

ACADEMIC SUPPORTS and ADDITIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

This section includes descriptions of courses available to students facing academic difficulties or in need of more specialized support, as well as several programs that differ in significant ways from regular courses. These programs offer unique opportunities to learn through experience outside the school building, through individually developed projects aided by an adviser, through the study of ideas that cannot be categorized into a single discipline or department, and through participation in seminars aimed at developing individual potential.

ACADEMIC CENTER for EXCELLENCE and SUPPORT (ACES)

Grade: 9 – 12

Duration: 1 Semester

Prerequisite: Recommendation from Team Meeting or 504 meeting.

Credit: 0.25 per semester (Daily); 0.125 per semester (Alternate Days)

ACES is an elective course with the purpose of providing curriculum and organizational support in an encouraging and effective environment that enables the student to meet the performance standards and the goals established between the student and the Student Support Team. Each student, with the assistance of his/her counselor and the ACES Supervisor, is required to establish two goals for the semester. Each goal must be accompanied with five tasks for achieving the goal.

Students will only receive credit for attending ACES if a contract signed by student, parent (guardian), school counselor and ACES Supervisor is on file. It is the aim of the ACES program to develop a school-parent relationship to help each child realize success to the best of his/her ability. Upon recommendation, students may be enrolled on a daily basis or on alternating days.

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

Grade: 9 – 12

Duration: at least 1 Semester

Prerequisite: Recommendation from Team Meeting, 504 or IEP

The Downtown Campus provides students with an opportunity to feel empowered socially and academically while still remaining a part of New Canaan High School. Students who attend the Downtown Campus have a variety of learning profiles, backgrounds, and goals. They continue to focus on strong academics while building a culture of community, allowing them to develop connections and explore opportunities that they are passionate about. At the Downtown Campus, students and teachers work together to create a safe and supportive environment that embraces people's individual differences.

Curriculum is aligned with the corresponding High School classes while providing individualized instruction in a smaller group setting. Students in the Downtown Campus meet all the credit requirements of the NCHS diploma. Class time will allow students the chance to work as a group, but also to break off and receive more independent focused teacher attention, in addition to specialized instruction and clinical support as needed. Progress Reports and Report Cards will follow the High School schedule and any other meetings can be scheduled with the Clinical Director as needed.

Students at the Downtown Campus are able and encouraged to participate in all NCHS events, athletics, and clubs.

CAREERS

Grade: 9 - 12

Duration: 2 Semesters

Prerequisite: IEP Placement

Credit: 0.5 per semester

This course is designed to help students explore a variety of post secondary options i.e. 2-year college, 4-year college, tech schools, apprentice programs and the military. Emphasis is placed on career interest, work values, developing work related skills including interviewing and basic resume writing, and strategies for seeking post high school opportunities.

ESSENTIALS OF DAILY LIVING I, II, III and V

Grade: 9 -12
Duration: 2 Semesters
Prerequisite: IEP Placement
Credit: 0.5 per semester

This course of study is designed to provide instruction in adaptive skills in the areas of cooking, cleaning, shopping, budgeting, hygiene, self-help, mobility, communication, community and personal safety, phone skills, and health. Students will have opportunities to generalize skills learned in this course in a community setting.

GROUP DYNAMICS

Grade: 9 - 12
Duration: 1 Semester
Prerequisite: Staff recommendation
Credit: 0.5 per semester

In an atmosphere of care and concern where social bonding, positive peer influence and tolerance of individual differences are experienced, Group Dynamics uses an evidenced-based prevention curriculum, known as "Reconnecting Youth," to help students increase academic success. The personal growth of the individual student comes from learning and practicing important skills: self-monitoring, setting and achieving life goals, improving self-esteem, managing conflicts appropriately and developing and sustaining supportive peer and family relationships.

Class size is limited to no more than 12 students per section. Students should be selected as soon as possible and no later than the second week of class.

GYM BUDDIES

Grade: 9 - 12 or by IEP Placement
Duration: One semester every other day
Prerequisite: None
Credit: 0.25

A course designed to include all students of varying abilities. The class focuses on enhancing fitness, team and lifetime physical education activities. Open to 11th and 12th graders and special education students. This class meets credit requirements for PE. The courses will be offered one period for both fall and spring semester.

HEALTHY LIVING

Grade: 9-12
Duration: One or two semesters every other day
Prerequisite: IEP Placement
Credit: 0.25

The Health Education Course is designed to enhance the awareness and knowledge of healthy lifestyle choices. Topics covered include nutrition and fitness, understanding peer influences, growth and development, healthy relationships, cyber safety and community safety.

LANGUAGE LEARNING CENTER

Grade: 9 - 12
Duration: 2 Semesters
Prerequisite: IEP Placement
Credit: 0.5 per semester

The goal of this course is to prepare students to be independent and successful in their mainstream classes and in their community. Strategies such as goal setting and decision-making, organization skills and outlining, listening and reading, writing, test taking and test preparation, and stress reduction will be taught. Application of these strategies will focus on developing language skills through student's academic work and through the school community. Students will take part in developing their IEP and will be evaluated on how well they apply these skills to the work that is required of them. No homework is required, credit only.

LEARNING CENTER

Grade: 9 - 12
Duration: 2 Semesters
Prerequisite: IEP Placement
Credit: 0.5 per semester

The goal of this course is to prepare students to become independent and successful in school and in the community. Strategies such as self advocacy, goal setting and decision making, time management, organizational skills and note taking, listening and reading, writing, test preparation and test taking, and stress reduction will be emphasized. Students will take an in-depth look at their learning styles and be asked to apply their personal strengths to academic situations. Course work will also focus on students' participation in the process of developing their individualized educational plan (IEP) and includes the development of a plan for transition to post secondary school or career choices. No homework is required. Credit only.

LIFE SMART

Grade: 9 - 12
Duration: 2 Semesters
Prerequisite: IEP Placement
Credit: 0.5 per semester

The goal of this course is to help prepare students to develop the language, communication, social and organization skills necessary to experience success in future employment or other post high school experiences. Topics include: interpersonal skill development, time management, personal qualities, reasoning/ thinking skills, and problem-solving skills. Students will participate in small group discussions. There will be some homework.

READING SKILLS

Grade: 9-12
Duration: 1 or 2 Semesters
Prerequisite: IEP Placement
Credit: .25 (alternate day) or .5 (daily) per semester

The goal of this course is to provide intensive instruction in decoding and fluency skills. Assessments and IEP goals drive instruction. The class utilizes researched based interventions to teach students decoding and fluency strategies that they can then apply to their academic readings. Students will also learn how to support comprehension by annotating text, making connections, summarizing, identifying the main idea of a passage and making inferences.

READING/WRITING LEVEL I

Grade: 9 -12
Duration: 1 or 2 Semesters
Prerequisite: IEP Placement
Credit: 0.5 per semester

This course places emphasis on building comprehension, vocabulary, decoding and written expression, using various programs that employ a multi-sensory approach. It is designed for students who will benefit from a program that directly and systematically teaches skills specific to their individual strengths and needs.

READING/WRITING LEVEL II

Grade: 9-12
Duration: 1 or 2 Semesters
Prerequisite: IEP Placement
Credit: .5 per semester

This class is designed to provide specialized instruction in reading and writing. Students will be taught active reading strategies to help improve comprehension of literature and expository text at their instructional level. Students participate in whole-class reading, guided reading, and independent reading activities. The foundations of writing including sentence structure, paragraph structure and simple essays will be emphasized.

READING/WRITING LEVEL III

Grade: 9-12
Duration: 1 or 2 Semesters
Prerequisite: IEP Placement
Credit: .5 per semester

This class is designed to provide specialized instruction in reading and writing. Students will be taught active reading strategies to help improve comprehension of literature, primary source documents, and expository text. Students participate in whole-class reading, guided reading, and independent reading activities. Additionally, students will be instructed in writing literature based essays, answering document based questions and a research paper.

SOCIAL SKILLS I, II

Grade: 9 - 12

Duration: 1 or 2 Semesters

Prerequisite: IEP Placement

Credit: 0.5 per semester

The objective of the social skills class is to teach students various social skills needed in order to be successful at the high school and beyond. This course will use a variety of research-based methodologies to teach students how to understand and navigate the intricacies of various social situations in academic, personal and work settings. Research-based practices that will be used include: direct instruction, small-group instruction, video modeling, picture analysis, video analysis and problem-solving analysis. Topics of instruction can include body posture and language, social language and social problem solving, social conversations, working in groups, handling difficult social situations, nonverbal communication, reading social cues and more.

VOCATIONAL INTERNSHIPS

Grade: 10 - 12

Duration: 2 Semesters

Prerequisite: IEP Placement

Credit: 0.5 per semester

As a central part of their transition, students are mentored in a structured program of career exploration as they develop and practice interpersonal and community participation skills.

Online Learning Experiences

Online classes allow students to explore beyond the NCHS curriculum. They can be beneficial for those who would like to take classes that we do not currently offer. They can also be used for students who are unable to schedule courses during the school day. These courses allow students to take charge of their own learning by scheduling when they will allocate time to study the material and independently manage the online learning platform. Currently NCHS offers courses through *Virtual High School*, *Educere* and *Plato*.

Students in grades 10 – 12 should first examine their reasons to take an online class and then explore programs that offer studies in this area. They need to reflect on their independence, motivation and willingness to take on this rigorous opportunity.

Students will be required to complete an application (available in the School Counseling office) to be considered for an online learning opportunity. A student may be enrolled in this program only after the School Counselor and the Department Chair have officially approved the course and the application.

NCHS School-Based Programs

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Grade: 10 - 12

The Independent Study Program is designed to allow students the means to study independently concepts or bodies of knowledge from which they feel they can profit. The program aims to facilitate students' development of their own personal standards for learning, allowing them to become more dependent on their own resources.

Students should begin by investigating an area of interest and determining its feasibility as a subject for Independent Study. A faculty member or adult knowledgeable in the field should be sought as an advisor (who may be outside of the school system), whose key role is to assist in the development of a project and students are urged to discuss thoroughly the scope and design of the project with their advisors. Together, the student and the advisor will submit to the Independent Study Committee for approval a contract that will include the proposed advisor-student meeting schedule, the amount of credit sought, the form in which the project will be presented, the amount of time and nature of the project. Credit is a contract item and can vary from 1/4 to several credits depending on the extent of the project. Details of the final evaluation of the project will be arranged through the student, the advisor, and the Coordinator of Independent Study. A journal in which the student analyzes the learning must be submitted, as well.

A student may be enrolled in this program only after a contract has been officially approved by the Steering Committee. Projects can run from one quarter to several years (including summers) though the usual time is two semesters; seniors, however, must be finished by May 1 of their senior year.

Through this program, a student may pursue an advanced level of study in a subject already taken but may not propose for credit a project that essentially duplicates a course he/she can take in the regular curriculum, nor one that replaces required courses.

SENIOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Grade 12

The Senior Internship Program (SIP) is an end-of-year, unpaid experience of about four-weeks. Selected NCHS seniors work on-site for 25-30 hours per week according to a schedule determined by the work site supervisor and the work site's needs. All interns are assigned a faculty mentor who will meet with the work site supervisor, communicate with the student on a regular basis, and be available to the work site supervisor for consultation and assistance.

Interns will attend a training workshop and complete the assigned tasks required of them, including but not limited to journaling about their internship experiences. Upon completion of the internship, students will receive .25 credit.

COOPERATIVE WORK EXPERIENCE

Grade: 11 - 12

Duration: 1 and/or 2 Semesters

Prerequisite: Appropriate grade level

Credit: A maximum of 1.25 credits can be earned each semester from working and .25 each semester from related class work.

Cooperative Work Experience is designed for students who wish to combine a part-time paying job or an equivalent skill developing pursuit (with prior approval) with their high school studies. The program gives students an opportunity to learn new skills and develop good work habits. In-school classes also include reporting on job progress, collecting information on careers, how to lead and supervise employees and learning the practical aspects of becoming a self-supporting person.

Day students must work for an approved employer at least 10-15 hours per week, **Work credits can only be earned with concurrent class work.**

| Earning Credit in Cooperative Work Experience Program (C.W.E.) | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Hours Worked | 25-20 | 19-25 | 14-10 | 9-5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Work Credit | 1.25 | 0.95 | 0.70 | 0.45 | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.10 | 0.05 |
| Class Credit | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 |
| Total Credits | 1.50 | 1.20 | 0.95 | 0.70 | 0.45 | 0.40 | 0.35 | 0.30 |

The hours worked and credits earned are based on an average of the total semester hours.

Inter-District Programs Grades 9 - 12

THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL STUDIES

The Center for Global Studies (CGS) is an interdistrict magnet high school located within Brien McMahon High School in Norwalk, for students interested in international studies. Since 1992, it has attracted hundreds of students from 13 different school districts. Students select a concentration of study: China, Japan, or the Middle East. Language immersion is embedded in the program and students may choose Chinese, Japanese or Arabic. Most students participate in a two-week study abroad option and the center maintains ties with several sites in Asia; in 2010, an option to travel to Egypt was added for those studying Arabic. In addition, electives are offered in Literature, Art, and History. Other classes (science, math, health, physical education and electives) are taken within Brien McMahon High School.

REGIONAL CENTER FOR AGRISCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

The Regional Agriscience and Technology Program offers an opportunity for all students in lower Fairfield County to explore the nation's largest commercial business – AGRICULTURE! Over 2000 career areas in the agriculture industry from agrimarketing to zoology become available to the students enrolled in the program. Instruction in introductory level information, as well as more advanced technological skills, is provided. Classroom instruction, laboratory and field experience, guest speakers, leadership development through FFA, and career exploration are all areas offered through this broad program. After getting an overview in Plant Science, Animal Science, Environmental Science, Aquaculture, and Agriculture Mechanics, students will choose an area of specialty during their last two years.

Students enrolled in the Stamford Regional Agriscience and Technology Program attend Westhill High School full-time. All activities including sports, offered at Westhill are available to students enrolled in the program. Students are prepared to go on to college or to enter directly into the workforce upon completion of the program. All students are encouraged to participate in internships and entrepreneurship that give them the professional experience to apply what is taught in the classroom to the real world of work. All students entering the Stamford Regional Agriscience and Technology Program must fill out an application and be interviewed. For further information call the Stamford Regional Agriscience & Technology Center at 977-4974.

REGIONAL CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The Regional Center for the Arts (RCA) is an elective program. Students attend NCHS in the morning and attend RCA in the afternoon. Offerings at RCA include dance, theater, musical theater, film/video production, and some creative script writing. RCA's performing arts training program is designed to prepare students to pursue professional careers and post-secondary studies. The curriculum is professionally oriented and highly structured. The program is demanding and requires a serious commitment from the students. In order to meet NCHS graduation requirements, students may need to add on-line courses to their program of study to earn a high school diploma.

ACADEMY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING

The Academy of Information Technology & Engineering (AITE) is an inter-district program offered in Stamford for New Canaan students. There are two areas of concentration: Computer Technologies and Digital Arts. This program prepares students for technologically oriented careers or for post-secondary study. In addition to working with state-of-the-art technology, AITE integrates technology with internships, interaction with real life businesses and mentors, and provides project-based instruction.

Study Abroad

Students who may be interested in studying in an international setting for a semester or a year should consult with their School Counselor to explore the many opportunities available.