

## **Research Brief**

### **Master Scheduling for Small High Schools (900-1500 students)**

**Question:** What do various master schedules look like in small high schools?

**Summary of Findings:** Providing a high quality instructional program where the needs of students are met and preparing them for success in the world beyond the high school are paramount in developing a school's master schedule. Throughout the past, there have been periodic movements to extend the school day and year in order to better meet these goals. What research has found is that there is little to no relationship between pre-allotted time and student achievement; there is some relationship between engaged time and achievement; and there is a larger relationship between academic learning time and achievement. The research also found that more time than imagined is spent on non-instructional tasks such as making announcements, taking attendance, managing the classroom, and/or disciplining students, etc. Time is an essential component of the learning process, however, the critical element is how much quality time is spent on appropriate work. Regardless of how the master schedule is set up, students need to be actively engaged in instructionally meaningful assignments.

#### **Major Findings and Conclusions:**

A small sample of ten high schools' (ranging in population from 951-1570) master schedules were obtained and examined in the following areas: structure, how many periods a day, starting and finishing times, and length of periods.

1. The most common schedule was the 6 period day with in class time ranging from 55-57 minutes, with school beginning from 8:00-8:15 and ending between 2:40-2:55.
2. One schedule has an 8 period day with 50 minute periods.
3. Several schedules have a zero period offered at the beginning of the day, prior to first period. During this time strength conditioning, ROTC, auto tech, music, and world affairs are offered.
4. One school offers two additional 55 minute class periods at the end of the traditional day from 3:20-5:20.
5. Three of the schools are on block schedules, each with different configurations.
  - a. One schedule has a 7 period day on Mondays when all classes meet for 48 minutes plus there is a 14 minute advisory slot. On Wednesdays and Fridays, periods 3, 4, and 6 meet for 90 minutes. On these days there is also a 10 minute advisory period and a 50 tutorial slot. On Tuesdays and Thursdays periods 1, 2, 5, and 7 meet for 90 minutes. On Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, school is in session from 8:00-3:20. On Wednesdays and Fridays, the classes run from 8:00-2:40.

- b. Another schedule has 7 period days on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays for 55 minutes. On Wednesdays, periods 1,3, and 5 meet for 95 minutes. On Thursdays, periods 2, 4, and 6 meet for 95 minutes and there is a 95 minute tutor time slot from 1:25-3:00.
- c. The third school is on the standard 4 x 4 block, where classes are 90 minutes long. A zero period is offered from 7:00-7:45.

6. The FTE ranged from 15/1 to 22/1.
7. At most of the schools, teachers have a daily preparation period from 50-60 minutes.
8. The number of credits needed to graduate are either from 22.5-24 or 220.

### **Online Resources:**

- **Changing Times**  
Questions about improving student achievement in block scheduling are asked and explored in this article.  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2001/10/03/05block.h21.html>
- **Is It Just A Matter of Time?**  
This article examines the research about time in the classroom and ways to best keep focused on student learning.  
[http://www.wested.org/online\\_pubs/timeandlearning/3\\_research.html](http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/timeandlearning/3_research.html)
- **Time and Learning: Making Time Count**  
This looks at three key elements that are suggested to make a difference in student learning: classroom management, appropriate curriculum and instruction, and increasing student motivation.  
Go to Resources on the Web, then connect to this document in a PDF file.  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2001/10/03/05block.h21.html>

### **High Schools**

The addresses that contain <http://www.melissadata.com> include general information about the specific school including its locale (urban, suburban, rural), FTE, Title I eligibility, number of students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch, and total population in each grade broken out by ethnicity.

- Albert Lea Central School, MN

Brief profile of a 4 x 4 block schedule.

<http://education.umn.edu/carei/Blockscheduling/Schools/AlbertLee.html>

- Arlington High School, WA  
<http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/schools.asp?Schoolnum=530024000023>
- Ashland High School, Ashland, OR  
<http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/schools.asp?Schoolnum=410156000401>
- Ashland High School, OR  
Home page  
<http://www.ashland.k12.or.us/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=41>
- Broomfield High School, CO  
<http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/schools.asp?Schoolnum=080249000103>
- Broomfield High School, CO  
Home page  
<http://www.bvsd.k12.co.us/schools/broomfieldhigh/index.html>
- Canon City High School, CO  
<http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/schools.asp?Schoolnum=080294000211>
- Canon City High School, CO  
Home page  
<http://cchsweb.org/>
- Centralia High School, WA  
<http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/schools.asp?Schoolnum=530114000206>
- Centralia High School, WA  
Home page  
<http://www.centraliahs.org/>
- Cheney High School, WA  
<http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/schools.asp?Schoolnum=530123000223>
- Cheney High School, WA  
Home page

<http://www.cheneysd.org/High%20School/schedules.html>

- Cheyenne Mountain High School, CO  
<http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/schools.asp?Schoolnum=080294000211>
- Cheyenne Mountain High School, CO  
Home page  
<http://cmhs.cmsd.k12.co.us/cmhs/default.html>
- El Camino Fundamental High School, CA  
Go to Home, bell schedule  
<http://www.sanjuan.edu/schools/elcamino/>
- Ellensberg High School, WA  
<http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/schools.asp?Schoolnum=530246000365>
- Oceola Middle/High School Schedule, NB  
<http://www.esu7.org/~oweb/class.htm>
- San Juan High School, CA  
Go to Handbook for bell schedule and graduation requirements  
<http://www.sanjuan.edu/schools/sanjuan/index.html>
- Sir Frances Drake High School, CA  
Home page  
<http://drake.marin.k12.ca.us/>

Date: 1/05  
Maine, Farmington

Submitted By: Dr. Karen Walker, University of

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