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Notre Dame High School
provides college-bound
students with the tools and
opportunities they need to
build confidence, pursue
their interests, and achieve
their academic ambitions.

page 22

Principal Joanna Barlow (left) and
Lisa Lenihan, Assistant Principal for
Curriculum and Instruction

Notre Dame:

Inspiring Academic Excellence

Nestled in the community of Lawrenceville, New Jersey, Notre Dame High School offers college-bound students in grades nine through twelve a meaningful and challenging academic experience rooted in Catholic values. From seminar-style discussions to experiential learning options, Notre Dame's student-centered curriculum nurtures critical and independent thinking as well as intellectual growth for students with diverse strengths.

Every aspect of the Notre Dame experience prepares students for what's to come in college and beyond. For example, expansive course offerings in everything from the arts to economics allow students to hone their strengths and pursue their interests, while ensuring a solid academic foundation. "Our program offerings are quite robust," says Lisa Lenihan, Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Instruction. "But thanks to small class sizes and involved teachers, our students enjoy big-school advantages with a small-school feel. It's really the best of both worlds."

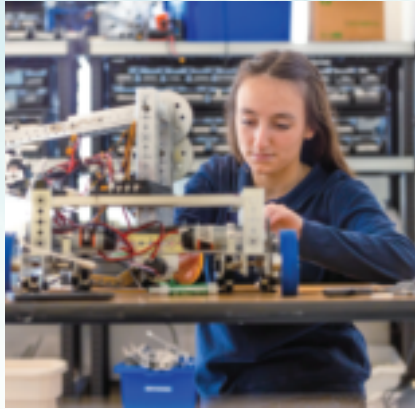
Notre Dame's block scheduling not only allows for more focused study, but also mirrors a typical college approach to course schedules. Students say they appreciate the greater flexibility in meeting and exceeding graduation requirements while being able to select electives that match their future academic goals, according to Principal Joanna Barlow.

Notre Dame encourages one-on-one interactions between students and educators. Dedicated office hours for faculty members prepare students for this vital college experience, enabling them to get comfortable with the process of having meaningful conversations with instructors about their education. College-bound students who have an individualized education plan, service plan, or need accommodations for a learning difference also have access to a learning needs coordinator who supports and encourages progress in their coursework.

"At Notre Dame, we ensure that every student gets the opportunity to go as far as their ability and ambition will take them," says Barlow. "We offer a variety of programs designed to help students with diverse strengths build the skills they need to thrive—and encounter the challenges they need to grow."

She cites the AP Capstone Diploma Program, which is a two-course program that grounds qualified students in research methods and engages them in independent inquiry.

"We enjoy a number of partnerships with



colleges and universities throughout the state where Notre Dame students can earn credit and/or dual credit," she adds. "If a student exhausts the Notre Dame curricular offering in a particular subject, we find a way to provide them the challenge they seek."

College partnerships and a dual-enrollment program allow students to pursue advanced studies beyond Notre Dame's 18 AP courses and 35 Honors courses. Through dual enrollment, a college or university awards the student college credits to jumpstart their college transcript. Arrangements with Seton Hall University and Georgian Court University, among others, provide students with endless possibilities for challenge.

Another example of Notre Dame's forward-looking approach is the McAuley Studies Program, which focuses on developing intellectual independence and supports students' efforts in their regular college-preparatory courses. The program helps college-bound students hone the academic skills and provides the tools they need to thrive at Notre Dame, in college, and beyond.

"Notre Dame is a place where students come to find their voice and vision—something that we're careful to nurture," says Lenihan. "We prompt and nurture students to find their leader within every opportunity, and we expose them to different fields and career paths."

Students come to Notre Dame to prepare for college. In the process, they also find their voice and vision for the future. Academic concentrations in subjects such as communications and applied sciences enable students to customize, focus, and enhance their academic experience to reflect their interests in a manner similar to a college minor.

College preparation at Notre Dame often happens far beyond the walls of the classroom,

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→ Notre Dame High School

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through opportunities such as internships and service learning. Senior professional internships thrust students into a real-world work environment, where they can explore key components of a career in a specific field, both on and off campus. Past internships sites have included law firms, physical therapy practices, and architectural firms. Service learning is an essential part of each student's education at Notre Dame, too; many seniors gain firsthand experience in decision-making and team-building by taking on formal leadership roles in the school's service-learning endeavors.

Academic advisory groups advance the small-school atmosphere of the Notre Dame community while providing students with opportunities for social and emotional growth. Led by a faculty member, each advisory cohort remains together from year to year and includes students from each grade, a model that promotes student leadership and relationships across grade levels.

"Our student outcomes say it all," says Barlow. "When our students leave Notre Dame, they are exceptionally prepared for admission to the colleges and universities of their choice, including the most selective and respected schools in the nation. We welcome prospective students to discover Notre Dame where they will experience our devotion to learning, preparing them for both academic and future successes." ■