

HSSC Recommendation

On November 13, 2018, the Issaquah School District's High School Scheduling Committee (HSSC) met for its final session and came to a recommendation for the Superintendent regarding a high school schedule. At the committee's first meeting in June 2018, the group set the threshold of 80% to ratify a recommendation for a schedule, and also specified that all voting on a schedule would be done in a closed ballot fashion. At the meeting on November 13th, all committee members gave their final input on the process leading up to the closed ballot vote. After the vote, technical team member Donna Hood (Executive Director of High Schools) counted the 10 ballots, and after, technical team member Martin Turney (Executive Director of Operations) counted the closed ballots a second time. Both technical team members recorded the same outcome, which was:

- The modified 7 period day with 2 days of blocking and flex time received 8 votes
- The Liberty High School 8 period A/B schedule received one vote
- There was a ballot that cast a vote for the 7 period day with 2 days blocking for Issaquah and Skyline HS's with LHS remaining on their current schedule

Based on the closed ballot vote, the committee made the recommendation of a modified 7 period schedule with 2 days blocking which received 8 votes and met the threshold for a recommendation.

While this recommendation signifies a departure for all the schools from their current schedules, the committee felt that it represents an appreciation for blocked periods. The committee also acknowledged that LHS may have to adjust course offerings thoughtfully in order to minimize any impact to elective programming, or reduce the total number of times a class is offered; however, the committee felt that the gains listed above will have a positive impact on student learning and teacher effectiveness and that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. In addition, committee members wanted to stress that the Issaquah School District is one cohesive organization and that supporting teacher effectiveness has a strong, clear and positive connection to student learning.

The committee recommends the modified 7 period day with 2 days blocking for the following reasons:

- Per the committee's charter, the district can afford the 7 period day with the passing of the February 2018 levy.
- It maximizes contact time per course while maximizing the number of times a class meets per week (4x), still allowing for some blocking (1x per week per class) and flex time.
- It reduces the impact of a student's absence on his/her learning because the course meets four times per week
- It allows for depth of instruction on blocked periods two times per week (especially for science labs, Socratic Seminars, class discussions, writing instruction or drafting, art projects, etc.)
- It allows high schools to share staff, students and resources
- It allows for the high school teaching staffs across schools to share lessons, units and strategies with each other in their district supported, regular professional development sessions
- It provides 28 opportunities to earn the state mandated 24 credits
- It allows for interests to develop and be explored while retaining an academic focus
- It brings equity to the prep time and caseloads across the high school staffs (see chart; for the purposes of the chart we chose a class size of 28; we acknowledge classes could be smaller or larger)

- This increased prep time for all teachers should enhance the kind of feedback teachers provide to students and reduce the time needed to get student work back to students
- It allows for building principals to use flex time for regularly scheduled interruptions (assemblies, drills, surveys) thus not impacting instructional time OR impacting instructional time equally (by placing such an interruption on a 7 period day)

Schedule Type	Prep in Minutes	Total per Week
4x8 A/B day	4 days (M, T, Th, F) = 90 min per day 1 day (W) = 70 min per day	360 + 70 = 430 per week 430 min/168 students (28 per 6 periods) = 2.56 min per week per student
6 periods	4 days (M, T, Th, F) = 50 min per day 1 day (W) = 45 min per day	200 + 45 = 245 245 min per week 245 min/140 students (28 per 5 periods) = 1.75 min per week per student
7 period with 2 days blocking	2 days (M, Th) = 100 min per day 1 day (F) = 90 min per day 2 days (T, W) = 80 min per day	200 + 90 + 160 = 450 min per week 450 min/140 students (28 per 5 periods) = 3.21 min per week per student

For this schedule to be most effective the committee suggests strongly the following:

1. High school specific professional development on how best to use instructional time, especially on blocked periods.
2. Academic interventions should occur within the school day whenever possible (i.e. during flex time).
3. That all students be required to remain on campus during flex time; flex time should be treated as part of the school day.
4. The particular development of flex time should be processed by individual buildings with academic support and access to teachers and counselors being high on the list of priorities, followed closely by social and emotional learning. The research reviewed by the committee suggests the use of flex time in a schedule is most successful when a school staff has buy in as to how long and how often it occurs and for what purpose.
5. Support will be needed for the building principals around facilities due to the increase in staffing.