

CHS Class of 2016 Gets Prepped for Freshman Year

The second annual Community Night provided info on academic requirements, departments, curriculum and more.

by Russell Waterman – 1/20/12



Community Night displays in the cafeteria provided lots of information on many curriculum courses at CHS

About eight months before officially entering [Coventry High School](#), many members of the future Class of 2016 are about to solidly plant an academic foot in the door.

Accompanied by parents and family members, over 200 eighth grade students attended the second annual [CHS Community Night](#) on Wednesday night to gather and absorb the information they will need to enroll in a school they will attend for the next four years.

Many teachers were present to discuss displays of student work and course offerings for the core academic classes- English, Math, Science, World Language; Physical Education and Health, and others such as Visual and Performing Arts, Technology and a Capstone community service project.

Curriculum information, departmental awards, trophies and other student achievements were also on display.

Band members played songs and even Drama members performed mime routines that captivated students and their families.

Chemistry labs, art rooms, biology labs, the Distributive Education store, library media center and other career and technical program areas were open for inspection and tours.

Several CHS students in red "Ask Me" t-shirts acted as mentors to guide prospective students and their families throughout the school and answer questions.

The night was part of a transition process by teachers and administrators at CHS and [Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School](#) teachers to prepare eighth grade students well in advance of their first day of high school. Folders were also distributed to each family that contained important information to take home.

"Students had to start setting up their schedules a few weeks back," said Anna Greene, attending Community Night with her daughter, Sarah, an Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School student and CSI TV series fan. Both were investigating courses that would help prepare her for her career goal: "I want to be a criminal forensic scientist," said Sarah.

Anna, a member of CHS Class of 1985, added, "It is a lot bigger it was when I was here. They didn't offer this (Community Night) for me. It is sort of intimidating coming from middle school to high school so this helps Sarah and her classmates a lot."

Michael Tucciarone and his son, Gino, listened carefully to students explain what they build in the Carpentry class, part of several Career and Technical Center offerings. "I am in the painting business and my father was a carpenter," said Mr. Tucciarone. "I like carpentry," noted Gino.

Nearby were other booths for the Jr. ROTC, Physical Education, Culinary Arts, Cosmetology and much more.

Chris Vamvaketis and his daughter, Estelle, also enjoyed Community Night. "I am interested in music," said Estelle. "This is great," said her father, a member of the CHS class of 1982. "This gives kids a chance to see what's available and not just learn as they go on what they like or don't like."

CHS Principal Michael Hobin began the second half of the program before a near-capacity and attentive audience of over 650. "It seems so far away, but before you know it you will be sitting here on Class Day in your robes remembering that 'I sat here just before I became a ninth grader,'" he said.

Lynne Burke, Assistant Principal for Student Services, showed a brief video presentation on all aspects of school life, including classes, sports, electives and extracurricular activities. "We concentrate on academic and personal growth, community service and making sound career choices."

"You must have at least 24 credits for graduation," she continued. "And you will be reading Romeo and Juliet and you're all going to love it," she said of the famous Shakespeare book "all our English students are required to read", to the groans and moans of some young students.

"In reading, math, science and writing we are achieving at or above the state and national test scores. When we compare what our National Honor Roll and Rhode Island Honor Roll Society members do against private school students, we are well above the state average."

There was louder applause after Burke made another announcement. "I had to check it at least three times, but members of the Class of 2012 will be receiving \$2,054,000 in scholarships, loans and grants for the colleges and post-secondary institutions they will be attending. That's at least a million dollars over what last year's class had received at this time."

"We want students to show off our school and there's a lot to be proud of," said Burke.

Capping off the night, 25 red t-shirts sporting the words, 'Coventry High School, Class of 2016', were distributed to students who had completed a survey. "You passed your first homework assignment," she beamed. "It is all about showing off our Oakers' Pride."

Incoming CHS freshmen might have to be exceptionally inventive to offer a tardy excuse for not completing their next middle-school-to-high-school assignment. "First-year schedules must be completed, signed by parents and students and returned by next week," said Burke. She added there will be an outreach effort at [Father John V. Doyle School](#) on Friday and ongoing efforts for other students from more schools.

"You can call us, e-mail us, look at the newsletter and check the school website," Burke said. "We will be here to answer any questions."