have a valid driver's license may park along the south-bound side of Brewster Rd. Please note the two lengths of blocked-off pavement along that side of Brewster in front of each of the fire hydrants where parking is prohibited.
  - Seniors, who have a valid driver's license AND have a school-issued Senior Parking Permit sticker, may park in either of the designated Senior Parking lots on a first-come-first-served basis.
  - These rules will be strictly enforced to ensure the safety of everyone on the High School campus.
  - The creek next to the gravel senior lots overflows its banks during heavy rain causing the lot to flood. It is not uncommon for cars to be flooded. Tell your student not to park there when

heavy rain is forecasted and to listen for school announcements over the speaker.

- **Bikes**

- Bike racks for students to lock their bicycles and helmets are located near the gym entrance, the closed end of the teacher's parking lot, and the Post Road entrance.

## **Q: What do I need to know about the school day schedule?**

- **SHS Regular Class and Delayed Opening Schedule**

- The first bell rings at 7:55 am.
  - At that time all students who have a first period class should be on their way to that classroom.
  - First period class begins at the second bell at 8:00 am.
- School starts at 8:00 a.m. every day and concludes at 3:00 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, and at 2:08 p.m. on Fridays.
- Scarsdale High School has an open campus for grades 11 and 12. This means that students in grades 11 and 12 may leave the school campus during their free periods.
- For students in all grades, If they do not have a class first period, they do not have to report to school until the beginning of the period when they have their first scheduled class of the day.

- **Absences/Late Arrival/Leaving School Early**

- If your child will be absent from any class or late to school for any reason, you must notify the SHS Attendance Office [hsattendanceoffice@scarsdaleschools.org](mailto:hsattendanceoffice@scarsdaleschools.org) ideally before first period and/or before the start of any class your child will miss so that the Office can keep an accurate record of student attendance.

- Likewise, if your child needs to leave school before his/her last scheduled class on any day, you must notify the Attendance Office at 721-2510 prior to the start of the class your child will miss so that Office can notify the teacher.
- Students must also go to the Attendance Office to sign in if they are late, or sign out if they are leaving early.
- If your child misses a scheduled class without prior notification from a parent, his/her record will be marked as absent without excuse and the parent will be notified. Multiple unexcused absences may lead to disciplinary proceedings.

- **Free Periods**

- Most students have a certain number of “free periods” in their schedules during which they do not have a scheduled class and do not have to report to any particular classroom.
- Students can use their free periods as they see fit, and are encouraged to use these periods to get extra help from their teachers, work with faculty advisers on student government, team, club or extracurricular-related activities, get a head start on their homework, and/or speak with their deans, counselors or other school administrators.
- Scarsdale High School has an open campus for grades 11 and 12. This means that students in grades 11 and 12 may leave the school campus during their free periods.
- For students in all grades, If they do not have a class first period, they do not have to report to school until the beginning of the period when they have their first scheduled class of the day.

- **Common Tutorial Periods**

- On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, between Second and Third periods from 9:39-49 am, all students have a Common Tutorial period, during which they are encouraged to speak with faculty about academic and extracurricular matters.
- During Common Tutorial periods students are NOT required to report to any particular classroom or teacher.

- **Homeroom Periods**

- On Tuesdays and Thursdays between Second and Third periods from 9:44-49 am, all students have a Homeroom period, during which they MUST report to their assigned Homeroom and check-in with their Homeroom teacher.

- **Community Lunch**

- The Community Lunch Pilot Program will continue in the 2025-26 school year. All students, teachers and staff will share the same lunch period during the school day from 11:38-12:24. The entire community can use that time to enjoy a meal, socialize with peers, access academic resources, attend club meetings and experience a break in the middle of their busy day.

- **Two-Hour Delay Schedule**

- In the event that the School District notifies parents and students of a two-hour delay in starting the school day schedule, the High School runs the full seven-period school day on an abbreviated schedule which can be found at this link to the [Class Schedules](#) page of the Scarsdale High School website.

## **Q: What school supplies and electronic devices do students need for class and home?**

- All students are required to have their own device. A "device" is a laptop, Chromebook, or tablet - not a mobile phone. Information about the new policies regarding internet enabled devices are discussed [here](#).
  - Many students already bring their personal devices to school, and they can continue to do so.

- For students who do not have their own device, or do not wish to bring their device to school, the school will provide a district-issued Chromebook. Information about arranging to borrow a device will go out to parents by email in August.
  - If a student is in need of computer tech support (difficulty with connection), the office is located in Room 350.
- Generally, students determine what types of notebooks/paper supplies and writing utensils they will use though some teachers may request specific types after school begins.
- The High School has a BYOD (bring your own device) wireless (WiFi) network for students who each use their assigned student Google account for communicating with teachers and storing or submitting schoolwork.
- Students are issued textbooks as needed. Most classrooms have a set of textbooks for use during class so students do not need to carry both textbooks and notebooks for every class.
- **Lockers**
  - Students are not assigned a locker because they tend not to use them.
    - In cold weather, most students will just bring their jackets with them from class to class. Don't be surprised if your student just walks around in a sweatshirt in 30 degree weather.
  - For students who want to use a locker, they can just pick any locker. The lockers are available throughout the building.
  - Gym lockers are used to hold backpacks, etc. during gym class. Students on sports teams generally store their gear for the season in designated locker rooms.
  - The band room also has lockers for instruments. Orchestra students leave their instruments in the orchestra room.
  - Locks are not provided by the school.

## Q: What are the lunch/food options?

- At the High School, food options are available most of the day in both the Lower Cafe, located on the ground (lowest) floor, and the Learning Commons, located on the second floor. The [District food service page](#) contains the link to the menus for each school in the district.
- If your child has food allergies, please click on this link to the [Allergies and Medical](#) page on the district food service section of the webpage.
- All students in the District automatically have lunch accounts assigned to them through their student numbers, and parents may use the online prepayment system, [MySchoolbucks.com](#), to deposit funds in their child's account so their child does not need to carry cash.
- Students can use cash or credit cards for bake sales and Maroon and White sales during school hours (no cell phone payments).
- Students may pre-order a freshly made deli sandwich for pick-up in the cafeteria by installing the Nutrislice sandwich app and connecting it to their SchoolBucks account. Follow this link for information on ordering through [Nutrislice](#).

## Q: What are the key fall parent events?

- *SHS PTA Sunday eblasts* resume on August 17, 2025, and include reminders about important dates and deadlines.
- The *PTA Membership* drive begins on August 17, 2025 and will be the only opportunity to purchase a printed school directory.
- **PTA events**
  - College Career Center Orientation - 9/11 at 9:00 am
  - Families New to District Welcome Coffee - 9/18 at 9:00 am
  - Multicultural Welcome Coffee - 9/25 at 9:00 am
  - Parent-to-Parent Zoom orientation -- 10/9 at 7:00 pm
- **Parent Teacher Conferences (PTC)**
  - October 15, 7-9 pm (Last names A-K)
  - October 23, 7-9 pm (Last names L-Z)
  - See Parent Teacher Conferences section below for more details.
  - Parking is very limited so please plan on arriving early for *Parent Teacher Conferences*. You do not want to be the parent that runs in desperately looking for a classroom.

## Q: What do I need to know about academics?

- Course offerings & academic/other policies can be found in the [Course Catalog](#) and [Student Handbook](#).
- **Course Selection**
  - Academic schedules are created with the Dean in the spring of each school year.
- **Placement**

- Decisions and recommendations are made during the Dean course selection meeting. Certain honors level classes require placement tests, which are offered after school on designated dates and announced in the Student Agenda distributed to each child at the beginning of the year and listed on the school calendar.
- **Overriding class level**
  - With parent permission, students may choose to override from Skills level (level 1) to Regular Level (level 2), or from Regular Level (level 2) to Accelerated (level 3). Students are not able to override into Honors or AT courses (Level 4 or 5, respectively). Students and parents should always have these conversations with the respective teacher and Dean, who can provide additional context and insight. If the student chooses to override a recommendation, the Dean will forward them an Override form, and once that is completed and returned to the Dean, the appropriate schedule change will then be made.
- **Dropping/adding a class**
  - The following are excerpts from the student handbook.

*Withdrawal from Classes:*

Students should plan their course of study carefully, in consultation with deans, parents, and teachers. This care in planning should significantly reduce the need for students to withdraw from classes; however, should circumstances lead a student's dean and parents to consent to a withdrawal, the following rules apply:

**A. Year-long courses:**

1. A student may drop a year-long course up to one week after the issuance of the second-quarter report card.
2. A student may not drop a course beyond that date except by prior written agreement among the student, parent, teacher, department head, and dean to extend the drop date to the end of the third quarter, beyond which withdrawal is not permitted.

**B. Semester-long courses:**

1. A student may drop a semester-long course up to one week after the issuance of the first quarter grades for the course.
2. A student may not drop a course beyond that date except by prior written agreement among the student, parent, teacher, department head, and dean to extend the drop date to the end of fifteen weeks, beyond which withdrawal is not permitted.

Students should discuss dropping a class and its implications on the final course grade with their dean.

**• Math honors testing**

- Students who have not been recommended for honors level math but are interested in taking the course need to take a math placement exam. They should contact their respective teacher, as well as the chairperson of the Math Department during the spring semester in order to sign up for the placement test. The student's Dean can also provide some context regarding their overall course selection. The test is administered in August before school starts.

**• English honors class**

- For English 234 (the junior year Honors English course), information regarding the Honors Level English Placement exam will be forwarded to all sophomores in the early winter. All sophomore English teachers will also describe the process to their respective students. Any rising junior who wishes to take the exam may choose to do so, and placement is determined on a variety of factors, including previous performance in their English classes, the placement exam, and department recommendation.

- 2026 placement test dates
  - January 8, 3pm
  - Snow date January 13, 3pm
- **Math and science sequencing**
  - Pay particular attention to math and science sequencing flow charts. The level they take freshman or sophomore year may affect your student's ability to take certain advanced courses later in high school.
  - Ask your dean for a copy of the science and math flow charts.
- **AT classes**
  - AT classes are college level courses, and are the highest level offered at SHS. Eligibility is based on the individual department, and may include a placement exam, recommendation from the previous teacher and department, and performance in the appropriate subject area. Specific subject information can be found in the Course Catalog. Interested students should also communicate directly with their respective teacher and Dean.
  - 2026 placement test dates
    - AT Social Studies, January 15, makeup January 20
    - AT English (teacher invite only), January 14
- **Error in final grade**
  - If any student believes that there is an error in their report card, they should contact the respective teacher and Department chair.
- **Extra academic help math:** There is a math help desk in the Math Center . The person who works there is intimately familiar with all the math levels and is a valuable resource for students.
- **Signifer**
  - Signifer is the academic honors society in Scarsdale. Students in grades 11 and 12 need a 3.7 cumulative g.p.a. to be eligible and commit to offering tutoring services to other students.

- You will be notified by the school if your child qualifies for Signifer. The A-School does not participate in Signifer because they do not receive traditional letter grades.
- **Tutors**
  - Teachers are available to meet with individual students for support during free periods, lunch, or before/after school as part of the SHS Tutorial Model.
  - Students in [Signifer](#) offer free peer tutoring.
  - Don't be shy about asking friends or casual acquaintances if they have tutor suggestions.
- **Homework Posting**
  - Most teachers will post assignments due the following day by 4pm.

## **Q: Where can I find information about school events and activities?**

- **Websites**
  - The extensive [District](#), [High School](#) and [PTA](#) webpages (all housed on the District website) provide comprehensive details about many of the topics covered here, are updated throughout the year, and have robust search features.
  - The calendars are a great resource to find out what's going on in the school and district.
- **eBlasts**
  - The weekly PTA eblasts on Sunday (sent via Membership Toolkit TO PTA MEMBERS ONLY) and occasional grade-specific emails (sent via Infinite Campus Messenger) are the main sources of information about upcoming high school events and activities for parents, as well as important deadlines.
  - School updates will come from Infinite Parent Messenger or Parent Square

- Principal Ken Bonamo sends quarterly messages to all high school parents and students and the District sends weekly updates with its “Friday Five” email.
- **Calendars**
  - The school district maintains a district-wide online [Calendar](#) and also posts a general school [year at-a-glance](#) one-page calendar showing school vacation schedules.
  - The Scarsdale High School [calendar](#) is posted on the high school web page.
  - The [athletic department](#) maintains Google Calendars for each SHS team, showing practice and game schedules.
  - The Scarsdale Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (PT Council), the umbrella organization of the PTAs, maintains the [Scarsdale Community Calendar](#) showing significant school and community-based events; a print version is mailed to all residents in August.
- **Printed Publications**
  - [Maroon](#), the student-run school newspaper, is distributed quarterly at the school and has an online presence.
  - [Bandersnatch](#), the student produced yearbook, is available for purchase starting in September and distributed in June.
    - *Any yearbook questions should be addressed to Bandersnatch. The SHS PTA is NOT involved in yearbook sales or distribution.*
  - Students tend to receive information through email and direct communications from their administrators, Deans and teachers, by word-of-mouth from other students, by reading posters hung on bulletin boards and walls in the school, and during homeroom when announcements are made through the P.A. system and over video monitors. All students receive a spiral agenda/calendar which contains the student handbook and is distributed during the first week of school. Television monitors in the Brewster Road lobby and on the second floor occasionally provide additional information.
- **Social Media**

- Both the District and school government have facebook and instagram pages and twitter feeds accessible to the public-- although these are not currently the primary means of communicating with parents and students. Some teachers also tweet information about their activities.
- Student government communicates with students through grade level Instagram accounts. Your child should be sure to check the accounts regularly.
- Student athletic events/games and Board of Education meetings are streamed [here](#).

## **Q: What is the Alternative School (“SAS” or “A-School”)?**

- The A-School is a cohort of approximately eighty 10th, 11th, and 12th graders who take their humanities classes together while still being able to take other courses in the main high school building.
- Among other things, the A-School was designed to establish a workable, democratic school governance system, a “just community,” and to create a sense of community where students and teachers learn to work together toward agreed upon goals. The [Alternative School \(SAS\)](#) page on the SHS website has a lot of information for prospective students and parents.
- Each winter there are A-School Parent Information meetings for freshmen parents to learn about the A-School.
- Students apply to the A-School in February of their 9th grade year.

## **Q: What are [Senior Options](#)?**

- In early May, 12th grade students finish their academic courses and participate in a self-selected, unpaid, off-campus internship as a graduation requirement. In planning their options, students receive guidance from their mentors and other faculty members.

## **Q: Whom do I contact with questions and concerns specific to my child - academic or otherwise?**

- [Deans/Counseling Department](#)
  - Students are assigned a Dean upon entering the high school and remain with their Dean until graduation. They provide academic and personal counseling, help students select courses, apply to college, and handle any school-related issues that arise.
  - The Dean is often the first person parents should contact regarding any questions or concerns about the student or about the high school.
  - The Counseling dept website also has information about [School Profile](#), [AP exams](#), [SAT and ACT information](#), etc..
  - The Counseling Department website contains links to [grade specific emails](#) and pages dedicated to [juniors](#) and [seniors](#).
- [School Nurse](#)
  - Among other things, the School Nurse tracks immunization, physical exam, vision, hearing and dental requirements.
  - The School Nurse processes Gold Card applications for participation in school sports teams and issues NYS Working Papers.
  - If your child has allergies or has been diagnosed with asthma or other respiratory problems, click on this link to [Allergic - Asthmatic Conditions](#) page of the School Nurse website to complete an allergy action plan or an Asthma Reaction Procedure form.
- [Psychology and Social Work Department](#)
  - School psychologists and social workers help children succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. They collaborate with educators, parents, and other professionals to create safe,

healthy, and supportive learning environments for all students that strengthen connections between home and school. School psychologists and social workers are highly trained in both psychology and education.

- Youth Outreach Workers
  - The Scarsdale Community Youth Service Project is a partnership of Scarsdale Village, Scarsdale Schools and Scarsdale Edgemont Family Counseling Service in which youth outreach workers have a physical presence in both Scarsdale Middle School and High School for daily emotional support, counseling and crisis intervention.
- Parent Support Groups
  - Scarsdale Edgemont Family Counseling Service offers popular grade-specific parenting groups that bring together a cross-section of parents to discuss the unprecedented challenges of raising teens in today's world. Groups meet monthly and are led by trained outreach workers, addressing real-time issues impacting Scarsdale youth and families including schoolwork, social media, peer acceptance, drugs/alcohol, and adolescent development.

## **Q: What do I need to know about high school sport teams?**

- Fall sports tryouts and practices begin on August 25.
- To tryout and then participate in interscholastic sports all students must first complete an online application, attach an electronic version of their annual physical, and be approved for a Gold Card. Gold card applications open July 28 for fall 2025.
- Team practices and game schedules are posted on their respective calendars, all available on the Athletics webpages. Teams practice daily, 5-6 days/week, at designated times and locations. Transportation is provided for all away games.

- 10th, 11th, and 12th graders who make any of the sports teams are exempt from physical education class during one quarter of their sports season. They will be required to pass a fitness exam and to maintain attendance at practices in order to be exempted from PE. If your student is on a non-SHS sports team they will not be exempt from PE. 9th grade athletes must complete all 4 quarters of PE.
- Parents and students will receive a message via infinite campus announcing the parent information meeting and opening of the Gold Card application process before winter and spring seasons.
- [Maroon and White](#) is the sports booster organization. Their mission is to promote school spirit and support all athletic teams. They sell Raiders spirit wear during the year. They also host an athletic awards banquet each year.

## **Q: What are the high school extracurricular clubs and activities?**

- The [Student Handbook](#), printed within the Student Agenda distributed at the beginning of the school year and posted under “School Information” on the school website, lists all school-sponsored, student-run clubs and their faculty advisors as of late summer (subject to change).
- Students can find a [master list of clubs](#) on the high school website. A Scarsdale High School email account is required in order to access the above link.
- Clubs solicit student members at a Club Fair in the fall.
- [Maroon](#), the student-run newspaper, [Bandersnatch](#), the student-run yearbook, and the [School Government](#) have their own pages on the school website.

- In general, students may join a club at any point in the year, though some clubs have meeting schedules that revolve around preparation for specific events or competitions.

## **Q: Does the counseling department accommodate requests for siblings to have the same dean?**

- For the Dean assignment process, parents may choose to request (or not) family continuity with the same Dean, provided an older sibling has worked with that individual.
- Requests must be made through email, and instructions are forwarded to eighth grade parents at the appropriate time.

## **Q: What do I need to know about the PTA**

- **SHS PTA Website**
  - Please click this link to visit the [Scarsdale High School PTA website](#) where you will find information about how to become a member of our PTA, how to register yourself and your student for our Student Directory, PTA Committees and volunteer opportunities and much more!
- **Join the PTA**
  - Please click this link to [join the SHS PTA](#).
  - Your \$50 dues support all the programs and events that our PTA provides during the school year to students, teachers and parents. Some events we sponsor include:
    - senior events
    - teenage safe driving assembly
    - wellness programming
    - student-to-student college night
    - new and multicultural family events
    - sponsor Scarsdale Scholarship Fund

- Printed directories are available for \$15. As part of the membership you will have access to an online directory too.
- As a member of the SHS PTA you also will receive our weekly newsletter that will keep you up-to-date on PTA and school events throughout the year, grade-level events and deadlines and much more.

- **Volunteering**

- There are many opportunities to volunteer with the PTA. Time requirements vary by committee but don't hesitate to contact the pta ([shspta10583@gmail.com](mailto:shspta10583@gmail.com)) to join, or if you have any questions.

- **Scholarship Fund**

- The Scarsdale High School PTA [Scholarship Fund for College](#) provides grants to Scarsdale seniors who wish to attend college but need assistance to pay for their first year.
- The funding is provided by generous parent donors. Donations are collected throughout the year.
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## **Q: What is the cell phone policy?**

- Students' personal electronic devices must be turned off and put away from the time students enter the building until the end of the school day. Information about this policy can be found [here](#).

## **Q: What are [Parent-Teacher Conferences](#)?**

- Students with last names beginning with A-K will be on October 15th and L-Z on October 23rd.
- SHS Parent-Teacher Conferences is a two-night event. One night you speak with your child's teachers; and on the second night you volunteer to keep time, timekeeper, while other parents have their conferences. The night assigned to meet with your child's teachers is based on the first letter of the student's last name.

- Detailed instructions on the process will be sent via email, but essentially, you will be signing up to make your own schedule for the night based on your child's teachers. There are many words to describe it but know that you will leave exhilarated, possibly exhausted and excited to have lived a day in your students life at SHS. Wear comfortable shoes!
- If you are attending PTC for the first time, it is a good idea to map out your desired teachers' meetings BEFORE making the schedules online (ask your child to help you as they know where each teacher is located.) This would avoid those unnecessary going upstairs, downstairs, then upstairs again. The maps will be on the PTC signup page. They are NOT on the public SHS PTA web page.
- Leave at least 10 minutes in between conferences. Better to wait a few minutes for your next conference than to scurry around.

