

# **Searcy High School**

## **(1,086 Students in grades 9-12)**

### **Mission Statement**

*Because education is a life-long process of paramount importance to the well-being of the individual and the democratic way of life, it is necessary for students to develop positive work habits, adaptability, understanding, and the ability to live and work in a diverse, technological society.*

### **Accreditation and Academics**

Searcy High School is accredited by and exceeds the standards set by the North Central Association as well as the Arkansas Department of Education.

**Graduation Requirements:** Twenty-two credits are required for graduation. Required credits for a general diploma are:

- English - 4 credits
- math - 3 credits
- science - 3 credits
- social studies - 3 credits
- health - .5
- physical education - .5
- fine arts -.5
- oral communications - .5

**College Preparatory Diploma:** To qualify for a College Preparatory Diploma, a student must complete the minimum pre-college core requirements set by the Arkansas Department of Education. Currently these are as follows:

- English - 4 credits (cannot be remedial)
- social studies - 3 credits (must include civics, American history, and world history)
- natural science - 3 credits (must include a biology and either chemistry or physics)
- math - 3 credits (must include Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II)
- foreign language - 2 credits (must be the same language)

A minimum grade point average will be required to earn the Arkansas Department of Education seal on a diploma. An advanced math course is required to be eligible to apply for the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship.

(Approximately 86% of the 2006 graduates made plans to continue their education at a four or two year college or university. 4% set their goal for a technical school and 8% planned to enter the military.)

**Honor Graduates:** Honor graduates must earn a minimum of eight Honors/A.P. credits in grades 9-12. No fractional Honors/A.P. credits will be used. Honor Graduates have a minimum College Prep Core GPA requirement of 3.50. Other detailed requirements are published in the current student handbook. Class ranking for Honor Graduates will be based only on College Prep Core courses (English, social studies, science, math, and foreign language).

**Advanced Placement Courses:** Advanced Placement (A.P.) courses are offered to eleventh and twelfth grade students seeking college credit while still in high school.

These courses are weighted as follows:

A=5  
B=4  
C=3  
D=2  
F=0

To earn college credit, students must take a national standardized test usually given in early May. College admissions offices will determine the amount of college credit given based on the score reported. Following are the A.P. courses offered:

- English III and IV A.P.
- Spanish III and IV A.P.
- French III and IV A.P.
- American Government A.P.
- Calculus A.P.
- Biology A.P.
- Physics A.P.

**Honors Courses:** Honors courses are offered to all students in grades 9 – 12. They are not weighted (\*Note the exception to this rule in the list of courses). College courses are credited through Arkansas State University – Beebe but are taught by SHS faculty. These courses are not classified as honors courses by ASU – Beebe but only by SHS to satisfy the honors requirements of advanced diploma types. Following is a list of honors courses:

- English I Honors
- English I Pre-AP
- English II Honors
- English II Pre-A.P.
- English III Honors
- English IV Honors
- College English Honors
- Physical Science Honors
- Biology Pre-AP
- Chemistry
- \*Human Anatomy and Physiology
- Pre-Calculus
- College Algebra/Trigonometry
- College Algebra/Statistics
- College Biology/Introduction to Human Anatomy & Physiology
- Physics Honors

## **Counseling Services**

The Searcy High School Guidance Center offers many services as it strives to assist students in the process of growing in personal, social, educational, and career development. Guidance center personnel include three certified counselors and one secretary whose main priority is to be available and resourceful in serving the needs and requests of students, parents, faculty, and administrators. The following will provide a brief description of the most important functions, programs, and services provided by the Searcy High School Guidance Center.

**Academic Program:** The school counselors at Searcy High School believe education is a life-long process of paramount importance to the well-being of the individual and the democratic way of life. A complete and flexible curriculum combined with a safe, nurturing environment offers opportunity for students to develop positive work habits, adaptability, understanding, and the ability to live and work in a diverse technological society. Students start preparing for their high school program of study in eighth grade career orientation class. Students discuss and research careers in the world of work, identifying interests, abilities, temperaments, and learning styles, as well as discussing required classes for graduation, the diverse diploma system, and courses offered at high school. Near the end of the course, counselors help students revise and update four-year plans to meet their changing needs. Course selection is of the highest priority as juniors and seniors prepare for college entrance. Based on their career focus needs, electives are continuously updated to ensure successful transition into post-secondary schools, the military, or the work force. It is primarily the responsibility of the guidance department to develop the master schedule and assign students to classes. Graduation credits are closely monitored for each student, making sure that every student is completing the course work required of his/her chosen diploma track and ensuring that elective courses are chosen that support his/her interests or career focus.

**Testing Program:** The purpose of Searcy High School's testing program is to identify academic progress and abilities. Test results are used to indicate individual and group strengths and weaknesses. Changes in curriculum are made according to needs as identified by test results. Guidance counselors are involved in every aspect of the testing process. They order testing materials, coordinate test administration, administer tests, coordinate materials for scoring, and interpret and disseminate test scores. Searcy High School Sophomores are tested with the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) and PLAN (10<sup>th</sup> Grade ACT), which are pre-admission college tests. PSAT high scorers are encouraged to re-take the exam as juniors in an effort to qualify as a National Merit Finalist in the College Board's scholarship program. All students enrolled in vocational classes take Vocational Competency Tests at the end of the course. Other required end-of-course tests include Algebra I, geometry, and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Literacy. Ninth graders take the Iowa Test of Educational Development as required by the state. Registration forms for college admission tests, the American College Test (ACT) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) are available in the guidance center. Students are encouraged to take these college admission tests during their sophomore, junior, and senior years. The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test, which is required for military enlistment, is offered to all interested juniors and seniors. As required by Arkansas law, all students taking Advanced Placement courses are tested in the spring.

**Individual Counseling:** An important goal of the Searcy High School Guidance Counselors is to provide individual, personal counseling to students on an as-needed basis. Students may schedule appointments or drop in when they need to discuss a personal issue. Parents, teachers, peers, or administrators may refer students to the guidance center for counseling. If the need of a student is beyond the scope of in-house counseling, referrals to outside resources are made.

**Scholarship Program:** The senior class counselor manages all scholarship applications. The results of the scholarship offerings are presented at the senior awards assembly at the conclusion of the school year.

**Fall Future Fest:** Each year the senior counselor coordinates a college and career day where juniors and seniors and parents have the opportunity to visit with representatives from colleges,

technical schools, businesses, the military, and lending institutions. Approximately 50 representatives attend this annual program.

**Keystone Program:** Coordinated by the ninth counselor, these classes are offered to ninth grade students. The main goal of Keystone is to help students become contented, committed, contributing students and citizens. Keystone classes are conducted in the ninth grade English and science classes during the first week of school. During this week students meet administrators, tour the school, review the handbook, find out about clubs and activities, discuss careers, and set short and long term goals. The week ends with a Keystone Celebration Brunch provided by parent volunteers.

**Post-secondary Planning:** Students are assisted with applications, resumes', essays, scholarships, letters of recommendation, financial aid, college/career searches, and college entrance exams. Materials and other resources are available.

**Application Assistance:** Guidance personnel coordinate and disseminate information for application to the following:

- National Merit Scholarship Program
- Arkansas Governor's School
- AEGIS - summer program for gifted/talented students
- MASH - summer program for students interested in the medical professions
- Arkansas School for Math and Science
- Upward Bound at Harding University - for first generation students (those students whose parents have not finished a four-year degree program) desiring assistance in planning and preparing for post-secondary education
- HOBY - sophomore ambassador to the state Hugh O'Brian Leadership Seminar
- CPEP – a summer enrichment for juniors and seniors scoring below 19 on the ACT; it serves as an intensive tutoring program.
- Summer school – English and physical science are offered.

**Informational Presentations and Materials:**

- “Making College Count” presentation for seniors
- “Making High School Count” presentation for freshmen
- Financial Aid Workshop for seniors and parents in spring
- “Senior Packet” – ideas for college, careers, other areas of training, financial aid, and scholarships, tips for seniors, important dates, deadlines, and websites
- “Senior Newsletter” – January Update
- College Representatives – SHS visits
- Tutoring program coordination
- Lifetrack Services, Inc. – a post graduate tracking and surveying service assists not only with status of graduates, but also with assessment of curriculum

### **Extra-curricular Opportunities and Activities**

**Annual Scholars Ceremony:** Students in grades 9-11 who have grade points of 4.0 or above for the fall semester of the current year will be named to attend the Annual Scholars Ceremony, which has been in existence since 1986. Determination of these students will be made by computing the grade point and using only the academic courses completed by the student. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade scholars will be those students who have met Honor Graduate status at the conclusion of seven semesters.

**Athletics:** Searcy High School offers a variety of opportunities for students to participate in athletics. For the male students there is:

- football
- basketball
- swimming
- golf
- tennis
- soccer
- baseball
- track and field
- cross country

For the female students there is:

- basketball
- cheerleading and dance
- swimming
- golf
- tennis
- soccer
- fast-pitch softball
- track and field
- cross country

In conjunction with these sports, an off-season weight program is conducted for both girls and boys. Searcy High School has been very competitive in all sports. For the last several years, the football, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, tennis and golf teams have advanced to the state play-offs.

**Band:** The Searcy High School Band is made up of 110 members in grades 9-12. Adjunct groups of the band are marching band in the fall, concert band in the spring, and various small ensembles. The band has received Division I ratings in marching and concert contests for the last several years. Every year there are several band members who achieve All-Region and All-State status. This, added to the fact that a number of students attend college on band scholarships, is a testament to the quality of the band program.

**Beta Club:** The Beta Club is an organization based on service and leadership whose purpose is to encourage effort and reward merit and to promote those qualities of character that make for good citizenship. Beta Club also promotes the ideals of honesty, service, morality, ethical conduct, and leadership among secondary school students and the community. Past service projects have involved the Angel Tree Project and the state Beta Club Care Package project.

**Choir:** The Searcy High School Choir is divided into four sections: Women's Choir, which is made up of ninth grade girls; Men's Choir, which is made up of boys in grades 9-10; Varsity choir, which is made up of tenth grade girls, and Concert Choir, which is made up of both girls and boys in grades 11-12. Tryouts are held each spring to determine new membership in Concert Choir. Over the last ten years, the Searcy choirs have earned more sweepstakes trophies than any other choir in the state. For years this choir program has had the distinction of having more students make All-Region Choir than all the other schools in the competition combined. For the last five years, the Concert Choir has been known as one of the top four choirs in the

state. This deserved reputation has initiated many requests for singing engagements throughout the community and state.

**Crown Club:** The Searcy Crown Club is an organization that was founded by the Searcy Junior Auxiliary. The club's main focus is to participate in community service throughout the White County area. High school girls in 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades may apply to be a member of the club. Crown Club participates in activities benefiting The Sunshine School, Friends for Life, Angel Tree, and other worthy causes within the community. Members also plan social events throughout the school year. The club meets the second Tuesday of every month during the school year.

**Drama:** The drama department presents a major production in the fall that is an open tryout for all students in grades 9-12. Every other year, a musical is presented in conjunction with the choral department. The Annual Valentine's Day Dessert Theatre is presented in February, and in April, there is a senior play. Students attend numerous speech and theatre tournaments throughout the year at other high schools and enter individual and group competitions, including the state Thespian Festival.

**Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America:** The chapter of Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is very active with over 70 members each year. They participate in one project per month, which is usually a service project for the community. FCCLA teams participate in the projects for District Star Events competition each year.

**Fellowship of Christian Athletes:** Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) is an interdenominational club. Its focus has always been on the person of Jesus Christ and not on traditions or denominational labels. FCA's concern is to draw athletes and coaches and all that they influence into vital Christian service within the church. Each FCA Teammate is urged to attend and serve faithfully in the church of his or her choice. Some "Huddles" occasionally worship at various churches as a group, and FCA events are planned so as not to interfere with Sunday church participation. FCA staff and board members are also active members of a local church, thus gaining local accountability.

**Fine Arts Club:** The Fine Arts Club participates in sign painting and painting pumpkins for a contest, conducts fund-raisers for worthy causes, donates a turkey at Thanksgiving, and designs a T-shirt for members. The club works with the Adopt-A-Street program. They also paint murals for community organizations such as Junior Auxiliary and the Holiday of Lights Committee.

**French Club:** The French Club is composed of students presently taking French I-IV. The French Club helps raise money for worthy causes such as the Red Cross, Angel Tree, and disaster relief. The Societe Honoraire de Francais, sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of French, invites students at Searcy High School to join who are presently taking French and who have at least three semesters of "A" average in French. They pay a one-time fee of \$20 prior to initiation in March and remain a member as long as they are in high school. They are allowed to purchase cords for graduation, and seals are included on their diplomas.

**Future Business Leaders of America:** Future Business Leaders of America is the club affiliated with the business department. Every year there are approximately 75 members. Some of the annual projects are a get-acquainted party for members, contributions to agencies such as the March of Dimes and Arkansas Children's Hospital, a canned food drive for the Junior Auxiliary food baskets, the Angel Tree Project, and a benefit for the Humane Society of Searcy and Paws Inn. The club has a Christmas party, sponsors a homecoming sweetheart, and conducts the annual DataMatch, which is a computer-generated compatibility list for students at Searcy High

School. In January and March, select club members compete on the district and state levels in tests related to courses in the business department.

**Future Farmers of America:** The Future Farmers of America chapter at Searcy High School is a national, award-winning chapter that conducts activities to improve individual members, the chapter, and the community. Each year the student members are instrumental in engaging over 90 members in everything from leadership training to developing a healthy lifestyle. Their focus is on the community. They have been involved in “Searcy in the City” in August. They purchased items for children on the Junior Auxiliary Angel Tree Project. Each year they actively attend over 15 different events focused on developing their leadership abilities. Each member knows that he/she will someday be a community leader and agriculture leader and that he/she must prepare for the task. FFA members have been responsible for representing Searcy on a state level for years, serving as district officers, a state FFA President, and state competitors in career development events. In addition to assuming leadership positions, they have amassed numerous FFA proficiency awards, state FFA Degrees, and American FFA Degrees.

**Future Teachers of America:** The Robert A. Abney Chapter (named for a former SHS social studies teacher and sponsor of FTA) of Future Teachers of America is very active. The club provides a small surprise for each teacher on his or her first day back at work. The club also provides food/snacks in the lounges several times a year. Each member chooses a faculty/staff member and provides Secret Santa surprises every day for a week during December. They participate in canned food drives and Christmas for Kids projects. Members write Happy Grams, which are nice, uplifting notes, to teachers in the district. A major activity of the club is to sponsor fall and spring teaching days. In this activity the members choose teachers in the district and help teach/tutor students in those classes. This provides help for those teachers, but it also lets the student members see what it is really like to be a “teacher for a day.” There are always over 100 members, and the majority of those are very active in the club.

**International Thespian Society:** The Searcy High School branch of the International Thespian Society is Troupe #340. The ITS is the only organization to honor secondary school students for outstanding work in theatre. The focus is on students’ achievements, involvement, and access to quality theatre arts instruction. Thespian membership is granted for the performance of meritorious work in theatre arts, which meets the society’s general guidelines. Specifically, students become members by earning points for their work. Any student who has participated in at least two productions for a total of ten Thespian points is eligible for Thespian Society membership. The goal is to earn 60 Thespian points by the senior year to reach the status of “Honor Thespian,” receive a seal on the diploma, and wear an honor cord at graduation. The local troupe provides opportunities to attend productions around the state and participate in school productions on and off stage.

**Key Club:** The Key Club is a community service organization. The members have several annual projects. The first is an initiation project for new members. This year it is selling cardstock footballs to raise money for the Arkansas Children’s Hospital. In the spring the club sponsors a dance for the students at the Sunshine School. In addition, there is a project committee that will organize additional projects as a new need arises.

**Lion TV and Lion Press:** Broadcast students are members of Student Television Network, a national organization for teachers and students in broadcasting. This organization sponsors a camp for TV teachers each summer in Springfield, Missouri. Ms. Jacki Romey, journalism teacher, attends this comprehensive camp. This organization also sponsors a camp for students. SHS students attend this camp. As part of STN, the students compete nationally in mail-in

contests and at the national convention. Searcy High School students have placed in contests for video productions. Journalism students program and operate their own cable television station, TV 18, on White County Video. They have worked to improve programming and also are learning the technical skills in running the station. Broadcast students attend the Student Television Network Convention in Los Angeles each year. As members of the National Scholastic Press Association and Journalism in Education, the students have attended national conventions. At the national convention in Kansas City, one student won a superior award for on-site editing. *Lion Press* was named All-American with five marks of distinction, the highest award the National Scholastic Press Association gives. The students are also members of the Arkansas Scholastic Press Association. They attend this convention and compete in on-site contests and mail-in contests. Numerous other awards in other contests were won including a Superior in general excellence, Broadcast Journalist of the Year, and second place Broadcast Journalist of the Year. The newspaper has been named All-Arkansas six times, and Lion TV has also won All-Arkansas twice.

**National Honor Society:** The National Honor Society has been affiliated with the National Honor Society for Secondary Schools since the charter date of April 2, 1932. This organization is made up of students who have completed one semester of the junior year with at least a 3.5 grade point average in the College Preparatory or College Prep Plus Diploma track. The purpose of this society is to promote enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character. These goals are achieved through various activities planned throughout the school year such as weeding the flower beds around the high school, purchasing Christmas gifts for three children selected from the local Angel Tree organization, sponsoring an Easter food drive, and other service opportunities as needed. Each member also completes an independent service project.

**Quiz Bowl:** Quiz Bowl is governed by the Arkansas Governor's Quiz Bowl Association and its constitution, by-laws, and rules. The Quiz Bowl team consists of 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders who compete locally, regionally, and statewide in academic tournaments and matches. The students practice one day per week after school with regional tournaments scheduled in March, state classifications in April, and the over-all tournament in late April. Students prepare for the matches and practices by studying practice manuals, which are updated yearly by the adviser. Any student may participate in Quiz Bowl; however, the final eight team members are chosen based on attendance at practices, performance during invitational tournaments and practice matches, and over-all attitude and enthusiasm.

**Spanish Honorary:** The Spanish Honorary is known as the Miguel Hernandez Chapter of the Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica. The society is sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. Membership is based on scholarship in general and scholarship in Spanish. A student who has studied a minimum of three semesters of Spanish and who has a B+ average the third semester of Spanish is eligible. The student must have also maintained a 3.0 grade point average prior to selection. The Spanish Department has one fundraiser in the fall. The money raised is used for class activities and fees for foreign language festivals throughout the year. Students who do not participate in the fundraiser and wish to attend any festivals have to pay their own expenses

**Student Council:** The Student Council is composed of the president, vice-president, secretary, and four representatives from grades 9-12, the president of each club, and the president, vice-president, secretary, and historian of the entire student body. The student council is a service organization for the school and the community. Each morning, to begin the school day, a student

council member leads the Pledge of Allegiance over the intercom system. Every year the student council purchases turkeys to be given to all classified personnel at Searcy High School for Thanksgiving. At Christmas the student council participates in providing Christmas gifts to a child through the Angel Tree Project and sings Christmas carols at the two local nursing homes. Members provide servers at the Searcy Chamber of Commerce dinner and the Hall of Honor banquet held in the Sullards Annex Cafeteria. They also receive many requests to serve as guides for functions at Searcy High School.

**Yearbook Staff:** *The Lion* is an annual publication of the yearbook staff, which is comprised of students in grades 9-12. These students apply for positions on the staff and are selected based on teacher recommendations, academic stability, creativity, and motivation. These students are trained in *In Design*, *Photo Shop*, *Imaging*, basic computer skills, principles of layout and design, copywriting, and photography. In-school workshops, as well as a weeklong summer seminar provided by Harding University and Josten's Publishing Company, serve as training facilities for the staff and advisers. Staff members meet daily and also utilize after-school hours and weekends to finalize shipments. *The Lion* is a 280-page publication, which is delivered in May to approximately 800 students who have ordered the yearbook. All sales and ordering are done locally by the staff members who have sold advertising to supplement the cost of production. Recent staffs have been recognized at the Arkansas Press Association Convention with superior and outstanding awards of excellence. The current publisher of *The Lion* is Josten's Publishing of Topeka, Kansas.

**Youth to Youth:** Youth to Youth is an anti-drug and anti-violence club, which promotes drug free lifestyles, healthy decision-making skills, and good character. Red Ribbon Week activities are designed by Youth to Youth members to influence high school students to make good decisions concerning drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, as well as violence prevention. Students participate in an annual coin drive to raise money for charities and promote a spirit of good will among Searcy High School students. Prom Promise is another Youth to Youth club anti-drug program. It encourages high school students to be drug free before, during, and after prom.