



Key West High School Transition Plan

2014-2015

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The transition from 8th Grade to 9th Grade can bring about many emotions for both students and their parents. While it certainly is exciting, any new school can be intimidating. Key West High School is fully committed to easing this transition through the implementation of a step-by-step guide for students and parents to become acclimated to our school. We have a dedicated team of administrators, teachers, students, and community members that work our new students to ensure they feel comfortable, confident, and able to contribute to our learning community.

Student Orientation

Our transition program begins at the end of February when our guidance counselors and administrators visit each of our area middle schools. After passing out the most current curriculum guide, which is a published description of all course offerings, graduation requirements, club and athletic offerings, and other useful information for students to share with their parents, a guidance counselor presents helpful academic information, like how to use the curriculum guide to build a class schedule. An administrator covers behavioral expectations, noting important policies like dress code and attendance. Finally, the Student Activities Director and/or Athletic Director excites students by sharing information about our numerous extra-curricular activities. The presentation closes with an opportunity for students to ask any question they may have to the team before they are invited to attend our KWH Showcase.

KWH Showcase

The KWH Showcase is a campus-wide event held in early March that highlights the numerous and unique opportunities KWH students have to expand and explore their talents, develop their passions, and foster positive relationships with peers and adults. It is also the kick off to our scheduling process for the upcoming school year. This event begins in the auditorium with brief presentations from our School Leadership Team with general information on academic offerings, graduation requirements, scheduling procedures, and what we have to offer in the areas of student activities and athletics. After a short group presentation, parents and students are encouraged to explore the campus to meet our staff and students. All of our courses, clubs, and teams are displayed throughout the cafeteria and courtyard. Student and parents have the opportunity to see and hear our groups perform, talk to teachers about course offerings, and meet our students involved in all of our clubs and sports.

Community Outreach Sessions

We realize that it is sometimes difficult for parents to come to us, so we also take our show on the road! Our community outreach sessions are held in mid-March from 5:30-7:00pm at both Sugarloaf School and Douglas Gym. Members of our School Leadership Team present a mini-showcase and then stay to answer any question that you may have.

Student Registration

Registration is a process in which students sign up for the courses they are going to take the next school year. After our orientation and showcase, our guidance department returns to the local middle schools at the end of March to give a presentation on the scheduling process by class. At this time, students will be given a registration form and are encouraged to use their curriculum guide to build their 9th grade schedule with their parents. A few days later, our counselors go back and actually begin the registration for the next school year. Every student meets with a counselor individually for one-on-one scheduling.

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Saturday Round-Up

We understand that some parents like to participate in the registration process. For this reason, we open our guidance department on two different Saturdays at the end of March from 8am-5pm for 15 minute registration sessions. Parents and students can review registration choices with one of our guidance counselors or administrators and get the answers to all of their questions.

8th Grade Transition Day

In May, KWH invites all local 8th grade students to attend this student-designed and student-led program. At the program, students will not only learn about what to expect at Key West High from the people who know it best – current students - but they will also meet and work with their new peer mentor. Peer mentors are a select group of outstanding 10th and 11th graders who were recommended by their teachers to participate in mentor training. They work diligently with many of our 9th grade teachers to create and prepare for the Transition Day Program, which includes a presentation of essential information, school tour, and team-building activities. Mentor groups work together at Transition Day and will also reconvene the first week of school and continue to meet once a month throughout the 2014-2015 school year. It is our hope that this extra layer of support from upperclassmen will ease the transition to Key West High School.

New Student Orientation

The week prior to school starting, we open our campus to all new students and their families at New Student Orientation. Parents and students begin in the auditorium with an overview of academics, activities and athletics, some of the differences they may encounter when making the transition from middle school to high school. Once the initial overview is complete, students and parents are invited to tour our campus. Our Peer Mentors are present to offer tours and answer questions. Our administration, guidance counselors and many of our instructional staff will also be on available to assist in any way. This is a great time for students to walk their schedule and meet their new teachers!

Grade Level Orientation Assembly

On the second day of school, we meet with our students by grade level to review important information specific to their success. We review our expectations, policies, and procedures, as well as provide them with a variety of different avenues of assistance. For freshmen, this assembly is followed by their first Peer Mentor Social so that they can reconvene with their peer mentor and group, seeking help and advice if needed.

Suspended Curriculum

Suspended Curriculum occurs in all 9th grade English, Science, and History classes for the first week of school. Instead of diving into the textbook, teachers curtail lessons to acclimate students to our building and to set them up for success in and out of the classroom. Topics that are covered in suspended curriculum are:

Time Management	Organization	Reading Strategies
Who's Who at KWH	Planner Use	Goal Setting
Plagiarism	Research Techniques	Writing Standards
Study Skills	Vocabulary Development	Student Code of Conduct

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9th Grade Center

Some students are in need of extra support. For this reason, our administration identifies approximately 75 9th grade students who scored level 1 or 2 on the 8th grade FCAT as members of the 9th Grade Success Center at KWH. Students in the Success Center share the same teachers in the following areas: World Cultural Geography, English 1, and Earth Space Science. In addition they all enrolled in an Intensive Reading Course. All 3 of the core area teachers have a common planning period. The team teachers create the same rules and procedures for the students enrolled in the Success Center classes for consistency. Teachers meet twice a week – once to focus on student needs/problems and once to plan common cross curricular lessons.

Mentoring Program and Socials

KWH's Mentoring Program consists of 40 diverse 11th and 12th grade students who desire to improve the underclassmen experience by developing meaningful relationships with new students over the course of 12 months. Students apply for this program and undergo significant training before meeting their mentees at the 8th Grade Transition Day. They also helped at New Student Orientation and continue to serve throughout the school year at monthly mentor socials. These socials provide mentors the opportunity to check in with their mentees, answer questions, give advice, and foster a positive relationship with all students.

Open House

In early September, Key West High School opens their doors to students and parents at their annual Open House. This is a chance for parents to once again walk their child's schedule, meet their teachers, and review teacher expectations and course requirements. After Open House, everyone is invited to The Backyard for the Bonfire, a KWH tradition! The Marching Band, Cheerleaders, and Conchettes perform, fall sports teams are recognized, and the football team is introduced. It is a fun evening full of Conch Pride!

ELL Open House

In October, we hold a special open house specifically for our ELL families. We provide dinner and babysitting services, while our ELL Team leads a presentation on graduation requirements, testing requirements, help services, and other vital information. The presentation is followed by student recognition presented by various KWH teachers and administrators. ELL Open Houses are held once per semester.

Parent Workshop

The transition to high school is not just one that affects students. Some parents also are in need of additional support during this time as well. In October, we offer an evening parent workshop to review Pinnacle Grade Viewer, share ways to stay informed, contact teachers, and set up conferences, as well as, other useful parenting tips. Our goal is provide parents with the tools they need to ensure their child's success at KWH!