

The Freshman Experience

Overview

Ninth grade is an exciting yet difficult transition year for many students. A new school, greater independence, a changing social environment and other factors can work against the best intentions of students trying to succeed. That's why Newport News Public Schools has developed **The Freshman Experience**, a division-wide effort embracing a wide range of initiatives to provide ninth grade students with a rewarding and meaningful first year. Part of the *Smart, Safe Schools* philosophy, **The Freshman Experience** ensures an easy transition into high school and provides ninth grade students with a strong foundation for success.



Goals

- Increase graduation rates for high school and post-secondary education and training
- Increase completion rates for college and post-secondary programs
- Provide students with the skills necessary to successfully navigate their school/work transitions

A Comprehensive Approach

The Freshman Experience provides continuous support for ninth grade students in the areas of educational achievement, career and life skills, and youth development. Teachers, counselors and other staff will receive training throughout the year, and students will participate in a host of experiences, including:

- Freshman First Day Simulation – August Orientation
- Freshmen Academy - held first month of school year & focused around four themes:
 - Welcome to Your High School
 - A Typical Day at Your High School
 - School Pride
 - Focus on the Future
- Reading of a common text: "We Beat the Streets"
- Electronic portfolio
- Career Pathways - development of a high school and post-secondary plan
- "Partnership for Success" conferences
- Extra-curricular activity commitment
- Youth development

A Partnership with Students, their Families and NNPS

The ninth grade year is often a challenging transition for parents as well as for students. Newport News Public Schools is committed to every student's success and has designed **The Freshman Experience** to provide additional support for students and their parents during this important year. Rising ninth graders and their families will receive additional information about **The Freshman Experience** prior to the August orientation.