

# The future of scheduling

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Times are changing. With the constant integration of new technology, it is imperative that high achieving schools adapt with the current notion in order to stay up to date and remain competitive among the elite. Among the different changes and reforms done to schools nationwide, block scheduling has proven to have a substantial fit into some schools.

Block scheduling is similar to the current scheduling system; however, the school day consists of half the periods with double the length, and classes rotate every other day. With North Allegheny recently being selected with the prestigious award of the seventh best public school in the nation, it is more important now than ever to live up to the position. Block scheduling could provide the extra push that is needed to improve the school district to the top of the top. The North Allegheny High Schools should adopt the block scheduling format opposed to traditional scheduling because block scheduling would provide less stress among students, create a superior learning environment, and benefit teachers. Homework after school causes a great deal of stress for most students, and block scheduling can provide a solution to the homework epidemic.

Traditional scheduling can consist of up to eight or nine different subjects per school day, whereas block scheduling has four or five. If every teacher under a traditional schedule issues even a meager amount of homework, the total can pile up to almost a second day of school at home. With fewer subjects during the school day, the homework amount after school can theoretically be cut in half. While teenagers should be challenged, their brains were not built for this type of monotonous academic rigour. Clifton Parker, a Social Sciences writer for Stanford News, provided an article about homework that <https://assignbuster.com/the-future-of-scheduling/>

was backed by research done in March of 2014 at Stanford University. The research studied the effects of excessive homework on high school students in a high achieving school district, much like North Allegheny.

The research found that lengthy amounts of homework each night can lead to greater stress, reductions in health, and less family time and other necessities to a healthy mind (Parker). Excessive homework has turned the beloved honor roll students into zombies, which is simply immoral. Similarly, a more recent study was conducted at the Brown University School of Medicine in August of 2015, and stated that “ primary school children have a homework load 3X the amount recommended by the National Education Association (NEA)” (Study). Primary school is an awfully young age to be relentlessly bashed over the head with overly extensive cultivation. Do schools suddenly feel the need to rob children of their free time and creativity? Block scheduling, however, provides a superior alternative.

In 1997, the Public Schools of North Carolina conducted a survey among various schools and students whose schedules were either traditional or block, and found that “ students in block scheduled schools report significantly less time on homework than students in non-blocked schools” (Block). With less time on homework, students would now have more time to focus on creativity and overall well being. This not only would help the kids, but it would help the school. Along with decreasing stress, fewer class subjects enable students to learn at an increased rate and retain more knowledge. A school day under traditional scheduling throws an excessive amount of information on students on many different subjects, to the point where the brain is being pulled in various directions by English, math, social

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studies, etc. Block scheduling introduces fewer class subjects during a given day, and as a result allows more information to be absorbed.

According to the National Education Association, with block scheduling, “Students have more time for reflection and less information to process over the course of a school day” (Research). Similarly, Michael D. Rettig, a director and professor at the College of Education in James Madison University, wrote in an article on block scheduling with the School Superintendents Association that “consistent evidence shows that students’ grades improve and the number of students on the honor roll increases” (Rettig). The adapted form of scheduling also introduces less class changes, which provides for longer class times and a reduction of behavioral issues in the halls. The Center for Public Education provided useful information on the controversy by performing research on block scheduling in the fall of 2006, and they found, “Less time is spent on transitions between classes and classroom management activities, such as calling attendance and organizing and focusing the class” (Making). With less time spent in the halls, not only do students gain more class time but there is less opportunity for bullying in the halls.

Has the school not spent the past decade implementing anti-bullying programs and seminars, most to no avail? Let block scheduling be the knight in shining armor. Let block scheduling reproach bullying. Let block scheduling save the school! Block scheduling not only benefits the student body, but also ameliorates teachers as well. The average school day can be quite hectic for students; however, the role of teachers is often overlooked.

This form of scheduling can drastically help teachers, which ultimately betters the students and the school as a whole.

With longer class periods, teachers now have more time to instruct and build relationships with students. The National Education Association reviewed prior research done on the effects of block scheduling, and stated that “ teachers see fewer students during the day, giving them more time for individualized instruction” (Research). Increased time for individualized instruction directly leads to increased performance by students, which ultimately eases the jobs of teachers. The NEA also stated that in addition to more one on one time, block scheduling also allows teachers more time to plan their lessons and lectures (Research). This increase in planning time can alleviate significant stress teachers experience when they fall behind on lesson planning, and in turn benefit their lives. After all, teachers have feelings too, right? Lastly, lessons during typical 40 minute classes are often cut short due to simply not enough time to cover the needed amount of material to complete the lesson.

Block scheduling provides an easy solution by doubling the class period length, which allows teachers to complete their lesson. The Center for Public Education shined light on the matter and added, “ With more time, teachers can delve more deeply into subject matter, because they are no longer pressed by the clock to squeeze as much content as possible into a single lesson” (Making). The reformed version of scheduling clearly eases the jobs of teachers, without lessening their roles as educators. Consequently, the increased individual instruction, improved lesson planning time, and reduction of stress most definitely helps those who have dedicated their lives

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to teaching the future of America. Even after the continuity of strong evidence that supports block scheduling, a common and very reasonable argument that is presented is that students will see their teachers only two or three times a week, which can create a lack of day to day consistency and lower student to teacher relationships. While it is true that students see certain teachers less often throughout the week, they would, however, see their teachers for twice the daily class time.

In fact, according to the highly respected Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), whose employees have dedicated their lives to the further education of America's youth, " Block scheduling may result in stronger relationships between students and teachers, as well as improved school environments and achievement as measured by student grades" (Effects). Block scheduling is clearly the first domino that needs to be pushed, and the school and society will reap the benefits that follow. While it may be a clever argument, the ASCD digresses. Consequently, block scheduling is the obvious superior over the traditional method, for it introduces less stress among students, enables students learning capabilities, and improves the jobs of teachers. Clear research has been done across the country, and as a result more and more schools have begun adopting the new method.

North Allegheny should be next on the list, for it would benefit the school immensely. Email the North Allegheny School District superintendent Robert J. Scherrer with your displeasures with the current scheduling system, for change is made one step at a time. Works Cited " Block Scheduling in North Carolina: Implementation, Teaching, and Impact Issues." Public Schools of <https://assignbuster.com/the-future-of-scheduling/>

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