

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

FRESHMAN YEAR

WELCOME TO ST. IGNATIUS

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WELCOME TO ST. IGNATIUS!

Most ninth graders eagerly look forward to their high school experience, but many are also naturally anxious about this life change. SI brings several new opportunities: academic challenges, campus ministry experiences (Freshman Retreat, Friday Morning Liturgy...), co-curricular activities, new friendships and increased autonomy. At the beginning of the fall semester, counselors meet with each student both in groups and individually to help familiarize them with the counseling process as well as to talk about their transition experience. This is also an opportunity to share tips for a smooth transition into the year.

As freshmen make the transition into high school, students often notice a decline in grades due to the necessary adjustment period which is common for students coming into a new environment with often dramatically different expectations. Academic rigor is but one of the many changes students experience in freshman year. The students in our freshmen class come from 100 different grammar schools, each having a different academic emphasis and varied extracurricular opportunities. While a decline in grades can naturally be frustrating for students and their families, this is a normal part of each child's development in high school. Even colleges recognize that freshmen year is a transitional year! By the second semester, students are usually finding their academic stride and asking for help where needed.

Staying organized is the key to success at St. Ignatius. At the start of each school year, students are provided with a day planner to keep track of assignments, tests, extra-curricular commitments, their course schedule, and the daily schedule at SI. Depending upon the events noted on our calendar, there are occasions when our daily schedule may be different from a typical school day. Students are encouraged to use their planner regularly and to check the SI website for any updates. An overview of the SI schedule (bell schedule) may be found on the back cover of the day planner.

Parental involvement improves student achievement and general adjustment so long as freshmen also learn personal responsibility and positive decision making. Counselors guide students in taking ownership of their academic, extracurricular and personal choices. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's counselor as questions, observations, or concerns arise.

Suggestions for parents

- Establish good communication – listen with compassion.
- Create a safe space for serious conversation.
- Be patient.
- Encourage good sleep habits.
- Continue setting age appropriate limits.
- Place responsibility on students.
- Help provide a good study environment at home (choose a room in the house free from distraction).
- Encourage a discussion with teachers and/or the counselor as soon as difficulties arise.

Tips for freshmen

- Seek balance between academics, co curriculars, and a personal life.
- Allow time for sleep.
- Make a few copies of the 'bell schedule' and your class schedule to access as needed.
- Keep notebooks, backpacks and your locker organized.
- Ask for help from teachers when needed.
- Remember: freshman year does 'count' (for college admission).
- Don't limit yourself to one group of friends; be open to meeting new people.
- Get involved in the SI community: try something new—especially if the first sport/play/activity didn't work out as planned.
- Get to know your counselor!

Freshmen are strongly encouraged to visit the counseling center, with or without an appointment. Our focus is to assist freshmen with their transition to high school. As it is a transition year, freshmen need to establish their place on our campus: dream, engage fully in high school life, make healthy choices and learn to set realistic goals. We urge students to visit their counselor to ask questions, talk about concerns and establish a relationship.

Fall Semester Timeline

August

23rd (9am-2pm) **Freshman Parent and Student Orientation:**

On the Sunday prior to the start of school, parents and students are provided a comprehensive overview of the significant aspects of an education within the community at St. Ignatius College Preparatory. Among the departments represented are Campus Ministry, Counseling, and Adult Spirituality.

26th (9:00am) **Freshman Orientation Day**

On the first day of school for freshmen, counselors meet with their incoming ninth graders to introduce the Counseling program at St. Ignatius. It also allows students to have their first glimpse at the person who will be their counselor for the next four years. The specific counselor name is noted on the student's schedule.

August/ September: **Individual Meetings with Freshmen**

Counselors will schedule a meeting with each freshman individually to welcome him/her to St. Ignatius and discuss individual transition experiences. It is also an excellent opportunity for students to ask any questions. We realize that at this point, freshmen are coping with finding their way, adjusting to new teachers, getting involved, staying organized, and using the St. Ignatius planner...(to name a few). We're here to help!

September

10th (7:00pm) **Back to School Night** (parents)

16th (7:00pm) **Orientation Evening for Parents of Freshmen and Transfer Student**

23rd (7:00pm) **Counseling Freshman Parent Night & Community of Concern Presentation**

Parents meet with their child's counselor in a classroom setting to learn more about the flow of freshman year from the Counseling Department perspective. Immediately following, parents will meet in the commons to hear a presentation about drug & alcohol use and abuse among teenagers. This is a mandatory presentation for all freshman parents.

October

12th & 13th **Midterm Exams**

November

English Classroom Meetings

A counselor will review Family Connection, provide registration instructions and have each student complete a Learning Style Inventory.

Small Group Meetings

Once they complete the Learning Styles Inventory, counselors meet with students in small groups to review Learning Styles Inventory Results and discuss preparation for upcoming Final Exams.

December

15th—18th **Final Exams**

Spring Semester Timeline

January/February

Individual Meetings

Counselors will meet with students (throughout the semester) to individually discuss the progress of freshman year. Students may request meetings at their discretion.

Honors/Advanced Placement Requests (for Sophomore year)

During late January and early February, applications for Advanced Placement and honors courses are provided in the following academic disciplines: English, math, language, science, and history.

The application process for each subject will be made available to students by the classroom teacher of each particular subject. The Course Catalog will be posted online for reference (www.siprep.org).

March

8th & 9th Midterm Exams

Class Scheduling for Sophomore Year Begins

Counselors visit students in math classrooms in March to review the scheduling process at SI. General instructions and Schedule Request Forms will be provided for students/parents to complete and sign by the indicated deadline.

April

April 1st-11th **Holy Week and Easter Break**

April 12th **Classes Resume**

June

1st - 3rd **Final Exams**

July

Sophomore year schedule is mailed to students at home. Instructions for schedule change requests are included within the mailing.

Using Family Connection

Family Connection: Web Address

<http://connection.naviance.com/siprep>

Or find the link on the Counseling Department webpage at www.siprep.org

Family Connection Registration

Counselors meet with freshmen during English class to register students on Family Connection. The goal is to have students begin the school year learning to think about 'who they are.' More information about Family Connection can be found in the preceding section of this handbook.

Learning Style Inventory

Freshmen will complete the 'Learning Style Inventory' to help students better understand how they learn. Further, it is an opportunity to consider how to adjust to varying teaching styles to be successful. Counselors will then meet with small groups of freshmen to discuss what they learned from the inventory as a springboard to personalizing effective study skills, organization and time management.

Course Selection for Sophomore Year

All students are asked to use Family Connection to register their course selections for the following school year. Students are made aware of their course approvals early in the Spring semester by the teacher in their current class. They may also find this information on the main page on the course selection program, 'Course Manager', on Family Connection.

The scheduling process typically begins in January. Students are instructed about using Course Manager on Family Connection during counselor visits to math classrooms in March.

Parent Event Surveys

Parents will be asked to evaluate events hosted by the SI Counseling Department for various grade levels. This is an important tool for us to use as we continuously evaluate our program to provide students and parents with useful information as they move through high school.

An e-mail is sent when a survey is posted. All surveys may be found by logging on to Family Connection. Parents must log on to their own account to access a parent survey.

Summer Programs for High School Students

Found under 'Enrichment Programs' on the Family Connection homepage, the various programs that come to our attention in the counseling center may be researched here. Options include college coursework, visual/performing arts, athletics, Leadership forums, and programs with specific academic interests, to name a few. Dates and costs are as varied as the options found on this link. This is not an all inclusive list, but a general overview of the opportunities.