

## *South Paulding High School*

### *Frequently Asked Questions regarding the 4X4 Block Schedule*

I have the following issues/questions/concerns:

Q: If a student fails a block – how will he/she move on and be able to make it up?

A: Students will be scheduled for their courses for the entire year. When a student fails a first semester course, the schedule may be adjusted to allow them to retake the failed course second semester, or they may wait until the following year to retake the course. Any required courses failed throughout the year will be scheduled into the following school year's schedule. There are many factors that go into these scheduling decisions including the availability of space in the students schedule and the availability of space in the needed class. The 4X4 Block will make most schedule adjustments easier than they are currently with the Hybrid Schedule since classes do not overlap one another.

Q: If a student fails a core subject in the fall, could they make it up in the Spring? (they would have 3 core classes in Spring).

A: Regardless of when the course is rescheduled, failing a core class will require a student to add an additional core class later. Yes, they would then have an additional core one semester in the place of an elective.

Q: Isn't it harder to learn lots of info of a subject over a small amount of time instead of smaller amounts of info during the day over a longer period (entire school year)?

A: There are trade-offs with any potential schedule. A seven-period day, for example requires students to keep up with and complete work and assessments for 7 classes, but the classes are spread over the course of the entire year. On the 4X4 Block, students will only have 4 classes at one time, but will complete the course content in one semester rather than the entire year. They will be required to learn more over a period of time in one particular class but will have fewer classes to focus their attention.

Q: What do I tell my child when they are in class and may have trouble with a concept, but the teacher says they must "move on"?

A: Teachers are expected to support their students as fully as possible to master the content. Students are encouraged to communicate any trouble their having directly to their teachers and to seek help early when they recognize they may be falling behind. Please communicate with the teacher and help to arrange time for your child to attend before and/or after school tutoring sessions so that he/she can master the concept and be successful.

Q: What if you are graduating and the class you need to take to finish is only offered in the Fall Semester but you are unable to get in the class in the fall. What do you do?

A: Scheduling is done very carefully to first give all students the required graduation courses, then their requested electives. There may be times, as there are now with the Hybrid Schedule, where students must decide between given choices but all students will receive the needed classes for graduation.

Q: Can you take Band only in Fall semester?

- A: Students in the band will need to take band both semesters as it is a year-long season.
- Q: If the student does dual enrollment, would they only be on campus for 2 classes? (Assuming the state still requires 2 dual enrollment classes for the state to pay for the class).
- A: Dual enrollment students are required to take 4 classes per semester. Those can be any combination of dual enrollment and high school classes. If a student takes 2 dual enrollment classes, they would take 2 classes at the high school.
- Q: How will this effect milestone test? When will they take them?
- A: All full credit block Milestone courses will test at the end of the course – either in December or in May. The only half credit Milestone course, Economics, will test as closely as possible to its ending. Students taking the course from August – October (1<sup>st</sup> 9-weeks) and from January – March (3<sup>rd</sup> 9-weeks) will not have to wait until the end of the semester to test.
- Q: Exam exemptions? Will student still be able to exempt finals?
- A: Yes, we will still have exam exemptions. We are currently deciding if the exemption policy needs to be adjusted to fit a 4X4 Block Schedule and will publish the policy in our student handbook and on our website when the decision is finalized.
- Q: Will it affect extra - curricular activities?
- A: Extra-curricular activities and athletics will not be changed based on the schedule format used to deliver instruction.
- Q: Will end of school time be the same?
- A: The start and end times for the school day will remain the same, 8:35 - 3:25.
- Q: Will there still be advisement?
- A: Yes, we will still hold Advisement on a weekly basis. There are no plans to change the day of the week or the length of the Advisement and initial discussions indicate that we will place Advisement between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> block. The specific schedules will be published in our handbook as the specific times are very important to any student with a non-traditional schedule such as Minimum Day, Work-Based-Learning, and Dual Enrollment.
- Q: Will there be two 9 week courses a semester?
- A: Each semester is divided into two nine-week grading periods. Most courses last throughout the semester and only have a progress reporting at the nine-weeks point. The exception is for the half-credit courses such as Economics & Government or Health/Personal Fitness. These half-credit courses will only run for nine-weeks so students will end one and start the next at that point.
- Q: How much will it affect lunch times?
- A: Our initial draft of the bell schedule shows lunches starting 25 minutes later on the 4X4 Block than they currently start.
- Q: Will a student be allowed to request classes? For example: Spanish I (Fall) & Spanish II (Spring) – same school year. If the class is not full. Since Spanish is an elective.

A: Yes, sequential electives such as Spanish 1 and 2 can be taken as described, provided the requests can be accommodated. The student would need room in their schedule to accommodate this request and, as stated, there must be room in the class.

It is also suggested that the four-year plan be considered when selecting electives. It may work out better for some students to take two sequential electives in one year, but for others, it may work out better to take them in separate years.

Q: Can a student request a core class as an elective?

A: If there is room in the class, it is possible that a student could do this. They would need to discuss their specific goals and reasons for wanting to do this with their counselor.

Q: I have a student who struggles with Math so skipping a semester could be hurtful. Options for frequent tutoring to retain info between semesters.

A: We offer tutoring sessions for students that are enrolled in that class at that time. We do not intend to offer traditional, face-to-face sessions during the semester when students are not enrolled in the subject area. However, we do have multiple resources that can be used to keep your student's retention of information more current.

Q: Will the amount of homework per subject increase with the longer class?

A: It is difficult to give a general answer to this question as this will vary by class. Teachers will continue to use their professional judgment when assigning work to students. Their goal is not to assign a given amount of work but to assign the amount of work necessary to reach the expected level of performance.

Q: Absences: How will make up work be handled? If I miss 2 days = 4 hours. Do they get double time to make that up?

Q: Extended – Illnesses?

A: Our makeup procedures will remain the same. Students may experience an increase in what is missed per day per class, but they will have fewer classes that they miss to balance the workload. It will be important to avoid absences if possible and to seek makeup work during longer, unavoidable absences.

Q: Substitutes – how will they handle double time in there?

A: Just as it is now with our current schedule, it will remain important for our substitutes to connect with the students and to engage them in the work left by the teacher. It will be very important for all teachers to leave well-planned, carefully constructed lesson plans and activities for an absence. Thirdly, it will be important for students to do their part and follow the instructions given by the teacher and the substitute.

Q: Could a freshman take online classes during the summer?

A: Incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders can only take online classes if they are recovering a high school class that was taken unsuccessfully in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.