

# PRES

class of 2026

## Incoming Parent and Student FAQ

### Q: Is it difficult to balance school work and sports?

- “This greatly depends on how many rigorous classes you take! Normally classes have around 30 minutes of homework a day, but those taking honors and AP classes might have closer to an hour of homework. I’m on the swim team and take 2 APs and one honors class. I would say the workload is manageable, as long as I make use of the time between school and practice to get things done. While having a block schedule also means that you have 2 nights to finish homework, I try to finish most assignments on the day they are assigned! I personally make use of the extra day before the due date to ask any questions about the more challenging problems. Most teachers offer extensions too, so if something in life ever comes up and you know you won’t finish an assignment on time, extensions are also available! You can even choose to take a free period so that you can experiment with how you can allocate the time you have on your hands!

–Jane Li ‘23

### Q. We are ready for our daughter to become a member of the Class of 2026. How do we secure her space?

- You can go to the [Class of 2026 website](#) and use a credit card to pay the deposit. You can also find the deposit link [here](#). The deposit is due no later than 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 30, 2022.

### Q. How are students accepted with honors?

- To be accepted with honors, students must achieve a GPA of 3.5 or higher and score 90% or greater on the High School Placement Test.

### Q: How are my classes for Freshman year decided?

- All students are required to take the math placement test in May to determine which math class they will take next year.

- Students wishing to take a more advanced language course are invited to take the language (Spanish or French) placement tests.
- Students who were accepted with honors who would like to take honors World History, Biology and/or English in the fall are invited to take the honors placement test.

**Q. Can you take dance as an elective?**

- Yes. Dance is in the performing arts department and counts for the “F” requirement for the UC/CSU system.

**Q. How many classes do you take Freshman year? Did you take electives or free periods?**

- “Freshman year, I took 7 classes including an art elective. I think it is really helpful to take your elective classes early in high school so you have more time the rest of high school to take other classes you are interested in. I also played tennis for Pres my Freshman year which also opened up more room in my schedule during my Junior and Senior years because I met my PE requirements through the sport. While I didn’t take any free periods freshman year, it may be helpful to take one if you are taking more honors courses. Free periods are especially useful Junior and Senior year when classes are more challenging and extracurricular activities and work outside of school (like college applications) increase.”

–Anika Gowda ’22

**Q. How many honors classes do you suggest taking? How many AP courses do students generally take?**

- Honors and AP classes vary student-to-student based on the prerequisites, the student's level of challenge, and the subjects that are of interest to her. You will receive more guidance on the subject at the Zoom scheduling event which is on April 12.

**Q. How often do you meet with your counselors?**

- Presentation High School has three professional counselors, each with master's degree-level training. Students are assigned to their counselor based on their last name. The counselor remains with their students until they graduate in order to facilitate strong long-term relationships with individual students.

Counselors work with students through different formats, including grade-level meetings, small group workshops and by individual appointments. They aim to meet with each student on their caseload a minimum of once per semester and are available each day on an as-needed basis. Counselors work with students for a

variety of reasons, including academic mentoring, college/post-secondary planning, career preparation, personal struggles, mental health concerns and peer issues. They can also assist our families in times of hardship with access to community resources.

**Q. What are the uniform requirements?**

- “Pres uniforms are GREAT! I came from a middle school with a strict uniform, but at Pres, there is still room within the dress code to express yourself through your clothing choices, such as through jewelry like nose and ear piercings! You can pair the Pres skirt or navy pants with any solid navy blue, royal blue, grey, or white shirt, socks, and outerwear! Our dress code allows any color of shoes except flip flops and slippers. I usually wear my Pres skirt, white ankle socks, tennis shoes, and pair it with a white hoodie or an athletic jacket with one of the many Pres shirts! For clubs and certain events at Pres, there are opportunities to buy more Pres (uniform-approved) shirts, and the rest is bought before school starts. For formal uniform, we wear the Pres skirt or pants with the Pres white polo shirt and the optional black Pres sweater. My friends that came from uniform-free schools really appreciate the convenience of uniforms. There are also several free dress days for events across the school year, and seniors get free dress every Friday of the second semester!” –Emily Gutierrez ‘22

Refer to the [school uniform webpage](#) for more information.

**Q. What kind of science programs are available at Pres?**

- In addition to the curricular offerings in science which can be found [here](#), we have programs that support STEM like Robotics, the Astronomy Club, Girls who Code, Math and Science Academy, Panthers Exploring Medicine, The Student Environmental Action Society, Women in Computer Science and the participation of our students in the Math and Science Colloquium.

**Q. What does the first day of school for a freshman look like?**

- We have a 2-day Freshmen Orientation on August 15 & 16. Those days are spent getting to know your classmates through fun activities, being introduced to your teachers and getting ready for the first day of school.

**Q. How do you start a club if it doesn't already exist?**

- If there is enough interest, you can take the proposal in the spring to the Student Council and once approved, it is taken to the Administrative Leadership Team for approval.

**Q. How has Pres helped you with college applications and time management?**

- “Going to Pres has given me the tools to learn by understanding instead of memorization. At Pres there is an incredible emphasis placed on the student’s individual success. Teachers spend extra time explaining concepts when we need, and we are taught in ways that will help us remember in the long-term instead of for just one test. This helped me a lot while doing college applications because I felt that I had an in-depth understanding of what I wanted to pursue and was easily able to write about what my teachers had taught me and what I’d loved at school over the years. This method of understanding instead of memorization also helps me manage my time well outside of school. Because there is so much effort given to teaching and internalizing ideas inside of class, homework becomes a lot easier because I don’t have to learn extra.”

–Moniva Pal ‘22

**Q. How long does homework take for frosh?**

- “One thing I adore about Pres is the plethora of electives and different levels of rigor for every class that it offers, but with such variety, the workload for frosh (and every year onwards) really varies for each student. In my experience, my middle school prepared me well in balancing my schoolwork along with extracurricular activities. As a transfer student to Pres, I took two honors (Math and Biology) and was able to smoothly adjust into the Pres workload while participating in clubs and taking art class outside of school. However, I still believe the transition from middle to high school is a significant jump, which is why I encourage students to choose courses that fit their interests and provide a healthy level of challenge. On average, homework took me around 1-2.5 hours, though certain classes required more work time for projects or before tests.”

–Michelle Lu ‘23

**Q. Describe the big sister program?**

- Upon acceptance at PHS, each student is paired with a Big Sister who is a Junior or Senior who is the point person for the incoming Freshman for questions, concerns or information. This Big Sister will guide you through your Freshman and Sophomore years.

**Q. How easy is it to meet people from different schools?**

- “It’s super easy to meet people outside of Pres, all you have to do is attend some fun events! All the local Catholic schools, specifically Presentation, Bellarmine, Mitty and Notre Dame, host mixers and dances throughout the year where you can meet new people. Other events include leadership, theater, community service, math competitions or even school spirit rallies! I met a lot of people Freshman year through Bellarmine football games and Party in the Quad, a Bellarmine event. There are some events made just for Freshmen too! Also by making friends at Pres, you then meet their friends that attend other schools too! There are also immersion trips where we join Bellarmine. I personally attended an immigration advocacy immersion trip in Washington D.C. with other Pres and Bell students. Ultimately, regardless of what you choose to get involved in, there will always be plenty of opportunities and ways to establish new connections with people both inside and outside the Pres community.”

–Emily Gutierrez ‘22

**Q. How does carpool work?**

- We share a list of people in your zip code who are also interested in carpooling so that you may contact them and arrange something that works best for everyone.

**Q. Is Independent Research done outside of class or in a separate class?**

- Our Independent Research is done outside of the normal schedule, but it is a class you must enroll in if you would like to participate. This class meets once a month during our collaboration period on Blue days and is taken for pass/fail credit. Members of this class also meet one-on-one with the moderator to work on their projects. At the end of the year, all members of the class compete in the Synopsis Science Fair.

**Q. Are the sports at Pres competitive?**

- Athletics at Presentation has a rich and storied history. In the last 5 years, we have been lucky enough to capture 19 league championships, 9 section championships, 2 NorCal championships, and 3 state championships; both individual and team. Our success is not just gauged on how many championships we are able to win, but rather our student-athlete experience and their ability to grow as a person. Athletics help round out the educational experience of the Presentation student and aim to have those lessons learned through athletics carry forward into students’ everyday lives.

**Q. How often are tests taken?**

- We teach through units and students are assessed at the end of each unit. The number ranges depending upon the class but typically falls between 3 and 7 units.

**Q. When do clubs meet?**

- Clubs can meet during flex time or after school. Typically meetings are around 30 minutes long. Be sure to check the school schedule for updated times and ask your club officers about meeting times.

**Q. Timing of school days**

- Our school schedule is as follows: [School Schedule](#)

**Q. What is the main strength of Pres academically?**

- PHS is proud to meet the needs of a wide range of students. We have an extensive breadth and scope of class offerings for all students.

**Q. Can you take another class instead of a free period?**

- You can take a maximum of 7 classes if you prefer to skip a study period.

**Q. Do Freshmen still get the electives they want or only Juniors and Seniors?**

- While Junior and Seniors get the first pick of elective classes, we have many offerings and enough for Freshmen and Sophomores to choose from.

**Q. How many clubs do you have?**

- We have more than 30 clubs and affinity groups at PHS.

**Q. What does Spirit Week look like at your school?**

- “Spirit Week at Pres is incredible because it’s when the class levels all feel a true sense of unity while in competition! Each class gets points for dressing up in different themes like ‘Dress Like Your Parent Day’ or ‘Pajama Day’ and we all decorate canvases as a class level and participate in a huge rally to show our spirit. But spirit doesn’t just stop with one week in our second semester! We have athletic rallies and opportunities to win spirit points throughout the year. At the end of the year, the class level with the most spirit from all of our events gets their class level engraved on the gorgeous Spirit Trophy at the front of the school. It’s always high-stakes and extremely fun time for every person in each class level when we show our spirit at Pres!”

–Moniva Pal ‘22