

High School Schedule Information

Background: the decision to change

The current daily schedule provides eight 44-minute periods each day. One of those periods is lunch, resulting in students needing to choose between lunch and class. Significant problems with this schedule were identified during our New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Accreditation Visit in April, 2008 (FLHS) and October, 2009 (FWHS). Recommendations from NEASC included the following:

- Develop a schedule that provides opportunities for teacher collaboration, review of student work, and the development of interdisciplinary instruction. (Instruction; FWHS)
- Implement a schedule that supports the mission and expectation for student learning, increases student/teacher contact time, extends instructional time, provides greater access to electives, provides time for teacher collaboration and includes a designated lunch time for all students. (Leadership and Organization, FWHS)
- Establish a common planning time for all teachers to enable them to share best instructional practices, common assessments and other concerns. (Leadership and Organization, FLHS)
- Implement a variety of strategies to engage students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills in all classrooms. (Instruction, FLHS)

In addition to the current schedule requiring students to choose between lunch and class, another problem with the current schedule is the hectic pace of every day. With eight 44-minute classes every day, it is difficult for teachers to plan and deliver instruction that generates a deep understanding of the content.

Prior to the NEASC visits, an effort was made to address needed changes in the schedule. After a significant amount of work, that effort ended without success in 2007-8 due to significant budget constraints in a difficult economic climate.

In November 2013 we again started a process of looking for a new schedule. We built on the prior effort by reviewing the Guiding Principles established previously and determined that these still applied as the most compelling reasons to pursue a change. We hired a consultant whose purpose was to ensure that we considered all possible options and also to verify possible staffing implications of the schedule.

After reviewing our guiding principles, examining research, drawing on internal expertise, speaking with other districts and discussing options, the “Day 1/Day 2

Schedule” was selected as the best solution to meet the needs of the high schools for the 2015-16 school year.

Our Guiding Principles

- Increase in overall instructional time
- Lunch for all students
- Improved pace of the day
- Longer instructional periods
- More access to electives
- Opportunities for Increased requirements for graduation
- Opportunities for collaboration by teachers

As part of this process, we are committed to providing professional development to teachers in order to help them plan lessons that take advantage of longer blocks. This professional development will include department-specific sessions on planning for a longer block, purchase of resource material for each high school’s professional library, visits to schools where this schedule has been used successfully for many years, and meetings with teachers from those districts who can share their strategies for lesson planning.

Benefits for our students

- Increased opportunities for a wide variety of instructional strategies in all classrooms
- Increased time for authentic, problem based assessments
- Appropriate time necessary to teach all students 21st Century Skills
- Maximum of four preparations per day for students
- More course options with fewer conflicts
- Less time spent between classes during passing times
- Increased instructional hours for students
- A designated lunch period for all students

High School Schedule

Day 1: Periods 1, 3, 5, 7

Day 2: Periods 2, 4, 6, 8

Lunch scheduled during periods 5 and 6.

			DAY 1	DAY 2
7:30—8:55			Period 1	Period 2
9:00—10:25			Period 3	Period 4
10:30—10:37			Homeroom	Homeroom
<i>Lunch</i> 10:39 - 11:09	<i>Class</i> 10:42 - 11:25	<i>Class</i> 10:42 - 12:08	Period 5	Period 6
<i>Class</i> 11:14 - 12:40	<i>Lunch</i> 11:25 - 11:55			
	<i>Class</i> 11:58 - 12:40	<i>Lunch</i> 12:10 - 12:40		
12:45—2:10			Period 7	Period 8