

Dear Student,

Lawrence High School is extremely proud of its instructional program. I don't think that there are many high schools which have the depth and breadth of course offerings that we do. However, one of our biggest challenges is to ensure that students select the appropriate courses and are properly scheduled into those choices. This is a complex process. As an all-Regents high school, the course selection process takes on added importance. As you may know, we have early deadlines, which include student and parent participation and, ultimately, complete schedules need to be ready before the end of the year.

For this to happen, you must understand what takes place "behind the scenes." Building the master schedule is a complex process. The first step is completed before Thanksgiving: a review of the present curriculum--making suggestions to add, drop and modify courses. We have just finished the second step, which entails preparing the materials for scheduling to proceed: assigning course codes...designing course titles...writing course descriptions...and preparing this catalogue. The third step involves getting this information to you so that you (and your parents) can make intelligent choices. Remember: course selection demands that you make choices. We can't stress enough that you make those choices carefully so that the next school year will be satisfying and as meaningful as possible.

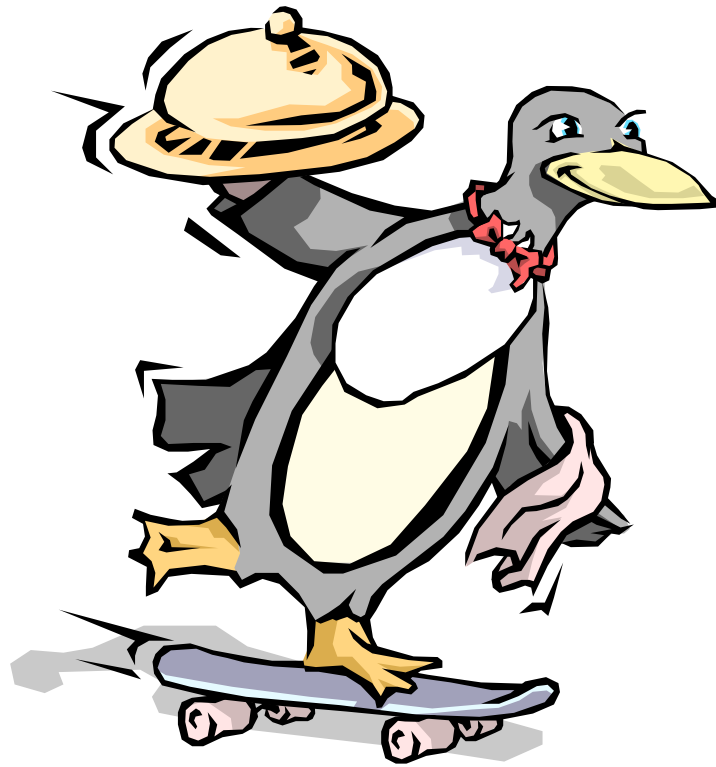
You are going to be hearing the course selection form described as a "contract." I want you to understand why. Based on your course requests, sections are formed and teachers are assigned. Please understand why we have to say "no" to certain request changes later in the process. We want you to understand the implications of those changes. Suppose, for example, that 26 students sign up for elective "X"; suppose 17 students sign up for elective "Y". We will run one section of each. Suppose, however, that 8 students change their minds after the course selection process is complete and request a change from X to Y. One section will become very crowded--and another will be almost empty. Now, repeat this scenario with the hundreds of courses and sections we have. Can you see why we view your course selection as a process which should be done with care and thought? Do you see why we need you to view it as a commitment?

As you know, freshmen, sophomores, and juniors must take a minimum of six subjects plus physical education, and seniors must take at least five subjects plus physical education. However, I want you to view these as minimums. I urge you to take full advantage of the wonderful offerings we have by taking as many electives as you can.

Ask questions! Your guidance counselors and the full faculty are eager to help you make your course decisions. It is an exciting process. As always, feel free to call on me as well if there is any assistance I can give you in enhancing your educational opportunities at Lawrence High School. That's what we are here for. My best wishes to you as we begin the course selection process together.

Sincerely,

Jennifer M. Lagnado, Ed.D.
Principal



Chicken, Fish, or Roast Beef??

Have you ever gone to a banquet and the waiter asks you what you would like to eat--chicken, fish or roast beef? Based on your request, the chef prepares your dinner. Now, try to imagine what happens if you sit down for dinner and, having ordered the fish, you suddenly decide you would rather have the roast beef. There is going to be chaos in the kitchen! So it is with course requests: Based on the courses you're signed up for with your counselor, we have assigned teachers and formed classes. For example, if 25 students sign up for a particular class, we will offer one section; if 75 sign up for another course, we will probably have three sections. Therefore, we want you to understand why it's not unreasonable for us to say "no" when students try to change their courses. We are not "mean," but to permit such changes in your courses at this time would obviously cause overcrowding and imbalances in class size. To put it another way, we can't afford to run out of roast beef and have all that fish left over!

