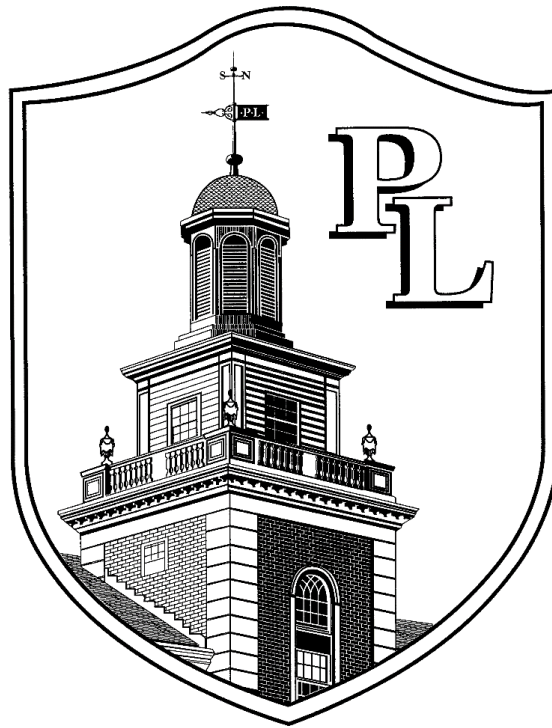


# **POMPTON LAKES PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## **CURRICULUM REPORT TO THE BOARD: HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM**



**CURRICULAR ♦ EXTRACURRICULAR ♦ FACILITIES**



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March 2017

## SECTION I CURRICULAR

### OVERVIEW

Pompton Lakes High School (PLHS) offers students a comprehensive program of studies that is comprised of mostly full-year and semester courses. The program of studies includes state-required courses in language arts literacy; mathematics; science; social studies; world languages; health, safety, and physical education; visual and performing arts; financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy; technological literacy; and 21st century life and careers, or career-technical education. The program also includes courses that afford students the opportunity to design a four-year plan which satisfies their individual needs, interests, and goals. All courses are categorized, or tagged, based on their level of complexity. A course may be tagged as a general, academic, honors, or Advanced Placement (AP) course.

PLHS offers AP courses and the accompanying national exams for college credit pursuant to the requirements set forth by the College Board. While the average number of AP courses offered by high schools of all sizes nationwide is slightly below 9, PLHS is proud to offer its students 15 AP courses across seven content areas. Specifically, the high school presently offers the following AP courses:

Biology	German
Calculus AB	Music Theory
Chemistry	Physics 1, 2
Economics	Spanish
English Literature	Statistics
Environmental Science	Studio Art
European History	U.S. History



**Students in Mr. David Pede's AP Physics 1 class discuss mechanical waves. Students at PLHS now have the opportunity to take AP Physics 2.**

PLHS is also pleased to offer students 16 honors courses:

Algebra 2	German 4
Biology	Precalculus
Chemistry	Spanish 2, 3, 4
English 9, 10, 11	U.S. History 1
French 4, 5	World History: 1400 to Present
Geometry	

In addition to providing required courses of study, PLHS offers a myriad of elective courses. Elective offerings include Anatomy and Physiology; Astronomy; Web Design; Broadcast Journalism and Multimedia Production; Creative Writing; Mythology; Sociology; Current Events; Sports and Entertainment Marketing; Personal Law; Digital Imaging/Visual Communications; Sculpture; Computer-Aided Design (CAD); High Tech Music; Introduction to Education; Form, Function, and Design; and Foods. PLHS also affords students the opportunity to earn course credit through the expanded cooperative employment/internship program, the independent study program, and the teacher aide program.

Besides its AP program, PLHS offers two additional programs through which students may earn college credit prior to graduation: Seton Hall University's Project Acceleration, or SHU-PA, and the Challenger Program, a partnership with Passaic County Community College (PCCC).

### Project Acceleration

Students in good academic standing may participate in SHU-PA. Students may earn college credit for the following PLHS academic-level courses whose syllabi and teachers have been pre-approved by Seton Hall University:

- Anatomy and Physiology
- Astronomy
- Calculus
- Creative Writing
- Introduction to Education
- Sociology



**Mr. Michael Riordan leads the discussion in his Sociology class. Sociology has formed part of SHU-PA since the inception of the program at PLHS.**

Registered students who successfully complete SHU-PA courses receive their regular PLHS credits and Seton Hall University credits that are transferable to more than 200 colleges and universities. Tuition is substantially discounted from the Seton Hall on-campus rate. At present, the cost of participation in Project Acceleration is \$75 per credit (that is, \$225 for 3-credit courses). Taking the same courses on the Seton Hall campus bear a substantially larger cost of \$1,130 per credit (that is, a total cost of \$3,390 for 3-credit courses).

### Challenger Program

Qualified students may take college courses of interest on the Wanaque campus of PCCC. Students must take a minimum of four classes in the morning at PLHS and attend classes in the afternoon at PCCC. Students are typically required to take a total of four courses at PCCC: two courses during the fall semester and two courses during the spring semester. Tuition is incredibly reasonable (that is, approximately \$315 per 3-credit course). The PLHS-PCCC partnership allows the high school to expand its curriculum at no cost to the school district. Through the Challenger Program, PLHS students may take college-level courses such as Public Speaking, Criminal Justice, and Psychology that the high school cannot easily offer.

In 2012, the successful combination of AP, SHU-PA, and Challenger earned PLHS status as a New Jersey Choice School and the opportunity to accept and enroll a limited number of academically-focused students from neighboring towns. The first cohort of three "choice" students is set to graduate from PLHS in June 2017.

### **RECENT HIGHLIGHTS**

The program of studies, or curriculum, at PLHS is truly dynamic; it is always evolving in accordance with the surfacing needs of students. Thus, PLHS is pleased to offer the following rundown of recent curriculum-related enhancements:

- Implemented the new AP courses Environmental Science, Economics, Physics 2, and Studio Art;
- Installed the new honors courses French 4 and German 4;
- Overhauled the business program through the creation of the new electives Sports and Entertainment Marketing, Entrepreneurship, and Business Management and Marketing;
- Expanded and formalized the cooperative employment/internship program;
- Developed the other new elective courses Broadcast Journalism and Multimedia Production and Digital Imaging/Visual Communications;
- Transformed the tired home economics program into an exhilarating culinary arts program (<https://twitter.com/cheffoleysroom>);
- Inaugurated the self-contained life skills program;
- Galvanized 21st century instruction and learning via wireless portable devices; state-of-the-art computer (PC and Mac) laboratories; and Apple iPad, SMART, Interwrite Mobi, and PASCO SPARK technologies;
- Implemented the school district's 1:1 technology initiative by issuing all current freshman students an HP ProBook 11 laptop and utilizing the Google Classroom web-based platform;
- Infused the Achieve3000 online differentiated instruction method to improve literacy in English, ESL, and special education classes;
- Introduced TenMarks, an online standards-based mathematics program, in Algebra 1;
- Effected online textbooks in all core social studies classes;
- Integrated PARCC-style close reading assessments in science and social studies; and
- Launched the online creative writing website "The Nest Review" ([www.thenestreview.wordpress.com](http://www.thenestreview.wordpress.com)).



**Freshman Jaida Damato completes work in the library media center with her school-issued HP ProBook 11 laptop.**

## MAIN GOALS

In concert with a staunch spirit of continuous improvement, PLHS intends to pursue the following short-term curricular goals:

- Implement the new AP courses U.S. Government and Politics as well as French;
- Install the new STEM elective courses Computer Science as well as Robotics and Product Design;
- Put in the required freshman course Computer Applications for 21st Century Learning;
- Add the Transitional Mathematics course for students who need to strengthen requisite knowledge and skills to enjoy greater success in Algebra 1;
- Introduce TenMarks in Geometry;
- Create a third-year course in woodworking;
- Revive the course International Cooking as part of the culinary arts program;
- Consider and pilot virtual courses as an option for the senior-year experience; and
- Expand the 1:1 technology initiative to all grade levels and become a full 1:1 high school.

## SECTION II

### EXTRACURRICULAR

#### OVERVIEW

In addition to presenting a strong curricular program, PLHS affords its students the opportunity to engage in a plethora of clubs, activities, and sports through its extracurricular program. An impressive 90% of students choose to take advantage of this opportunity.

PLHS offers 28 extracurricular clubs and activities. An emphasis on service permeates the extracurricular program, which includes the following clubs and activities:

Assembly Planning Committee	Marching Band
The Cardinal Network	Morning Announcements
Change-of-Town Officers (CTO) Day	National Honor Society (NHS)
Classes of 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Peer Helpers
Coalition of Student Ambassadors	<i>Pioneer</i> Yearbook
(CSA)	Pompton Lakes Prevention Coalition
Color Guard (Band Front)	(PLPC) / Club HAWC (Health and
Environmental Club	Wellness Coalition)
Fall Drama	PSAT and SAT Evening Course
Football Refreshment Stand	Spring Show / Spring Musical Fundraising
Future Business Leaders of America	Committee (SMFC)
(FBLA)	Stage Crew
<i>Impact</i> Literary Magazine	Student Council
Interact	Volleyball
Jazz Band	Zonta (Z-Club)

NHS and Z-Club feature formal induction ceremonies which are held in the fall. NHS also sponsors the spring Academic Recognition Ceremony which honors the top 25 academically ranked students in the senior class with unique testimonials prepared by members of the faculty. Other premier activities which involve the work of multiple clubs include Back-to-School Night, Eighth Grade Open House, and the Senior Awards Ceremony.

Several groups within the extracurricular program at PLHS have taken advantage of opportunities to compete against other high schools at various levels. The marching band and color guard have competed on local, state, and national levels as part of the USBands Youth Education in the Arts (YEA) circuit. The marching band and color guard have also joined the concert band and choir to perform in exclusive locations like Lake George, Boston, New York City, and most recently Disney World. For the past 11 years, FBLA has dominated the regional and state levels of competition in advancing to the national level of competition; in summer 2015, the organization emerged as the national champion through the competition held in Chicago, IL.



**In summer 2015, the national championship FBLA group took the Windy City by storm.**

An esteemed member of the highly competitive North Jersey Interscholastic Conference (NJIC) which was formed in 2010, PLHS (<https://twitter.com/PLHSathletics>) hosts 22 male and female varsity sports teams, including the following:

Fall

Boys Cross Country  
Girls Cross Country  
Boys Soccer  
Girls Soccer  
Football  
Cheerleading  
Girls Tennis  
Field Hockey

Winter

Boys Basketball  
Girls Basketball  
Bowling  
Cheerleading  
Boys Fencing  
Girls Fencing  
Indoor Track  
Wrestling

Spring

Baseball  
Softball  
Boys Lacrosse  
Boys Tennis  
Boys Track and Field  
Girls Track and Field

PLHS is proud to offer and enjoy high levels of success in sports such as bowling and fencing which are more commonly found in larger high schools.

**RECENT HIGHLIGHTS**

Opportunities within the extracurricular program at PLHS have bolstered a flourishing fine arts program. In 2015, the high school successfully added a fall drama to its slate of premier school events. In fall 2015, the performance of the popular *Charlotte's Web* inaugurated this new activity; in fall 2016,

PLHS' version of the 1940s Broadway play *Harvey* continued this envisioned tradition. While the fall drama has endured its infancy, the spring show (musical) has chased new heights. In spring 2015, *Shrek the Musical* sold out the high school's Colfax Auditorium for three nights; in spring 2016, *Young Frankenstein* proved to be up to the task of trying to match its widely known predecessor in terms of the overall quality of performance. Both *Shrek* and *Young Frankenstein* benefited from the new auditorium lighting system and intricate set designs, including a custom-built thrust stage extension. Motivated by their active involvement in stage crew, several eager students went on to the Youth Transitions to Work (YTTW) Stage Technician Apprenticeship Program after graduation. With the performance of *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* looming, excitement surrounding the fine arts continues.

While the fall drama and spring musical have garnered much deserved attention, PLHS is pleased to point out several other new features of its extracurricular program:

- The Men's and Women's Choral Ensembles, outgrowths of the regular choral program;
- The Fine Arts Night/Showcase which emanated from an anti-bullying initiative;



Members of the 2016-2017 varsity bowling team stand with the state sectional championship trophy. Three of the student-athletes on the team impressively bowled perfect 300 games during the season.



Art instructor Mr. Kevin Sullivan and freshmen Sarah Balfour, Lexi Azoulay, and Stephanie Breccq prepare for Fine Arts Night.

- The Cardinal Network, an online outlet for news, stories, and special features that replaced *The Cardinal* newspaper (<https://thecardinalnetwork.wordpress.com> or <https://twitter.com/thecardinalnet>);
- Club HAWC (Health and Wellness Coalition), an affiliate of the borough's Pompton Lakes Prevention Coalition that promotes healthy choices and a substance-free lifestyle;
- The Young Adult Book Club which was self-organized by students interested in reading for pleasure and maintaining the vibrancy of the library media center; and
- The Chess Club, a group which represents the ongoing success of PLHS' participation in the American Library Association's International Game Day initiative.



Seniors Carlos Levy and Sebastian Montalvo have been instrumental in the formation of the Chess Club. Levy is often regarded as "the one to beat" at PLHS.

In the area of athletics, boys lacrosse and girls volleyball were added to the club-activity program back in 2013-2014. Boys lacrosse has evolved into an interscholastic sport which will compete at the varsity level for the first time in spring 2017; girls volleyball has enjoyed sustained interest as a spring activity. During the 2016-2017 academic year, the NJIC, PLHS' athletic conference, has received much positive attention for its newly launched conference championship tournament structure. PLHS is fortunate to have advanced to the inaugural conference championship finals in both football and wrestling.

## MAIN GOALS

PLHS intends to pursue the following short-term goals for its extracurricular program:

- Establish board-approved advisors for the Young Adult Book Club and the Coalition of Student Ambassadors (CSA);
- Consider a culinary arts club in anticipation of intensified interest in the culinary arts academic program; and
- Assess live streaming capabilities for announcements and events.



Juniors Paige Rodano and Dylan Krewer are two of the many students who have thrived in the culinary arts program at PLHS.

## SECTION III

### FACILITIES

#### OVERVIEW

For nearly 85 years, the Pompton Lakes High School building has been recognized as the crown jewel of the community. Built in 1932 and expanded in 1961, the high school has been defined by the same basic blueprint for decades. However, it has undergone several notable improvements and continued to adapt to changes and trends in education as well as the needs of its students.

During the past decade, new heating, cooling, security, locker, and telephone systems have become part of the school's infrastructure. Moreover, more contemporary science facilities have been installed, the design (wood) shop has been modernized, and the co-educational weight training facility has been outfitted with first-rate equipment. Amidst these changes, technology has also infiltrated the school building pursuant to well-thought district plans congruent with 21st century instruction and learning. Thus, wired and wireless networks have been put in place to support all school-owned portable devices and computer (PC and Mac) labs.

#### RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

Considering that PLHS operates at or near 100% capacity during most class periods, the school leadership has focused on the optimization and repurposing of space. In summer 2016, Room 101, a large classroom formerly used for health classes, was redesigned to house the new and potentially growing self-contained life skills program. Consequently, the nearby Room 102 computer lab was converted into a traditional classroom to accommodate the displaced health classes. As part of the plan for the life skills program, an athletic training facility was created in the rear of the

locker room adjacent to the kitchen-cafeteria. The creation of this facility was intended, in part, to provide related services for the life skills program. Recognizing that the devotion of Room 101 to the life skills program made one less classroom available for regular instruction, the school leadership spearheaded the transformation of Room 106 from a storage room of mostly archaic audio-visual supplies to a fittingly equipped conference room-style classroom. The school leadership also worked with maintenance and custodial crew members to repurpose smaller general supply areas and increase the use of a larger one.



ESL instructor Ms. Melanie Ratajczak and her students enjoy class in Room 106, a space which began the 2016-2017 academic year as a storage space. Students love their "new home."

Beyond the changes in the usage of space, PLHS has benefited from several other recent facility enhancements:

- Auditorium LED lighting and projection systems;
- State-of-the-art Color TekStar LED school sign;
- Energy-efficient lighting upgrades throughout the campus;
- Furniture for collaborative, deskless classrooms; and
- Additional fitness equipment.



**A remarkable and appreciated addition to the PLHS campus, a new school sign welcomed students back for the start of the 2016-2017 academic year.**

### MAIN GOALS

Considering the age of the historic high school building, keeping the improvements ahead of the wear and tear remains a constant theme. Thus, the following facility goals prevail:

- Renovate Room 103, the culinary arts classroom;
- Renovate the Terhune Library Media Center and provide classroom space therein;
- Make the cafeteria more adaptable for instruction;
- Upgrade the Room 205 science laboratory;
- Enhance the athletic training facility and equipment to render greater ability to rehabilitate student-athletes in house;
- Convert office-storage space in the Room 112 music room into a mini-recording studio; and
- Upgrade athletic facilities wherever possible.

