



# **Handbook for New International Students**

**Richard Montgomery High School**

250 Richard Montgomery Dr.

Rockville, MD 20852

Phone: 301-610-8000



## Table of Contents

<b>During Your First Visit to Richard Montgomery High School .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Your First Days of School .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Doing Your Best in School .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Extracurricular Activities .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>School Policies .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Accommodations for ESOL Students .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Grading System .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Grading Periods .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Interim Reports, Report Cards and Permanent Records. .</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Grade Point Average (GPA) .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>State of Maryland Graduation Requirements .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Promotion to the Next Grade Level .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Returning to Your Country .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Attendance .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Audio Devices .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Choosing your Friends Wisely .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Respect .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Post-Secondary Planning .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Emergency Closings .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>For More Information .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Graduation Requirement Check List .....</b>	<b>18</b>



# Welcome!

Welcome to Richard Montgomery High School! We are very glad you are here. This is an exciting time for you, with lots of changes and new things to learn. This handbook contains information to help you do your best in your new school.

## During Your First Visit to Richard Montgomery High School



- **High School Credits Earned in Your Country**

You already visited the Office of Residency and International Admissions (RIA). You have their evaluation of your school credentials. They may have granted you credits toward your high school graduation in the State of Maryland.

If you have questions about the credits that RIA granted you, you must contact them within 60 days of the date of the evaluation. Richard Montgomery High School will change RIA's evaluation only in very rare cases. The phone number for RIA is 301-230-0686.

If you studied English in your country, Richard Montgomery High School may grant up to two pending English credits. This is determined by the head of the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) department.

- **Math Placement Exam**

You will take a math placement exam. The results of this exam will determine the math course you will take. You may use a calculator and a bilingual dictionary during the exam.

- **Class Schedule**

After your math test is graded, your counselor will create your individual daily schedule of classes. Your counselor will try to find a student who speaks your language to help you find your classrooms.

- **Academic Honesty**

You will sign an academic honesty agreement. You will agree not to copy anything from another student, a book, the internet, or any other source without identifying the source. This includes daily homework, quizzes, written assignments, tests, and exams. There are consequences for copying work without identifying the source. If one student is caught copying another student's work, both students receive consequences.

- **Bilingual Dictionary**

You will need to purchase a bilingual dictionary. You should carry your dictionary with you at all times during the school day. The ESOL department will provide you with the most updated list of approved dictionaries that you can use during tests and exams. Using a bilingual dictionary during assignments and testing is one of your accommodations.



## **Your First Days of School**

You will need to do the following. Someone will help you.

- Pick up your "SpinBook" from the Financial Office. The SpinBook is the daily agenda that all students use. It contains very useful information. You will also use it to write down your homework assignments. The Financial Office is on Main Street next to the Main Office. Your first SpinBook is free, but a replacement costs \$5.00.
- Obtain a computer logon from the Media Center. This account will allow you to use our school's computers. The Media Center is located on Main Street. You will need to complete some paperwork and return a few days later to pick it up.
- Get your student identification card from the Security Office, located across from the gymnasium. You are required to have your ID badge with you at all times at school.
- Get a locker from the Security Office. You may bring your own lock or buy one from the Financial Office for \$2.00.

- Ask your counselor for Edline registration codes for you and your parents. You and your parents will use Edline to check your grades and find your homework assignments. You and your parents will have separate Edline accounts.
- Apply for “free or reduced lunch” if your household income qualifies you for the program. Pick up an application form from the counseling office secretary or a main office secretary, fill it out, and return it to the Main Office. You may or may not qualify. The processing can take up to two weeks. You will be notified by the teacher of your first-period class. A FARMS designation also allows students to receive fee waivers on the SAT and ACT exams and a limited number of college applications and may permit students to obtain financial assistance for field trips and SAT and ACT preparation courses.
- Set up a debit account in the cafeteria if you choose. Students may deposit cash or checks into personal cafeteria accounts and pay for food purchases directly from these accounts.
- If you are enrolled in a Physical Education (PE) class, you will need to change into a T-shirt and shorts or sweatpants every class period. You may bring these clothes from home. You may also purchase PE clothes in yellow and black, the Richard Montgomery High School colors, in the PE office. Students will be assigned lockers in the locker room with locks on them.

## Doing Your Best in School



Students must take responsibility for their own learning. To do well in school, you must:

- Attend every class every day.
- Be in your seat when the bell rings.
- Bring all needed materials to class every day: notebooks, pencils, textbook, calculators, bilingual dictionaries, etc.
- Focus on and participate in classroom activities.
- Write your homework assignments in your SpinBook.
- Do your homework every night. You should spend at least one-half hour per academic class per night on homework.
- Turn in your homework on time.
- Do your own work. Do not copy other student’s work.
- Study carefully for quizzes, tests and exams.

- Ask for help from your teacher if you do not understand the material. Ask your teacher when he or she can meet with you, whether before school, at lunch or after school.
- Look for tutoring opportunities. Most departments offer help sessions on specific days at lunch. Ask your teacher for a schedule of these help sessions.
- Ask your counselor or teacher to find you a peer tutor.
- Ask your teachers and counselors for study strategies and techniques.
- Go to the Media Center after school for a quiet place to do homework.
- Read in English on your own.

## Extracurricular Activities



You will meet more students and feel more comfortable in school by joining a school-sponsored activity. Interacting with other students helps ESOL students learn English faster! There are many clubs and sports at Richard Montgomery High School.

Ask your teachers and other students about other clubs and sports and visit these websites:

- For sports: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rmhs/athletics/>
- For clubs: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rmhs/students/clubs/>

See the next page for help in accessing these websites.

Most extracurricular activities require students to have at least a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) to participate. See page 10 for more information on GPAs.

Montgomery County Public Schools



# RICHARD MONTGOMERY

a world-class HIGH SCHOOL



HOME ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION ATHLETICS COUNSELING IB PROGRAMS MEDIA CENTER PTSA **STUDENT**

250 Richard Montgomery Dr  
Rockville MD 20852  
Phone: 301-610-8000  
Fax: 301-279-8428

**Principal**  
Dr. Nelson McLeod

**Assistant Principals**  
Ms. Afie Mirshah-Nayar  
Mr. Josh Neuman-Sunshine

**IB Magnet Coordinator**  
Ms. Jennifer Hoover

**School Business Administrator**  
Ms. Ozzie Hernandez

**Quicklinks**

- > About Our School
- > Alumni
- > Bell Schedule - Regular
- > Blackboard
- > Crisis/Emergency Info.
- > Drama Club - Black Maskers
- > Edline
- > Staff Contact Info.
- > Staff Info. & Development
- > 2010-2011 SIP Linkages Chart



## Back-To-School Night

### Thursday, September 22, 2011

- 6:00pm Activities Fair (Main Street & Rocket Café)
- 7:00pm Program

**August Information (Revised August 1, 2011)**

**Upcoming Events**

**Friday, August 05**  
Last day of Summer School, 2nd Session

**Thursday, August 11**  
Summer School Graduation

**Saturday, August 13**  
Fall Sports Tryouts

**Tuesday, August 16**  
Incoming 9th Grade MYP Student Orientation

**Monday, August 22**  
Professional day for teachers

**Tuesday, August 23**  
Professional day for teachers

**Wednesday, August 24**  
Professional day for teachers

**Thursday, August 25**  
Professional day for teachers  
New Student Orientation

**Friday, August 26**  
Professional day for teachers

**Monday, August 29**  
First day of school for students

**Monday, September 05**  
Holiday - Labor Day

[View Full Calendar](#)

Montgomery County Public Schools



# RICHARD MONTGOMERY

a world-class HIGH SCHOOL



HOME ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION **ATHLETICS** COUNSELING IB PROGRAMS MEDIA CENTER PTSA STUDENT

**Students**

- > Clubs
- > Community Resources for Suspended or Expelled Students
- > Directions to DAR Constitution Hall
- > Seniors
- > Student Service Learning
- > Student Rights & Responsibilities
- > Students main page

**Home**

## Students Page

- Activity Bus Routes 2010-2011
- Bell Schedules: Regular, Half-Day
- Career Center
- Clubs
- Drama Club (see show dates)
- Free Test Prep for College Entrance Exams
- Free Test Prep Online for the ACT and SAT
- PSAT/SAT/ACT/AP Exam Prep
- Student Service Learning (SSL)
- Yearbook Online Ordering

## Forms for Students & Parents

- Attendance Note
- Age of Majority Form
- Athletic Health Form SRC-6
- Athletic Medical Card (Form 560-30)
- Athletic Permission Form
- MCPS Forms for Students
- Medication (Authorization to Administer) (Form 525-13)
- Transportation Permission (Sports & Activities) (Form 560-31)

**Related Links**

- > College & Career Center
- > PTSA
- > Academics
- > Media Center

**Business Partners**

- > Giant Food's A+ Bonus Bucks (school code 00727)
- > Safeway's Register Tapes for Education
- > Target Take Charge of Education (school code 58178)

# School Policies

## Accommodations for ESOL Students

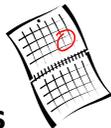
ESOL students are permitted to use bilingual dictionaries and have extra time to take tests and exams. They may use bilingual dictionaries for most class assignments and testing. See your ESOL teachers and counselor with any questions.



## Grading System

Grades are assigned as follows:

- A: 90% - 100%
- B: 80% - 89%
- C: 70% - 79%
- D: 60% - 69%
- E: 0-59%



## Grading Periods

The school year is divided into two eighteen-week semesters. Each semester is divided into two nine-week periods, called marking periods or quarters. First semester goes from August to late January and second semester goes from late January to June.

In most academic classes, for each semester, each of the two quarter grades is valued at 37.5 percent and the final exam is valued at 25 percent to determine the final grade:

1 <sup>st</sup> Semester			2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester		
Aug. to Nov.	Nov. to Jan.	Jan.	Jan. to Mar.	Mar. to June	June
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 37.5%	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 37.5%	Final Exam 25%	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 37.5%	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 37.5%	Final Exam 25%

## **Interim Reports, Report Cards and Permanent Records**

Parents can regularly monitor their children's current grades using Edline.

Interim reports are available on Edline at the midpoint of each quarter. They can be found by clicking the Interim Report link on the Private Reports page.

Report cards are issued four times a year, in November, January, April and June. Report cards are distributed to students at school in November, February and April. End of year report cards are mailed home in June.

Semester grades appear on the student's permanent record. This grading policy is different from the policies in some countries, where only end of year grades appear on the permanent record.

The permanent record is referred to by several different names but the official name is Secondary Scholastic Record. Staff and students often call the permanent record the "transcript." Secondary Scholastic Records are available on Edline, where they are called the Student Grades and Graduation Credit Report. They, too, can be found on the Private Reports page. Secondary Scholastic Records are mailed home each summer and may also be obtained in the registrar's office.

## **Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Grade points are the numeric equivalent of a student's grades:

A = 4

B = 3

C = 2

D = 1

E = 0

Grade point average (GPA) is the average of the number of grade points earned per course. GPA is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the total number of course credits included in the computation. For example, a student who earns three As and four Bs in a semester would have a GPA for that semester of 3.42:  $[4+4+4+3+3+3+3] / 7 = 3.42$ . Grade point averages are shown on report cards and the cumulative GPA is shown on transcripts.

Weighted grade points are the numeric equivalent of a student's grade in honors and advanced level courses, as follows:

A = 5

B = 4

- C = 3
- D = 1
- E = 0

Weighted grade point average (WGPA) is a recalculation of GPA substituting weighted grade points earned in honors and advanced level courses for regular grade points. WGPA is calculated in the same way as GPA. For example, a student who takes five regular courses and two honors or advanced level courses, and earns and four Bs and three As, two of which are in honors and advanced level courses, would have a WGPA for that semester of 3.71:  $[5+5+4+3+3+3+3]/ 7 = 3.71$ . The cumulative WGPA is shown separately on the student’s transcript.

## State of Maryland Graduation Requirements

By law in the State of Maryland, students must fulfill requirements in three areas: academic credits, High School Assessments, and Student Service Learning. Details are below. A blank graduate credit check form is included at the back of this handbook to allow students to monitor their own progress toward graduation.

### Academic Credits

Students must earn 22 credits to graduate, in specific courses, as shown below. One credit equals one full year. Most students graduate with 28 credits.

<b>English</b>	<b>4 credits, including credits for ESOL courses</b>
<b>Fine Arts</b>	<b>1 credit</b>
<b>Health Education</b>	<b>0.5 credit</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>4 credits, including Algebra and Geometry</b>
<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>1 credit</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>3 credits, including Biology and 1 physical science credit</b>
<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>3 credits, including U.S. History, Modern World History and U.S. National, State, and Local Government</b>
<b>Technology Education</b>	<b>1 credit</b>

## Electives:

ESOL students generally fulfill this requirement with two years of a foreign language (possibly upper-level Spanish or Chinese for native speakers) or a program at Thomas Edison High School of Technology.

## High School Assessments

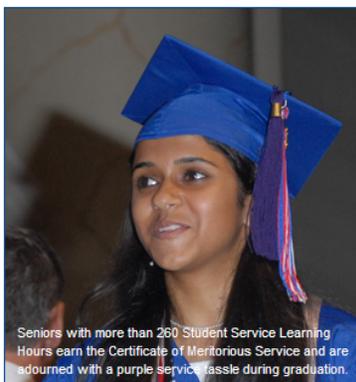
Students must pass the Maryland High School Assessments in English 10, Algebra 1 and Biology in order to graduate. These assessments are given near the end of the school year in which students take the course. Students who fail assessments are given remedial help and the opportunity to take the assessment again until they pass. Maryland High School Assessments are in no way related to university entrance exams such as the SAT, ACT or TOEFL.

## Student Service Learning

Students are required to provide service to the community through volunteering their time outside the school day at a non-profit organization. The number of student service learning (SSL) hours students must earn depends on their MCPS enrollment date and is shown on report cards; students can also ask their counselors.

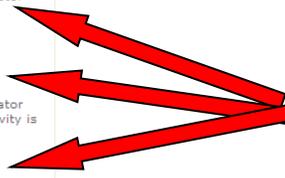
A complete list of community service opportunities can be found on the MCPS website: <http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/ssl/>.

### Student Service Learning (SSL)



#### Most Requested

-  **Verification Form**  
Submit this form to your school's SSL coordinator by the end of each semester when service is performed.
-  **Request for SSL Preapproval**  
Submit this form to your school's SSL coordinator **BEFORE** the activity if the organization or activity is not listed as Approved for SSL.
-  **SSL Community Opportunities**  
Find organizations and opportunities identified as MCPS SSL approved.



Students must find their own community service opportunities but school staff can sometimes help. Religious institutions can grant student service learning hours for secular activities only.

Documentation of service is required, per instructions on the required forms. There are strict deadlines for turning in SSL forms. Students should turn in forms as soon as possible in order to receive credit for services performed.

## Promotion to the Next Grade Level

The State of Maryland does not recognize the completion of grade levels, but rather credits earned toward promotion to the next grade level. The following table summarizes the credits required for promotion to grades 10, 11 and 12.

	Total Credits Needed for Promotion to Next Grade Level	Mathematics Credits in Required Courses	English Credits in Required Courses	Science Credits in Required Courses	Social Studies Credits in Required Courses	Other Required Credits
From Grade 9 to Grade 10	5	1	1	0	0	3
From Grade 10 to Grade 11	10	2	2	1	1	4
From Grade 11 to Grade 12	15	3	3	2	2	5

## Returning to Your Country

In many countries, students have to meet certain requirements each year that enable them to “pass a grade.” For example, in Chile, if students pass all of their exams in the 9th grade, they are considered to have passed the 9th grade and are moved to the 10th grade. In our system, it does not work this way. Rather, students must pass certain courses and earn certain credits each year to be officially promoted to the next grade level, as shown in the table above.

When students fail a required course, they either repeat it in summer school or during the school day the following school year. Students can only take one course per summer in summer school. Repeating courses the following year takes up a class period in the student’s schedule. Therefore, passing courses the first time is crucial.

In our experience, the difference between our system of grade-level promotion and the system used by other countries can be problematic if students return to their home countries to continue their high school studies. Please note that it is the responsibility of parents to coordinate far in advance with their embassy or ministry of education to resolve any issues that the difference between our systems causes.

We will be happy to write a letter on a student’s departure explaining our system of grade-level promotion and interpreting the student’s transcript to show where the student stands in terms of progress toward graduation in our system. We cannot be held responsible for the grade level the country ultimately assigns students on their return. Parents may be asked to sign a letter

indicating they understand our school system's grade promotion policy and how this may affect their child's grade promotion should they return to their home country.

## **Attendance**

### **General information on attendance**

Education in the State of Maryland is mandatory until age 16. The academic calendar can be found on the Richard Montgomery website, at:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rmhs/aboutus/calendar.aspx>

Parents or guardians must write a note explaining any absence from any class. The note may be written in the student's native language, although English is preferred. The note must include the student's name, ID number, grade, date(s) of absence, reason for absence, phone number and parent signature. Any absence longer than three days requires a doctor's note along with the parent's note.

Students must deliver the note to the attendance secretary, located on Main Street near the main office and across from the gymnasium, within three days of the student's return to school. If the note is not received within three days, absences are marked "unlawful." Students must present the purple note received from the attendance secretary to each teacher on their return to classes.

The only lawful absences are illness of the student, certain religious holidays, death in the immediate family and college visits. Illness constitutes such symptoms as contagious disease, vomiting, temperature of more than 100 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Centigrade as measured by a thermometer, etc.

Family travel is not a lawful absence. Doctor visits should take place after school hours. If doctors' appointments must take place during the school day, students are expected to attend school before and after the appointment.

Students are not permitted to leave the school building, except at lunchtime, without signing out with the attendance secretary or the school nurse. If a student feels ill, he or she must ask for a pass to go to the Health Room. The Health Room is located across from the gymnasium. If the nurse feels a student is ill enough to go home, she will contact the student's parents for pickup.

Students and parents must keep the school informed of changes in contact information: home phone, cell phone, emergency contacts, etc.

### **Failing classes due to excessive unlawful absences**

Teachers take attendance every class period. Students are expected to show the maturity, responsibility and dedication to their education by attending every class, every day.

Students are responsible for asking teachers for work missed during their absences. Teachers have the right to refuse work from students on days missed if their absences are unlawful. This includes exams given on the days missed.

Teachers have the right to fail students with passing grades if the students accumulate more than five unlawful absences. Students with three unlawful absences in a class will be warned of the possibility of failure and referred to their counselor and administrator. The counselor will consult with the student and the parents/guardians, verify reasons for the absences, and determine the appropriate interventions.

Students with five unlawful absences in a class will automatically be required to submit an appeal of the recording of their absences if they or their parents believe any absence was recorded incorrectly and/or develop an attendance intervention plan with their counselor/administrator.

After five unlawful absences, if a student does not complete either an appeal of attendance recording or an attendance intervention plan and/or continues to be unlawfully absent, the student will be considered to be in danger of receiving a failing grade in that course.

## **Audio Devices**

The use of cell phones and music-playing devices (iPods, MP3 players, etc.) are a distraction in the classroom. They must be turned off and put away during instruction time. Use is permitted during lunch periods. Teachers may take away such items and parents may be required to pick them up at school.

## **Choosing Your Friends Wisely**

Richard Montgomery High School has about 2,200 students. Some will try to do their best in school and some will not. Some may ask you to do things that sound right to you and some may ask you to do things that sound wrong to you. Use your best judgment in choosing friends. Choose friends who want to do well in school and who want you to do well in school.

## **Respect**

Students are expected to be respectful, attentive, kind and courteous at all times to teachers and fellow students.

All students have the right to feel safe at school. "Bullying" will not be tolerated at Richard Montgomery High School. Bullying means repeatedly causing someone to feel stressed, humiliated or threatened. Bullying can be verbal, physical, social, emotional, relational, and sexual. Bullying can involve using electronic devices and the Internet. Consequences are severe. Students are strongly encouraged to talk to an adult at Richard Montgomery if they are being bullied.

Under no circumstances should students bring weapons to school. This includes toy weapons and knives of any kind.

## Post-Secondary Planning



Students should begin making plans for after high school graduation by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Counselors and the College and Career Information Coordinator are happy to help. Students should visit the College and Career Information Center (CCIC), next to the Counseling Office, no later than the fall of 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The College and Career Information Coordinator has information on the American system of higher education, how to choose a college, the college application process, college entrance exams, including the SAT, ACT and TOEFL, and how to find scholarships.

## Emergency Closings



The normal school day at Richard Montgomery High School goes from 7:25 a.m. to 2:10 p.m. However, schools may open late, dismiss early, or be closed all day due to weather conditions and other emergencies:

- When schools are closed, all afternoon and evening activities are also cancelled or postponed.
- A “delayed opening “ means that schools open two hours later than normal. Bus pick-up times are two hours later than normal.
- An “early dismissal” means that schools will close 2.5 hours earlier than normal. Drop-off times are 2.5 hours earlier than normal.

If you suspect schools maybe closed due to bad weather, you can check local television and radio stations, call 301-279-3673 or go to <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org>.

## For More Information

You will also find information in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, French and Vietnamese online at:

- <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rmhs>
- [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org)
- <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/index.asp>

# Graduation Requirement Check List

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Grad. Year: \_\_\_\_\_

This is a summary of a student's progress towards graduation. As requirements are met it will be noted next to the name of the requirement. Requirements not met are still needed and outstanding for graduation.

English		World Studies		Mathematics		Science		Additional Credits	
9A	<input type="text"/>	USH A	<input type="text"/>	Algebra A	<input type="text"/>	Biology A	<input type="text"/>	PE 1	<input type="text"/>
9B	<input type="text"/>	USH B	<input type="text"/>	Algebra B	<input type="text"/>	Biology B	<input type="text"/>	PE 2	<input type="text"/>
10A	<input type="text"/>	NSL A	<input type="text"/>	Geometry A	<input type="text"/>			Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Met
10B	<input type="text"/>	NSL B	<input type="text"/>	Geometry B	<input type="text"/>	Physical A	<input type="text"/>	Arts 1:	<input type="text"/>
11A	<input type="text"/>	MWH A	<input type="text"/>			Physical B	<input type="text"/>	Arts 2:	<input type="text"/>
11B	<input type="text"/>	MWH B	<input type="text"/>	Math A1	<input type="text"/>			Tech1:	<input type="text"/>
12A	<input type="text"/>			Math B1	<input type="text"/>	Other 1	<input type="text"/>	Tech2:	<input type="text"/>
12B	<input type="text"/>			Math A2	<input type="text"/>	Other 2	<input type="text"/>	Electives:	<input type="text"/>
				Math B2	<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

### Program Completer

Program Compl. A1

Program Compl. B1

Program Compl. A2

Program Compl. B2

### Add'l Requirements

**SSL Hours** \_\_\_\_\_ (Not Met)

SSL Req. \_\_\_\_\_

**HSA** \_\_\_\_\_ **Bridge** \_\_\_\_\_

HSA English (396) \_\_\_\_\_

HSA Biology (400) \_\_\_\_\_

HSA Algebra (412) \_\_\_\_\_

CGPA

WGPA

Earned 22 Credits \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score and Pass Ind. \_\_\_\_\_

Class

Notes:

Notes: