

May 30, 2017

Good morning

I am writing today to inform you about a change in scheduling at the elementary schools next year. Three years ago the elementary schools began a five-day rotational schedule. The purpose of this schedule was to ensure that students would not miss classes which previously had been scheduled to a day of the week. For example, students who had physical education on Mondays more frequently lost that class. This change promoted more consistency in each of our specialist areas.

For next year we are implementing a 6-day rotational schedule. The purpose of the change is to provide our teachers with more additional planning time as it allows us to lengthen some class times for music and physical education classes. It will provide students more time in music and physical education over the year while the total time in art class will increase by two hours in kindergarten and be reduced by two hours in grades 1 to 3 and by one hour in grades 4 and 5. All students in grades K to 4 will have 2 40-minute music and physical education classes every 6 days. Students in grade 5 will have two 40-minute physical education classes and one 40-minute music class every 6 days. Art will be 40 minutes long in kindergarten, 50 minutes long in grades 1 to 3 with the period extending to 70 minutes in grades 4 and 5.

The specific benefits of the 6-day schedule include

- More planning time for teachers K-3. All current 30-minute planning periods will increase to 40 minutes.
- More opportunities for specialists to try instructional strategies that they cannot fit into smaller blocks of time.
- More opportunities to schedule academics across six days (instead of five.) With academic blocks of different lengths, the creation of interdisciplinary blocks (technology, library, social studies and language arts, etc.).
- Like the A-E schedule, not losing time due to snow days, holidays, etc.

Band and orchestra classes, as well as OT and PT services will remain on a Monday-Friday schedule. We are currently working to make adjustments to our special education plans to ensure equivalent service hours.

One concern we have heard is that students will have difficulty remembering the letter day. We have not seen this issue with the current A-E schedule and we do not expect it to occur with the A-F schedule. We will send home a 6-day schedule at the beginning of the year and we can also post the letter date on school web sites for reference. From personal experience I know I need the reminder more than my children do; we will make it available to you.

If you have any questions on the 6-day schedule, please contact your building principal.

Thank you,

Mike Cummings

Director of Elementary Education