

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Because we ask students to make their course requests in January, it makes sense to provide students a chance to insure the accuracy of their requests later in the spring, prior to the start of the school year.

It's our expectation that after this second review, students will "lock in" to their choices and proceed accordingly come fall. Why is this relevant? There are two primary reasons:

- The "master schedule" and course sections (teacher assignments) are built based on student requests. Reliable student request data is critical to assigning limited resources in an equitable manner.
- It's also critically important that the master schedule be balanced, while being agile to the scheduling needs of our students and staff.

A great amount of time and energy is invested into designing a master schedule that will satisfy the varying needs of our stakeholders. The master schedule gets thrown into chaos and becomes inefficient when significant changes are made post-build. It's imperative that student requests are accurate and remain constant when we start the year in August.

From April 17-28, and students will have the opportunity to alter their course requests for the upcoming school year. To make changes, students must complete a Registration Request Change Form (available in the Counseling Office or online through Registration Central) and return it to their counselor. We **STRONGLY** encourage every student/family to review their course requests in Power School prior to April 17th.

During this review, students/families should insure that a minimum of 12 credit hours are requested. A schedule with 12 credit hours or less will force the student to have at least one study hall during the year. This study hall could be located anywhere in the student's schedule. Please understand that we will not have the flexibility to alter schedules to accommodate specific placement of study halls in students' schedules. Students who do not wish to have a study hall, should request 14 credit hours, which would be considered a full schedule (periods 1-7).

At this time, the only courses to be offered before or after school is one section of Performance PE (7:00 AM), Drivers Education (3:05 PM) and Literary Magazine (3:05 PM). All other courses will be scheduled during periods 1-7.

Many students have requested a PE course for both semesters. We are unable to guarantee these requests. Students will be assigned only one PE unless there is an academic need to double up. If space allows, students may be granted the option to take an additional PE course on a space available and first come, first serve basis in the fall or spring semester. In the meantime, students should not anticipate their PE course both semesters and take pro-active steps to insure a proper number of courses are requested.

Kennedy will again offer a 7 period day allowing students the flexibility to take additional electives and/or core courses to enhance their college and career preparation. We have discovered that many students have requested 12 or fewer credits. While 12 credits is considered a full schedule (6 classes and a study hall), a schedule of fewer than 12 credits, in most instances, is not taking full advantage of the range of available opportunities.

More than ever before, Kennedy provides students with extraordinary opportunities to enhance their education and career exploration. Kennedy offers a full range of Advanced Placement courses. In addition, students can take advantage of amazing opportunities off campus through Iowa BIG, Kirkwood Academy Programs and the Student Built House. To dig deeper into these programs, please visit Registration Central <http://kenn.cr.k12.ia.us/academics/cougar-registration-central/>. There are videos, course descriptions and much more information to help your student explore.

Historically, we know that 35-40% of Kennedy students will attend Kirkwood Community College after graduation. Yet many of our junior and senior students are choosing to take less than a full schedule when they could opt to take a Kirkwood Academy or Dual Credit course to get a jump start on a career program or general studies courses -- a tremendous benefit that could save families \$1000 or more on college tuition. Similarly, students interested in the trades, should consider the Student Built House (Building Trades) for a great hands-on learning experience. Iowa BIG allows students to pursue many interests, get involved in their community, develop communication skills and so much more. These opportunities are right at our students' doorstep. We hope you can encourage your child to invest in their future and to seek out these opportunities if their schedule allows. Encourage them to take more than the minimum. Encourage them to explore, to challenge themselves for the betterment of their future.

Again, please revisit your student's course requests. Ensure accuracy. Do the courses selected make sense? Are they being purposeful with their selections? Are they planning with more than one year in mind (unless he/she will be a senior!)? Are they challenging them self and being realistic?

To recap: If your student needs to make a change in their course requests for next year, the time to do so is April 17-28. We expect students to be locked-in once this deadline has closed on April 28th. Any requested changes after this date will only be considered for academic "needs", not "wants." Please ensure your student is taking full advantage of the opportunities that are available and do everything you can to help them become ready for their future.

Sincerely

The Counseling and Administrative Teams