



TRANSITION TOOL KIT FOR TESLA STEM HS PARENTS

Customized by: Tesla STEM PTSA in
conjunction with Tesla STEM staff



WHY A TRANSITION TOOL KIT?

Feedback by parents from the Summer, 2019 National PTA Parent Focus Group taught us that incoming parents, along with students, need some additional supports.

Some of our parents, including our international parents, have particular challenges we may take for granted:

- Navigating middle and then high school to set yourself up for success is complex; parents also need to learn the academic landscape
- Families new to this country will be facing a completely new culture on many fronts, including in schools
- The US's idea of encouraging independence in schools, particularly when entering high school, may be a brand-new concept – a little explanation could go a long way

WHAT INCOMING HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS NEED TO KNOW:



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GLOSSARY (DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ASB, PTA AND BOOSTER CLUBS)



ASB - The **Tesla STEM HS Associated Student Body (ASB)** is made up of both elected and appointed officials who run the student government. Students in this group manage the student body finances, plan all events such as prom and Homecoming, and work on building positivity in the school. ASB also refers to a student's school ID card. <https://tesla.lwsd.org/activitiesathletics/asb>

ASB Card – Required for activities that are not part of the school curriculum. A way to think about it is that ASB funds cultural, recreational and social events. Any activity where a student receives a grade from a teacher is not eligible for ASB funding (because grades are academic). The Tesla ASB fee is \$30. <https://payments.lwsd.org/>

Sports Activities - Students who wish to participate in an after-school sports would go through the local high-school ASB, you would have to reach out to the Athletic Director at your local high-school school in order to set you up in the system and learn more about ASB and sports fees). <https://tesla.lwsd.org/activitiesathletics/athletics>

Booster Clubs – These non-profit organizations are parent-run and support and raise money for sports, music, robotics and other clubs in schools. Help to support competitions and trips that PTA, schools, and ASB are not allowed to fund. **Tesla STEM does not have booster clubs unlike other comprehensive high schools.**

CTE Dual Credit Courses - Through a partnership with community and technical colleges in the state, certain CTE courses provide students with the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit for the course, if they complete the course with a grade of "B" or better. If a course qualifies for CTE Dual Credit, it will be noted in the course description, and teachers will provide students with information about how to register for CTE Dual Credit. <https://www.lwsd.org/programs-and-services/college-and-career-readiness>

PTA – The parent–teacher association (PTA) or parent–teacher–student association (PTSA) is a formal organization composed of parents, teachers and staff that supports students and teachers, provides information to parents, is a community resource etc. <https://teslastemptsa.org/Home> Like us on <https://www.facebook.com/teslastemptsa/>

Running Start – Running Start is a program in which juniors and seniors who qualify may enroll in college level courses at Bellevue College, CWU Sammamish, Cascadia College, or Lake Washington Institute of Technology and earn high school and college credit concurrently. **This program is not offered at Tesla STEM**

WANIC – Washington Network for Innovative Careers, a skill center program - Courses offered through WANIC often introduce students to specific career paths. Many skill centered classes have AP attached, students can also earn industry certifications. Some classes include culinary, nursing, emergency response services, computer science, etc. <https://www.lwsd.org/search-results?q=wanic>



1. WHAT IS DIFFERENT

Curriculum: Different subjects with different teachers, students move between classes. Middle school helps students develop the skills and content knowledge to be successful in high school. Credits/grades for students taking Algebra, Geometry or a World Language are now automatically part of the high school transcript.

Communication: Students begin to take charge of their learning and communication with teachers.

Extra-curricular: Electives, clubs, sports, ASB (see Glossary) and other student leadership activities start to guide student interests.

Curriculum: Grades, course selections and rigor start to really inform a student's post-graduation path, especially if college is the goal. Parents can help track student work, however students should become comfortable taking charge of their learning. Parents sign off on their student's course selections.

Communication: It's helpful for student to form a connection with teachers (also later for letters of recommendation). Good for student to know his or her school counselor.

Extra-curricular: Student involvement in clubs and/or sports are more targeted, and are highly recommended for any, but especially college paths. Students are expected to seek out activities and engage on their own. They can also start their own club! In addition to other electives, ASB and leadership, HS also has booster clubs, an entirely new support group.

2. PARENT TO SCHOOL COMMUNICATION – WHAT TO EXPECT



Curriculum Night – Tesla STEM hosted a [Virtual Curriculum Night](#) in September which is available for you to view at your leisure. Follow the link... and enter Page Passkey GOSTEM.

(There are no formal Parent Teacher Conferences in high school)

Communication with teacher – Parents will not typically be receiving updates or e-mails, though this can vary. Great for student to keep communication channels with their teachers open. Staying after class, attending office hours, before or after school, and email are all options for students. **Parents can also reach out to teachers via e-mail for questions and can request a meeting.** Note that teachers appreciate students advocating for themselves before the parent steps in.

Communication with Principal – Principal, Cindy Duenas often connects with parents through the school newsletter and update emails – The Principal, Associate Principal, Counselors and some staff members also address the community at PTSA membership meetings.

General - Where can I as a parent get the most up to date information?

School info: <https://tesla.lwsd.org/> , PTA <https://teslastemptsa.org/> and [sign up for PTA newsletter!](#)

2. PARENT TO SCHOOL COMMUNICATION – KEY CONTACTS



School Connections

Principal:

Cindy Duenas cduenas@lwsd.org

Associate Principal:

Sumeyye Cardakli scardakli@lwsd.org

Office staff:

Danielle O'Brien dobrien@lwsd.org

Activities Coordinator:

Lori Zebrack-Smith lzebrack-smith@lwsd.org

This is typically the Leadership teacher, also in charge of all the ASB-coordinated fun!

Counseling Office:

<https://tesla.lwsd.org/counseling-central-boxes>

You generally have to make an appointment. Role of counseling detailed in Section 5.

Late Arrival / Absence / Early dismissal:

Lauren Ferguson laferguson@lwsd.org 425-936-2770

School Bus route:

These differ based on your feeder high school. LWSD transportation department will send you information.

3. KEEPING TRACK OF STUDENT WORK, ASSIGNMENTS, GRADES & FEES



Students and Parents can track student grades, work and assignments through: **Microsoft TEAMS**. It is a learning management system and a gradebook used by staff, students, and families in LWSD schools

Skyward Family Access – [Students/Families - Tesla STEM High \(lwsd.org\)](#) **Call** (425) 936-2770

Graduation requirements – student needs 24 credits in different subject areas to graduate. When in doubt, check with your student’s counselor! There are alternate ways to get these credits and you can check with the Counselors.

High School and Beyond Plan (Xello) – students are required to complete; they explore their interests, discover potential future careers, and research post-secondary education options. They then link their plan for high school course taking with their future goals.

Choice of electives – what is offered? When and how to decide? Course and elective selections are not guaranteed – based on space, timing, other course offerings, needs of graduating students, etc.

Bell schedule – <https://tesla.lwsd.org/>

FEES: [For Students and Families - Lake Washington School District \(lwsd.org\)](#)

ASB - All students are issued a school ID card.

Other fees – yearbook, PE shirts and shorts, ASB card, class fees, parking & graduation regalia. Note, financial assistance is sometimes available.

Lunch accounts – <https://www.lwsd.org/students-families/breakfast-and-lunch-menus/online-payment-instructions>

4. ACADEMICS AND TESTS



Classes are explained by teachers on Curriculum Night. Homework, quizzes and tests are individual according to the teacher. Finals are scheduled for the last week in fall and spring semesters. Some classes (especially AP) have comprehensive finals with content from the entire year. Also, parents please note that finals days are not a typical schedule and students generally only take 2 finals per day.

LWSD Graduation Requirements – The school works with the student to make sure they are taking the classes they need for graduation. Sitting down with a school counselor is helpful if a student or parent has questions. High School and Beyond Plan. <https://www.lwsd.org/schools/high-school/high-school-guide>

Find here the [2022/23 Class Catalog](#) for Tesla STEM and the [Customizable 4-year Course Planner](#)

AP Classes - Advanced Placement (AP) is a nationwide program that is designed to prepare students for higher education. AP classes provide rigorous, college-level curriculum in various subjects and the opportunity to earn college credits or advanced college standing.

ELL or English Language Learning - empowers (English Learner) EL students to both participate in classroom curriculum and attain English proficiency. [Link](#)

World Language Credit - Students are required to graduate with two credits in a World Language. <https://www.lwsd.org/schools/high-school/high-school-guide/world-language-credit-options>

4. ACADEMICS AND TESTS



ACT/SAT – these are standardized tests widely used for college admissions in the United States. Prep classes are offered in the fall and spring; junior (11th grade) students and parents need to be on the look-out for the deadlines to sign up for practice and real tests. PTSA also offers [Test prep Programs](#) – please look for information in the PTSA Newsletter about upcoming workshops and classes offered.

Credit Transfer Opportunities - students can also enroll in classes at other institutions to pursue specific skills and receive both high school and college credit in some cases; see Glossary for more details on these programs;

There are many different **post-graduation paths** available to students: the **College and Career Readiness Office** offers information and support to students wanting to attend college or visit college campuses, to do internships, etc. This is a great resources and parents are welcome to go learn for themselves! [Applying to College - Tesla STEM High \(lwsd.org\)](#)

5. COUNSELING OFFICE SERVICES



The Counseling Office offers a whole host of services, and your student will want to know who her/his counselor is (determined alphabetically). Encourage your student to meet with their counselor. Students can team up with their counselor to map out their High School and Beyond Plan. Among the services they provide are:

- **Course registration and scheduling**
- **Monitoring of student academic credits and on time graduation plans**
- **Academic, personal/social and career advising**
- **Coordination of referrals for community resources**
- **Comprehensive guidance programming delivered in classroom or other settings**
- **Guidance for post-secondary planning and application requirements**

Counseling Office Contacts - <https://tesla.lwsd.org/counseling-central-boxes>

New to the country? Here are some reasons you or your student might connect with a counselor: requesting special accommodations (physical or mental) for your student, questions about graduation requirements, emotional health support, etc.

For additional resources for youth mental health, go to: [Social/Emotional Resources - Tesla STEM High \(lwsd.org\)](#)



6. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

There are many Clubs that students can and are encouraged to get involved in. Many clubs are interest-based (as opposed to class-based) and founded by students such as Art History, Astronomy, Chess, Code, Economics, Equity, FBLA, Girls who code, HOSA, Key Club, Machine Learning, Model UN, NHS, Robotics, Science Olympiad, Speech and Debate, TED, Yoga and many more.

The student clubs are run by ASB and meet at different days and times of the week.

<https://tesla.lwsd.org/activitiesathletics/clubs>

Find more information about Activities, Academics and 9th Grade Orientation [here](#)

Leadership – Associated Student Body (ASB) funds is run by and for students. The fund raised by ASB are used for optional, extracurricular events that are cultural, athletic, recreational, or social. These funds are not available for graded student activities that are part of the school curriculum. [Meet the 2022-23 ASB officers](#)

7. SPORTS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES — SCHOOL/ASB/PTA RUN



Tesla students can participate in the high school sports at their respective neighborhood high school. They will have to join the ASB of that high school to be able to do so. -- Individual **school's ASB funds athletic programs** (athletic budgets are approved by ASB and financed with ASB funds). Booster clubs help support athletic and some additional programs through separate non-student fundraising (and follow specific guidelines).

Fall Sports – register in August (forms online, final clearance in-person during summer office hours); teams may practice all summer, try-outs prior to the start of school

Winter Sports – register in November (forms online, final clearance in-person during lunch and after school)

Spring Sports – register in February (forms online, final clearance in-person during lunch and after school)

School Dances – Homecoming (October) and Spring dance (March) – open to all students (others need a signed pass from their school); Senior Prom (June)

School musicals, plays and music concerts

Other Student Run Events (Leadership) - check ASB webpage

7. SPORTS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES – SCHOOL/ASB/PTA RUN



Tesla STEM students can participate in **High School Sports through their neighborhood High School**

Tesla STEM PTSA hosts various Programs and Engagement Events for the Community to come together and connect.

FACE – Family and Community Engagement

- Fall Social – Oct 2022 – Date TBD
- Let's talk Roundtables - hosted monthly or quarterly depending on demand

PROGRAMS –

- SAT /ACT Test prep Information sessions, workshops, and classes
- College Application related workshops
- Financial beginnings workshops



8. PARENT VOLUNTEERING

Parents have many opportunities to volunteer in schools. Be on the look-out in the PTA newsletter for information and on how to sign up. Or sign up with the Tesla STEM PTSA Volunteer Coordinator

Some examples are:

At school:

- * Lap Top roll-out and roll-in (beginning of school and end of school)
- * Picture day (beginning of school)
- * Popcorn Friday

Some classes, such as Robotics offer opportunities to parents with specific interests or skill sets to participate. Also, music class trips always need parents to join in.

There are also many roles and specific PTA events that count on parent support all year long:

- * Join the Board
- * Take a Committee chair position
- * Help with Staff appreciation, School beautification, Senior Celebration etc.

We get that not everyone can show up in person. There are other ways you can help such as with donations.

All volunteers must be pre-approved by the district – access application [here](#)

Keeping in mind current health guidelines, all Volunteers must also [share their vaccination proof for volunteering on-site](#)

9. PTA IS YOUR PARENT TOOL



Why is PTA important at Tesla !!

A key source of information and news for parents is the PTA newsletter that keeps you updated on school activities, key deadlines, resources and more. [Sign up](#) for PTA newsletter!

Membership Meetings: 3 times a year - September 28, 2022, Jan 25, 2023, May 24, 2023

Come and hear about what PTSA activities and programming.

Participate and Vote on important decisions about the PTSA Budget and Programming.

Share your thoughts, ask your questions, get answers!

PTSA Events are even easier to attend remotely this year

Key PTA Programming that support your children (examples):

- ❖ Parent events focused on how to support your high school student,
- ❖ SAT/ACT practice, College Financial and Informational Seminar
- ❖ Reflections Art Program, teacher grants, staff appreciation,
- ❖ PTA Scholarship Program and much more...

For questions about PTA or how to get involved or manage a program, check our [website](#)

DISTRICT-WIDE INFORMATION RESOURCES

Welcome New Families PTSA Council/LWSD event this is a great way to meet district administrators, learn about the school system, network with other parents and community organizations and more;

Parent Education Events – planned by the PTSA Council in conjunction with the LWSD; professional guests speak on topics of parenting as well as screenings of documentaries such as Screenagers

Lake Washington School District (LWSD) – is another great source of information as headquarters to all the schools in the district; check out their website on back to school, COVID-19 updates and much more at www.lwsd.org . Have a question? Go to <https://www.lwsd.org/help/lets-talk>



WE WISH YOU A SPLENDID YEAR AT TESLA STEM!