



STAPLES HIGH SCHOOL

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Staples High School Grade 9 Performance Indicators

To: Westport Board of Education

From: Stafford Thomas, Principal, Staples High School

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Background and Context

The Class of 2028 began their educational journey during a turbulent time marked by the COVID-19 pandemic. In spring 2020, as fourth graders, they transitioned into remote learning. Their fifth-grade year (2020–2021) was spent in a hybrid model, with varied instructional access. By sixth grade (2021–2022), more consistent school operations resumed, setting the stage for increasing normalcy through middle school.

Despite improvements in routine and instructional continuity, the long-term effects of early educational disruption—particularly in academic and social-emotional development—remain areas of focus. In partnership with Staples High School administration and Assistant Superintendents Anthony Buono and Michael Rizzo, this report presents a multi-dimensional view of the Class of 2028's performance using a set of well-rounded indicators.

Indicator	Class of 2024	Class of 2025	Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028
GPA (Unweighted, 1st Semester)	3.54	3.50	3.60	3.60	3.54
PSAT 8/9 ERW	544 (2021)	544 (2022)	537 (2023)	552 (2024)	551 (2025)

PSAT 8/9 Math	536 (2021)	540 (2022)	534 (2023)	527 (2024)	537 (2025)
Attendance Rate	—	96% (2022)	95% (2023)	95% (2024)	96% (2025)
Mental Health Crisis Forms	2 (2021)	14 (2022)	6 (2023)	2 (2024)	4 (2025)
Special Ed Referrals (Total)	16 (2021)	23 (2022)	36 (2023)	14 (2024)	16 (2025)
Special Ed Eligible (from referrals)	6	9	4	3	2
Honors/AP Recommendations	—	—	257	232	293

Summary of Findings

Academic Performance

- **GPA:** The Class of 2028 maintains a strong GPA (3.54), consistent with historical averages.
- **PSAT 8/9 Scores:** The cohort's PSAT scores in both ERW (551) and Math (537) align with or exceed recent years, indicating sustained academic strength.
- **Honors/AP Recommendations:** A notable increase to 293 recommendations suggests enhanced academic engagement and readiness.

Engagement and Well-being

- **Attendance:** With a 96% average daily attendance rate, student engagement remains high.
- **Mental Health:** A continued decline in crisis forms (from 14 in 2021–22 to 4 in 2024–25) reflects strengthened mental health supports and early intervention systems.
- **Special Education Referrals:** While referral numbers have leveled off, eligibility determinations have decreased over the past 5 years.

Conclusion

Overall, the Class of 2028 demonstrates encouraging trends across academic, behavioral, and emotional well-being indicators. While the positive trajectory is clear, a continued commitment to differentiated support and early intervention remains essential. Staples High School faculty and staff will persist in using data-driven, student-centered strategies to ensure all students thrive.