

## Curriculum Guide

Notre Dame High School's Course Planning and Curriculum Guide is designed to provide students and families with a comprehensive overview of Notre Dame's academic program and annual course planning process.



# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL



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# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AT NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

Notre Dame High School offers a rigorous, forward-looking academic program that prepares young women for success at highly competitive colleges and universities while nurturing confidence, leadership, and independence.

As an all-girls Catholic high school, we believe our students thrive when they are challenged academically and supported personally. Notre Dame graduates are assertive, creative, and prepared to stand on their own, academically, morally, and professionally.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (240 UNITS)

To earn a Notre Dame High School diploma, students must complete the following credit requirements:

- Theology: 40 units
- English: 40 units
- Mathematics: 30 units
- Science: 30 units
- Social Studies: 30 units
- World Language: 20 units
- Visual & Performing Arts: 10 units
- Electives: 40 units

## COURSE PLANNING PROCESS

Students plan courses annually in collaboration with counselors, teachers, and families. Course placement is based on academic performance, teacher recommendations, and departmental guidelines. This process ensures that each student is appropriately challenged while supported for success.





# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

## ACADEMIC PATHWAYS (GRADES 9–12)

Notre Dame's curriculum follows a carefully sequenced four-year pathway that allows students to meet graduation and college entrance requirements while exploring individual interests.

### Typical 9th Grade Program

- Theology: Old Testament / New Testament
- English I or Honors English I
- Algebra I or Honors Geometry
- Biology I or Honors Biology I
- Spanish I or Spanish II
- Interdisciplinary Arts
- Seminar

Upper-grade schedules offer increasing flexibility, advanced coursework, and elective options.

## DEPARTMENT COURSE OFFERINGS

### **THEOLOGY**

Students engage in scripture study, moral theology, and service learning, deepening their understanding of faith and social responsibility.

Courses include: Old/New Testament, Life in the Church & Sacraments, Morality, Service & Justice, Theology Electives

### **ENGLISH**

The English program develops strong readers, writers, and critical thinkers through literature, composition, and rhetorical analysis.

Courses include: English I–II, Honors English I–II, American Literature, British Literature, AP English Language & Composition, AP English Literature & Composition, Dual Enrollment English

### **MATHEMATICS**

Students build a strong foundation in problem-solving and analytical thinking, with accelerated and college-level options available.

Courses include: Algebra I, Geometry, Honors Geometry, Algebra II, Honors Algebra II, Dual Enrollment Precalculus, Dual Enrollment Statistics, Calculus



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## SCIENCE

Hands-on laboratory experiences encourage inquiry and real-world application across scientific disciplines.

Courses include: Biology I, Honors Biology I, Chemistry, Honors Chemistry, AP Physics, Dual Enrollment Biology, Dual Enrollment Geology, Dual Enrollment Biology II, Dual Enrollment Marine Biology

## WORLD LANGUAGES

The Spanish program emphasizes communication skills and cultural understanding.

Courses include: Spanish I, Spanish II, Honors Spanish III, AP Spanish Language & Culture, AP Spanish Literature and Culture

## SOCIAL STUDIES

Students develop historical understanding and civic awareness through inquiry-based coursework.

Courses include: World History, AP World History, U.S. History, AP U.S. History, Government, Economics, AP Government & Politics

## VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

Creative expression is an essential part of a Notre Dame education.

Courses include: Visual Arts I–IV, Interdisciplinary Arts, AP Drawing, Dual Enrollment Culinary Arts

## ELECTIVES

Electives allow students to explore interests and expand academic skills.

Courses include: Seminar, Drama, Dance, AP Computer Science Principles, AP Psychology



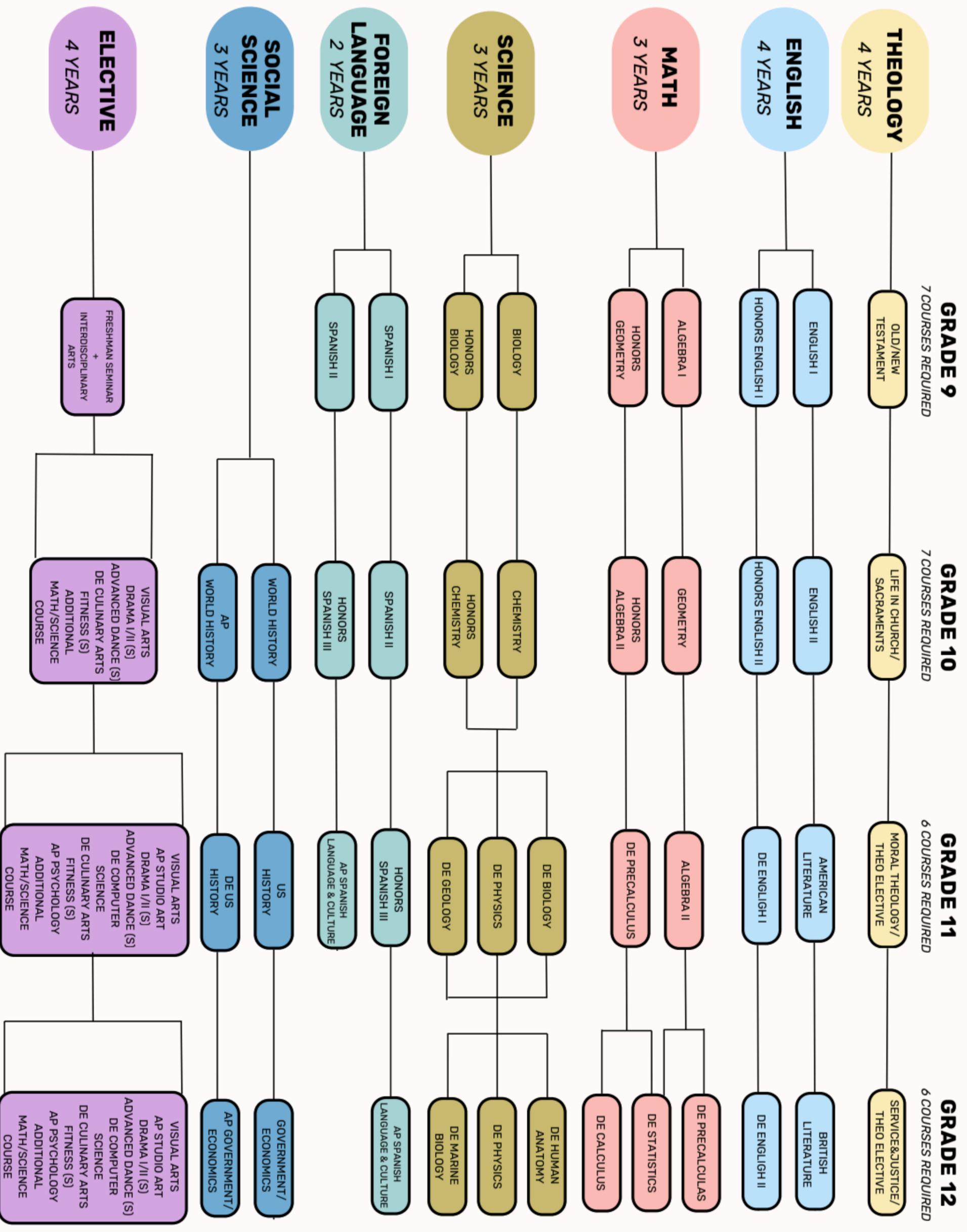


**Notre Dame High School**  
**2025 - 2026 Daily Schedule**

<b>A Monday</b>	<b>A Tuesday</b>	<b>B Wednesday</b>	<b>C Thursday</b>	<b>A Friday</b>
1 8:30-9:15	1 8:30-9:15	1 9:20-10:35	4 8:30-9:45	1 8:30-9:15
2 9:20-10:05	2 9:20-10:05	<b>Community Block*</b> 10:40-11:35	5 9:55-11:10	2 9:20-10:05
3 10:10-10:55	3 10:10-10:55			3 10:10-10:55
<b>Break</b> 10:55-11:10	<b>Break</b> 10:55-11:10	<b>Break</b> 11:35-11:50	<b>Break</b> 11:10-11:40	<b>Break</b> 10:55-11:10
4 11:10-11:55	4 11:10-11:55	2 11:50-1:05	6 11:40-12:55	4 11:10-11:55
5 12:00-12:45	5 12:00-12:45			5 12:00-12:45
<b>Lunch</b> 12:45-1:30	<b>Lunch</b> 12:45-1:30	<b>Lunch</b> 1:05-1:50	<b>Lunch</b> 12:55-1:50	<b>Lunch</b> 12:45-1:30
6 1:30-2:15	6 1:30-2:15	3 1:50-3:05	7 1:50 - 3:05	6 1:30-2:15
7 2:20-3:05	7 2:20-3:05			7 2:20-3:05
<b><i>Note: Sports practices will not begin before 3:30</i></b>				

\*The 2026-27 daily schedule will be slightly different

# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2029 COURSE SEQUENCING MAP





# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

## ADVANCED ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Notre Dame High School offers a broad range of advanced options, **Honors**, **Advanced Placement (AP)**, and **Dual Enrollment (DE)**, so students can choose the level of challenge that best matches their readiness, goals, and interests.

Our program is designed to support both acceleration and access: students can pursue advanced coursework in multiple departments while still maintaining balance through arts, electives, faith formation, and student life.

### HONORS COURSES

Honors courses are designed for students ready for greater pace, depth, and independence. They emphasize advanced reading and writing, higher-level problem solving, and stronger analytical expectations, while still providing teacher guidance and support.

Examples of Honors offerings include:

- Honors English I
- Honors English II
- Honors Geometry
- Honors Algebra II
- Honors Biology I
- Honors Chemistry
- Honors Spanish III

### ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)

AP courses provide nationally recognized rigor and prepare students for the AP exam experience. AP coursework strengthens college readiness through sustained reading, writing, inquiry, and academic discipline. Students who take AP exams may earn college credit depending on the policies of their chosen colleges.

AP offerings at Notre Dame include:

- AP English Language & Composition
- AP English Literature & Composition
- AP Computer Science Principles
- AP Physics
- AP World History
- AP U.S. History
- AP Government & Politics
- AP Spanish Language & Culture
- AP Drawing
- AP Psychology



# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

## DUAL ENROLLMENT (DE)

Dual Enrollment courses are taught on campus at Notre Dame High School by Notre Dame faculty who meet college qualification requirements. DE courses are approved by Hartnell College and Monterey Peninsula College (MPC), allowing students to earn transferable college credit while completing high school graduation requirements.

Key features families appreciate:

- On-campus instruction (students take college-credit courses at Notre Dame)
- UC/CSU acceptance: DE courses are designed to be accepted at UC and CSU schools
- Low cost: a small per-semester college fee may apply (e.g., \$12/semester when enrolled in DE)
- Transcript impact guidance: DE grades may factor into a student's college GPA depending on institution policies

DE course options include:

- English
  - Dual Enrollment English I
  - Dual Enrollment English II
- Mathematics
  - Dual Enrollment Precalculus
  - Dual Enrollment Statistics
  - Dual Enrollment Calculus
- Science
  - Dual Enrollment Biology
  - Dual Enrollment Geology
  - Dual Enrollment Physics
  - Dual Enrollment Marine Biology (offered on a rotating basis)
  - Dual Enrollment Human Anatomy (as available)
- Social Studies
  - Dual Enrollment U.S. History
- Visual & Performing Arts / Career Pathways
  - Dual Enrollment Culinary Arts
- More coming soon



# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Notre Dame High School welcomes international students into a supportive academic community that values cultural diversity, global perspective, and academic excellence. Our International Student Program is designed for students from outside the United States who are interested in a one-semester, one-year to multi-year homestay high school experience in California's Central Coast.

International students are fully integrated into campus life, attending classes alongside local students and participating in athletics, the arts, leadership opportunities, retreats, and school traditions.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAM & ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

International students follow Notre Dame's college-preparatory curriculum, which meets or exceeds University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) entrance requirements. Our academic program emphasizes critical thinking, writing, collaboration, and college readiness.

While academic English support is available, international applicants are expected to demonstrate basic English proficiency prior to admission. All applicants complete an interview to assess readiness for full academic immersion.

#### **International students receive:**

- Individual academic counseling and course planning
- Ongoing monitoring of academic progress
- Access to Honors, AP, and Dual Enrollment courses, as appropriate
- Support from faculty experienced in working with international learners



# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

## HOMESTAY PROGRAM

International students live with carefully selected host families in the local community, providing a safe, welcoming, and culturally enriching home environment. Homestay families support students as they adjust to life in the United States while offering daily opportunities to practice English and experience American culture.

Homestay arrangements include:

- A private bedroom and meals
- Transportation support to and from school
- A family environment that supports academic focus, personal growth, and well-being

Notre Dame partners with trusted homestay providers and maintains regular communication to ensure a positive and supportive experience for students and families.

## A GLOBAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

International students enrich the Notre Dame community by sharing their cultures, perspectives, and experiences. In turn, they benefit from a nurturing environment that emphasizes leadership, service, faith formation, and academic excellence. Notre Dame graduates both domestic and international leave prepared for success at colleges and universities around the world.





# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

## ATHLETIC OPPORTUNITIES

Athletics at Notre Dame High School support the development of teamwork, leadership, discipline, and school spirit. Student-athletes are encouraged to balance academic responsibility with athletic commitment while representing Notre Dame with pride and integrity.

### ATHLETICS BY SEASON

#### Fall Sports (2025)

- Tennis
- Volleyball

#### Winter Sports (2025–26)

- Basketball

#### Spring Sports (2025)

- Lacrosse
- Swimming
- Softball (2026 TBD)

Additional sports, such as softball and soccer, may be offered based on student interest, participation levels, and program availability.





## VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS OPPORTUNITIES

Notre Dame High School believes creativity, expression, and artistic exploration are essential to a well-rounded education. Our Visual and Performing Arts program encourages students to develop confidence, discipline, collaboration, and personal voice while exploring a wide range of artistic and creative disciplines.

Students may fulfill graduation requirements and pursue advanced study through opportunities such as:

- Interdisciplinary Arts
- Visual Arts I–IV, including drawing, painting, and ceramics
- AP Drawing for advanced, portfolio-based study
- Choir, offering students the opportunity to develop vocal technique, musical literacy, and ensemble performance skills
- Performance-based opportunities, including drama and dance offerings
- Dual Enrollment Culinary Arts, blending creative expression with real-world skill development





# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL



## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING & ACADEMIC INITIATIVES

Notre Dame's academic program is strengthened by experiences that connect classroom learning to leadership, service, college readiness, and real-world application. These initiatives support the development of confident young women who can think critically, communicate effectively, and serve with purpose.

### SERVICE & JUSTICE

Service & Justice is a signature Notre Dame learning experience that integrates Catholic Social Teaching with meaningful community engagement. This program combines classroom learning with guest speakers and structured service experiences designed to help students connect faith, justice, and leadership.

Highlights include:

- Classroom learning focused on social justice topics
- Guest speakers from the Salinas community
- Dedicated service experiences with community partners



# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

## IMMERSION WEEK

Immersion Week provides a focused period where students step away from their regular class schedule to engage in grade-level experiences that support their growth and readiness for what's next.

Immersion Week (Jan 5–9, 2026) includes:

- Seniors: one-week internships (approved in advance)
- Juniors: a cohort-based college “bootcamp,” including visits to UC, CSU, community college, and private institutions, plus planning and career exploration
- Freshmen/Sophomores: 5-day overnight retreat at a local camp under the Redwoods.

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT & STUDENT SUCCESS

Notre Dame High School is committed to helping every student thrive. Academic success is supported through a culture of high expectations, strong relationships, and consistent guidance, so students feel both challenged and known.

Support structures include:

- Academic counseling and course planning to ensure students remain on track for graduation and UC/CSU eligibility
- Faculty mentorship, including teacher feedback, encouragement, and help building effective learning habits
- Structured guidance for ninth graders, including transition support through Freshman Seminar and a typical 9th-grade schedule designed to build strong foundations
- Ongoing check-ins and placement guidance to ensure students are in courses where they can grow and succeed

## COLLEGE & CAREER CENTER

The mission of Notre Dame High School's College and Career Center is to help students and parents navigate the sometimes perplexing maze of college research and applications and prepare for life after high school. The College Counselor works in conjunction with teachers, families, students, and other staff members to maximize student achievement.



# NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

Resources provided include:

- Student and parent meetings
- Coordinating college representative visits and college fairs
- PSAT/ACT/SAT information and test prep guidance
- Scoir information and training sessions
- Essay writing workshops
- College application workshops and assistance
- Scholarship opportunities and assistance
- Information on summer programs, community colleges, and military options

College Counselor:

Kristina Stone

(831) 751-1850 ext. 222

kstone@notredamesalinas.org

Temporary College Counselor (Spring 2026):

Joanne Uhl

(831) 751-1850 ext. 222

juhl@notredamesalinas.org



**Principal:**

Timothy Uhl

(831) 751-1850 ext. 249

tuhl@notredamesalinas.org

**Admissions:**

Alondra Ruiz

(831) 751-1850 ext. 246

aruiz@notredamesalinas.org

**Student Activities:**

Marisol Menchaca

(831) 751-1850 ext. 503

mmenchaca@notredamesalinas.org

**Link to application:** <https://bit.ly/notredameapply>