

# South Brunswick High School

## Q & A from Incoming 9th gr Zoom 1/15/25

### **ANSWERED during the ZOOM:**

#### **How do the different science paths work? What are the prerequisites ?**

The science placements are determined based on students' math courses and their performance in the math course they are in.

#### **Can a student take more than one 21st Century course?**

Unfortunately no. There is only room for one 21st Century class in a Freshman schedule. However, those subject area classes are offered as regular electives that students can take in 10th-12th grades.

#### **Can the 9th grader take 2 subjects of the 21st Century instead of HAP requirement?**

Unfortunately no. One 21st Century class must be taken and then there is the separate option of taking HAP/performing or visual arts.

#### **Where can we get more details about the 21st century courses and what exactly the courses will teach, for example vocational trade?**

Descriptions are provided on the school website - under "Guidance Department," "Scheduling," "9th Grade Course Booklet." This will all be shared with you.

#### **What if a student wants to give only 2 priorities for 21st courses as he/ she is interested in only 2 ... Will that will be considered while placing kids**

Please be sure to choose all three options for the 21st Century Skills classes. This is required in order to finalize those choices.

#### **Is Music course graded and credits awarded?**

Yes, the music classes are graded and students receive credit.

#### **Which courses can they change within a month without penalty?**

It may be possible to change any class, however there is no guarantee that it will be possible. We encourage making the best choices for 21st Century classes now because making changes to classes after the fact are extremely difficult.

#### **Can a student take both visual arts and performance arts?**

Only if they take Mixed Chorus in the 21st Century and the Freshman Visual Arts course. Theater Arts in the 21st Century also counts as a performing art and still allows for the Freshman Visual Art class.

#### **Can we choose choir and visual art ?**

Yes, you would take "Mixed Chorus in the 21st Century" as your 21st Century Course and then Freshman Visual Art in place of HAP.

#### **If my child picks band, but around the beginning of the year but doesn't want to do it anymore, are they allowed to drop it?**

Short answer is yes, but I am confident that your child will love their experience in our music program. If you have other questions or want to chat, send me an email. robert.sears@sbschools.org

**Does a music course count for credit?**

Yes it does.

**For Music Course, do students need to complete the course in the previous grade or knowledge?**

For the band classes, a student must already have experience with their instrument.

**If not taking music in 9th grade, can they take it in 10th grade?**

Yes, absolutely.

**What is Technical Theater?**

Technical Theater is a course that involves all aspects of theater except Acting/Singing on stage. Theater Arts is a course for those interested in acting.

**If I take music in place of HAP in 9th grade, can I take an Art class next year or does it have to stay the same for all 4 years?**

There is flexibility to take music in freshman year and then take different classes in the following years.

**How do you audition for Marching Band? Do you have to take music HAP for it?**

Information about our Viking Marching Band will come out from the HS music department this Spring! I would definitely recommend that you continue in Band in place of a HAP if you are joining Marching Band!

**Can a student do the same with Music and Art? My daughter is in orchestra and also interested in visual arts?**

Unfortunately there is no option to take both Orchestra and the Freshman Visual Art class as a freshman. It will need to be one or the other.

**Since they can't take orchestra & visual arts in freshman year, will she be able to do visual arts and orchestra in sophomore-senior years?**

Those opportunities will be available in later years of high school.

**Does visual art give credits for graduation?**

Yes, Freshman Visual Art is a full year course and counts for the 5 credit graduation requirement.

**Is HAP vs Other Arts a binary choice (either or) or can they combine both?**

The only way to take a Performing Arts course and a HAP, would be to take "Mixed Chorus in the 21st Century" for your 21st Century Choice and then HAP. Or "Theater Arts in the 21st Century as your 21st Century Choice and then a HAP.

**If they choose HAP as a freshman, will they have HAP for all four years, or can that change from year to year.**

No, they will not have to in the upper grades; it can change depending on the student's choice. Students with IEPs may be scheduled to take a Study Skills class in all/most grades, which is a structured support class.

**Do HAP/ music/ art have credits assigned to them?**

HAP does not, Music and Art classes do.

**What is freshman visual art?**

Freshman Visual Art is a course designed for 9th-grade students (in place of a HAP) who have a very strong and serious interest in Art. Students will learn and explore the elements of art, principles of design, and techniques to build skills for drawing, painting, ceramics, collage, printmaking, and other art media.

**What other opportunities for visual art classes will be there in the future to fulfill the 1 year of visual art graduation requirement if they don't take a visual art class in their freshman year?**

Students can take a Visual Art class as an elective in 10th - 12th grades.

**Does a student need to take a Music HAP to play an instrument?**

Band, Chorus, or Orchestra would be taken in place of the HAP

**Does the theater arts option require weekend participation?**

No, the Theater classes do not require weekend participation.

**What are the prerequisites for Computer science?**

The prerequisite for Computer Science in the 21st Century is an 87 % or higher in Algebra I.

**If my child completes the Geometry summer course and passes, will they be placed in Algebra II and will it change their schedule?**

If a student takes Geometry in the Summer Institute, they will be placed in the appropriate Algebra II class based on their grade in the course. It may change their schedule.

**Would it be possible to get more information on SBHS video facility / lab for 21st century course?**

Descriptions are provided on the school website - under "Guidance Department," "Scheduling," "9th Grade Course Booklet." This will all be shared with you.

**If a child is in IEP, do we need to select courses now?**

If your child has an IEP, your child's courses will be discussed and reviewed at their annual review meeting this spring. You can select the 21st Century Class now, along with their World Language.

**Will students earn credits for summer courses that count toward the 125 required for HS?**

Yes. Students will need to fill out an Option 2 form (it is on the HS website) and get approval unless the course is taken in our summer institute.

**Are there summer courses online or offline?**

Mostly in person.

**If my child takes the Geometry summer course, will that count for the high school or middle school?**

This will count for high school because it is taken after the student completed 8th grade

**What courses are available for students in the summer after 8th grade?**

Summer school information will be made available next month. Typically, we offer Geometry and Chemistry for credit and some courses for preparation and/or enrichment.

**How many credits can students get for summer courses?**

It depends on the course taken.

**My daughter is interested in piano. What course should she opt for in place of regular HAP?**

Great question. We do not have a piano course, however, we do have a Percussion Ensemble course and those piano skills transfer directly to pitched percussion instruments. Something to consider. Your daughter might also consider Mixed Chorus, usually piano players are also really great singers. Send me an email so we can chat! robert.sears@sbschools.org

**Which programming language is covered in Computer Science?**

The 21st Century course uses Java.

**What can students do to have more college credit?**

South Brunswick HS students can earn college credit with our Dual Enrollment partnerships with TCNJ, Ramapo, and Middlesex Community College

**Can they take chemistry instead of physics in freshman year?**

I am sorry, no.

**Do students have the option to choose to take Physics, Chemistry, or Biology for their science course during their freshman year?**

No, they do not. Our freshmen science is Physics or Physical and Earth Science

**Is Biology a mandatory subject or could other courses be taken in place of that?**

Biology is a mandatory class as a graduation requirement.

**Does my child need a certain amount of volunteer hours/community service hours?**

Volunteer hours are not a graduation requirement.

**Do you support Model UN club?**

Yes, we have a Model UN club.

**NOT ANSWERED at time of ZOOM:**

**For the 21st Century Computer Science course prerequisites, if the student completes Algebra 1 in the summer program, are they eligible?**

Students cannot complete Algebra 1 over the summer. Algebra 1 must be taken in class during the school year.

**Are the 21 Century courses filled on a first come first serve basis?**

No, they are not.

**What is the class pathway if my child takes the Tech in the 21st Century class? As in, what classes can he take in the following years?**

Most of the courses in the Technology Education Department do not have prerequisites. Generally, a student who completes the Tech in the 21st course can move on to the Digital Design and Prototyping course and/or an Electronics course. There is also Engineering Technology, Engineering Drawing, Architecture Courses and Video Production courses that students can move on to after the 21st century course.

If your student is interested in the Vocational Trades, we will be starting a Vocational Trades Academy for the 25-26 school year. The Academy will have a 3-4 year pathway finishing with an internship with a local company.

**Is the deadline for students to change their 21st Century course? And if so, what is the deadline?**

A student can complete a form in the Fall, which must be signed by the teacher and parent, to change a 21st century course. They will have a deadline about 2-3 weeks into the course to request a change. This may not be able to be changed due to scheduling issues with other classes, and the availability of other 21st century courses.

**What path is available for a student in 10th grade and onward if they take the Freshman Art course in 9th grade?**

They may continue taking Art courses for 4 years but are not required to do so if they take Freshman Art. They may continue to take Honors/AP level art courses over the 4 years, ending with an AP Art Portfolio class.

**Can I sign up for Concert Orchestra without an audition?**

Yes, all incoming Freshman should register for H17353 Concert Orchestra. There is no audition. In early Spring, our HS music directors will send out communication with audition details for those who are interested in auditioning for a level 2 Honors Performing Ensemble.

**For the kids not in the band or orchestra in middle school, can they pick the "concert band " or " percussion ensemble" music option for their 21st Century class?**

No, these are not 21st century choices. They may take Mixed Chorus in the 21st century. The other music offerings are in place of a HAP.

**I understand that guitar is not an option in Band class, but my son has played it for the last 5 yrs; is there any option to consider it?**

We have guitar players in Jazz Band, if that is of interest to your child. While we do not have guitar as a direct option in band, many times guitar players are good singers. You might consider joining a Mixed Chorus class.

**If my child with IEP is interested in music but is not in any band or orchestra, do they have a chance to take an instrument course?**

Yes, there are no prerequisites for our Performing Arts courses open to freshmen. However, prior experience is highly recommended when enrolling in an instrumental course in high school. The best fit depends on your child's experience and interests.

For example:

- *Theater enthusiasts* might consider courses like Theatre Arts I in the 21st Century (H17367), Technical Theatre (H17368), or Costume and Character Design (H17364).
- Singing enthusiasts could explore Mixed Chorus in the 21st Century (H17410) or Mixed Chorus (H17349).
- Piano players may wish to use their skills by joining Percussion Ensemble (H17413).

**I know there is a program where you work with young kids. Where can I find the program?**

The program is undergoing some revision for next year. You would want to have your child sign up for Human Behavior in the 21st century to be eligible for the Future Teachers' Academy.

**The college and career info is available for juniors?**

All information is available on the guidance website- under [College & Career Info](#). Juniors also should use their SchoolLinks account to access their profile and college/career search options.

**How can incoming 9th graders apply for honors classes?**

Incoming 9th graders are placed on the basis of prerequisite criteria. Please consult the videos on the website for criteria.

**If my child takes Geometry as a summer course, are they eligible for taking AP Physics or are they just limited to Honors?**

Students that take Geometry in the summer are not eligible for AP Physics1 in the Fall. Depending on their grades, they will be placed in either Hon. Physics or Physics.

**What is the fee for taking Geometry classes over summer?**

The 6 week courses are \$1200.

**It's usually biology in 9th grade, and physics in 11th, why is it different in our high school?**

We have been a Physics First school since the mid 90s. Over 2000 schools across the nation offer Physics as their freshman course. The idea behind this movement is that Physics lays the foundations for better understanding of chemistry, which in turn will lead to more comprehension of biology. Introductory physics is tangible and demonstrable. Grasping the basic physics concepts of electrostatic and nuclear forces and the concept of energy storage and transfer are crucial to the understanding of chemical structures, atomic binding, gas laws, and the periodic table of the elements.

**What is the prerequisite for the summer chemistry course?**

An average score of 87% or greater in Algebra.

**How does Teams system work?**

Our student body is broken down into thirds, alphabetically, and we call each third a team. Those Teams each have an assigned Assistant Principal, a Dean, and a Student Assistance Counselor

Team Office for Students A - H: Annex 108

Team Office for Students I - Pb: C301

Team Office for Students Pc - Z: C201

**Does SBHS have a swim team?**

Yes!

**Will there be an ice hockey team next year?**

As of right now, yes.

**When can my kid try out for color guard?**

There will be information coming out in early Spring about joining the color guard!

**Is there a home eco club or something close to it?**

There is the Sweet and Savory Club for students interested in cooking/baking and a Viking Closet club for students interested in fashion (and social media marketing).

**Can my child do clubs and sports at the same time?**

Yes; this depends on how much time the sport takes up. If they are not present for all practices, events, etc, they may risk losing their spot. We have many clubs that can fit around sports schedules. It's best not to overload with too many extracurriculars at the same time.

**Is there a limit to the number of club membership or total activities? Typically, how many activities are recommended?**

No, but for a club to be added to a transcript, they must attend a certain amount of meetings. We suggest no more than 2-3 activities, so students can fully participate in the ones they choose.

**Some parents are new to the country and going through this experience for the first time. Please provide some pointers to address anything we should know which we might not know to ask.**

We hope you received a lot of valuable information from this recorded Zoom session and it will also be helpful for you to attend the Freshman parent meeting which will be held in the Fall and is connected to Back-to-School Night.