



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendent Greg Baker

FROM: Steve Clarke, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Co-Chair; Jeannie Hayden, Administrator on Special Assignment, Co-Chair

ON BEHALF OF: High School Schedule Implementation Advisory Group

RE: Recommended Implementation for 2017-18

DATE: Jan. 6, 2017

We are pleased to present the following document that provides information about the High School Schedule Implementation Advisory Group's process and outlines a set of recommendations related to the new schedule starting in the 2017-18 school year.

The document is organized in five sections:

- I. Introduction and context
- II. Scope, schedule and planning structure
- III. Summary of advisory group work
- IV. Recommendations regarding graduation requirements, time schedule, student support, instructional implications, and PE waiver process.
- V. Conclusion

### **I. Introduction and context**

After several years of engagement at the high school level around schedules, increasing course offerings, and bell times, in the spring of 2016, you announced that for the first time in history, all four high schools would

move to the same schedule. The plan included moving forward with an eight-period schedule beginning the 2017-18 school year, at the same time that our schools' new start/end times go into effect. The eight-period schedule, also referred to as a 4×8 schedule, consists of an eight-class schedule with four classes alternating every other day.

## **II. Scope, schedule and planning structure**

A call for applications to serve on this group was publicly extended to students, staff, parents and neighbors.

The High School Schedule Implementation Advisory Group consists of the following members:

- Steve Clarke, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Co-Chair
- Jeannie Hayden, Administrator on Special Assignment, Co-Chair
- High school administrators:
  - Linda Miller – Bellingham High School
  - Jeanette Grisham—Bellingham High School
  - Byron Gerard – Options High School
  - Michelle Kuss-Cybula – Sehome High School
  - James Everett – Squalicum High School
  - Marty Atkins – Sehome High School
- High school teachers:
  - Scott Smartt, Bellingham
  - Sarah Spitzer, Bellingham
  - Leslie Adamson, Options
  - Kirstin Doud, Sehome
  - Sonia Bell, Sehome
  - Alan Doud, Squalicum
  - David Kish, Squalicum
- Special education teacher:
  - Mary Lippiatt
- Parent:
  - Holly Miller, Kulshan
- Students:
  - Jace Taylor, Bellingham
  - Eric Newcomer, Sehome
  - Carl Peterson, Squalicum
- School registrar:
  - Robin Montague, Squalicum
- Counseling department leaders:
  - Sharon Gilbert, Bellingham
  - Hana Schutz, Sehome
  - Aramis Johnson, Squalicum
- Technology/Skyward liaison:
  - Katie McGrew
- Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Mike Copland
- Department of Teaching and Learning Directors
  - Charisse Berner

- Keith Schacht
- Assistant Superintendent, Steve Clarke
- Communications and Community Relations Representative, Jacqueline Brawley
- CTE Director, Jeff Tetrick

The group was given the following tasks as part of its scope of work:

**Purpose(s)/Goal:** The Bellingham Promise and the implementation of the new high school schedule will enhance the experiences of high school students and support us in developing a shared vision for an innovative high school program that is exciting, compelling and engaging for students. “We collectively commit that our students... will graduate from our schools prepared for success in the global community... and ready for the widest range of educational and vocational options....”

**Basis for Establishment:**

In an effort to improve student’s academic success, health, and elective options, Bellingham Public Schools plans to adjust bell times and implement a new high school schedule beginning in fall 2017.

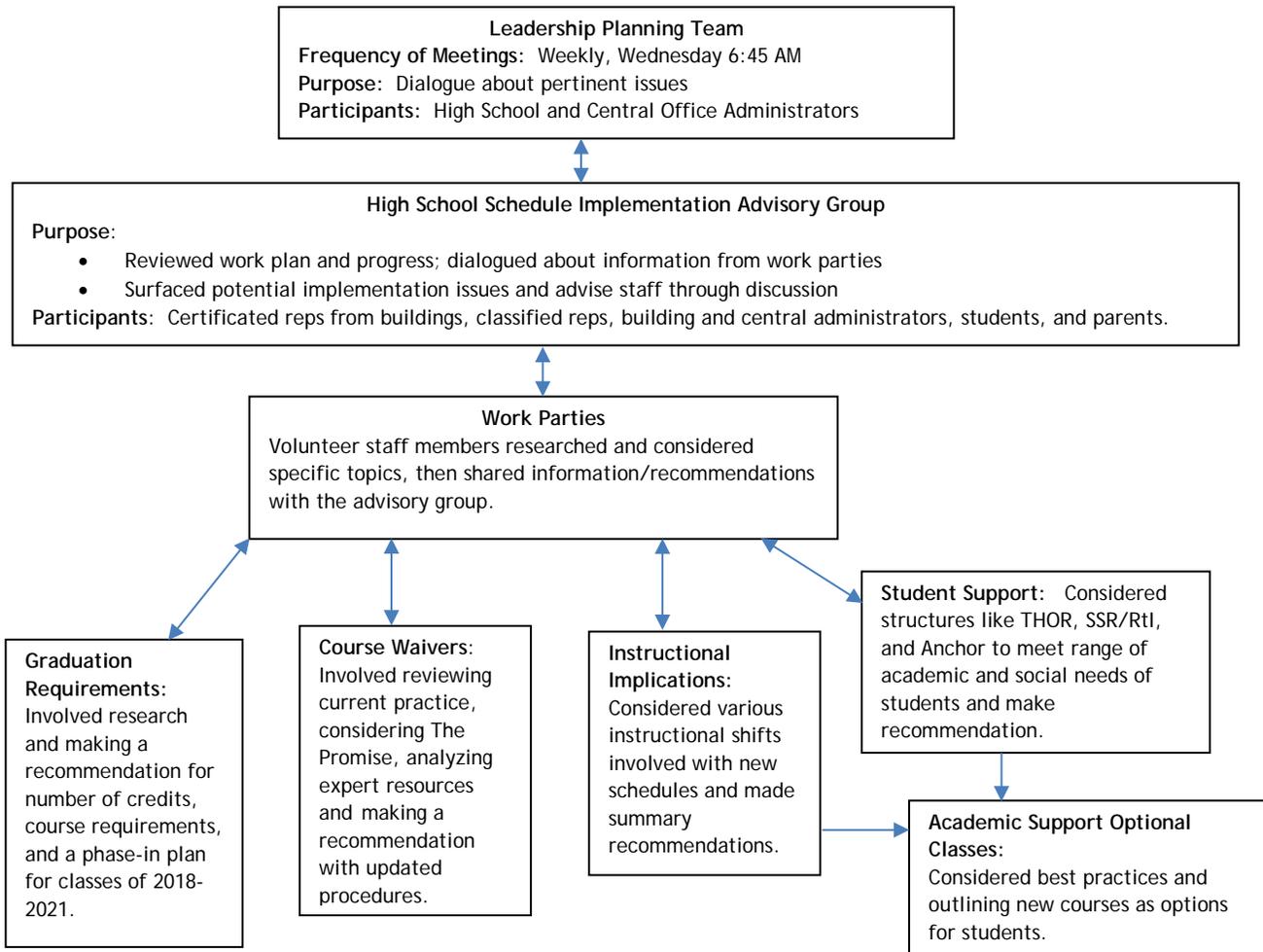
<p><b>2017-18 High School Day</b> 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. (6.75 hours)</p>	<p><b>2017-18 Schedule</b> 4X8 (four periods per day X eight periods per semester)</p>
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**Decision-Making Process and Timeline:**

- Review work plan and progress
- Surface potential implementation issues and advise staff through discussion (Sept. 2016-Jan. 2017)
- Prepare a summary report and recommendations for Executive Team and Superintendent Greg Baker by the end of first semester of the 2016-17 school year (Jan. 2017)

## Planning Structure:

To facilitate the successful implementation of the new schedule, we established a leadership planning team, an advisory group, and work parties as illustrated:



### III. Summary of advisory group work

**Plan of Work:** The High School Schedule Implementation Advisory Group met five times from September to December 2016.

- Sept. 1 – Minutes
- Sept. 22 – Minutes
- Oct. 20 – Minutes
- Nov. 17 – Minutes
- Dec. 8 – Minutes

#### **IV. Recommendations regarding new schedule outcomes, graduation requirements, time schedule, student support, instructional implications, and PE waiver process**

##### **A. New Schedule Outcomes**

The new schedule will support students in:

1. personalizing high school educational plans. The new schedule increases flexibility for students to explore and develop areas of interest and passion and create intentional, individualized pathways.
2. being challenged and inspired to take rigorous courses (differentiated with staff support).
3. equitably accessing courses. The new schedule will allow students to access new/more courses at their home high schools, intra-district sites and other programs in our community.
4. graduating in a timely manner.
5. addressing health and wellness issues. The new schedule adheres to medical research around teenage sleep patterns.
6. graduating prepared for success in the global community and ready for the widest range of educational and vocational options.
7. meeting homework requirements, thus allowing time for activities, family, and personal endeavors. Preparing for the new schedule gives us the opportunity to examine the role of homework and consider a goal to help students develop habits of a balanced life.

##### **B. Graduation Requirements**

The advisory group supported the Graduation Requirement Work Party's recommendation, which was to:

- increase the number of credits to graduate to 30, which is beyond what the state requires (24).\* The implementation timeline for the new requirements varies between the classes of 2018 and 2021. (See the transition plan for classes 2018, 2019 and 2020 [at this link](#), at the bottom of page 1.) It's important to note that principals will be able to waive up to two credits for students demonstrating hardship or extenuating circumstances.
- limit the number of new requirements (by subject) in favor of student choice (increasing elective credits from five to 9.5);
- add a .5 technical literacy class (as part of Career and Technical Education) in ninth grade where students will learn technical skills necessary to be successful in other high school and post-high school endeavors. In addition to receiving instruction in Microsoft Office, students will become familiar with the school network, learn about internet ethics, online etiquette, how to care for and maintain their devices, and more. This course also supports students in exploring career trends and potentially developing ideas about types of careers for which they might become passionate.
- increase science requirements from two to three credits in an expected three-year science sequence of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, which will support students in learning all of the required Washington state science learning standards (NGSS).
- add a visual and performing arts credit (from one to two credits). This change is consistent with new state requirements.

*\*With the new schedule in place, the class of 2021 (next year's freshman) will be able to graduate with 32 credits. The committee unanimously recommends requiring 30 credits to graduate (as opposed to 32) to maximize flexibility and students ability to choose courses that will ultimately support them in developing both areas that they are passion about and significant skills that prepare them for life after high school. We anticipate that most students will graduate with 32 credits, and we expect students to be fully enrolled during their high school career (extenuating circumstances notwithstanding). While credits are important, our high schools are committed to engaging all high school students with purposeful, inspiring instruction over four years (in some cases, it could be longer) and offering classes 180 days per school year. Credit*

requirements are one benchmark; other measures and evidence are also significant as we consider the development of the whole child – one of Bellingham Public Schools’ core beliefs.

In conjunction with this recommendation, the school board will consider adopting Policy 2410 on Jan. 26, 2017.

Subject	Credits	Content
English	4.0	Required: English 101 and English 201, and other courses in reading, writing, and communication.
Mathematics	3.0	Required: Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II (Algebra II may be met by another third year math course based on Personalized Pathway/High School and Beyond Plan including parent/guardian signature). See counselor for details.
World Language	2.0	Required: Two credits in the same language (e.g., two years of Spanish, two years of French, two years of German, etc.). Credits may be met through Personalized Pathway/High School and Beyond Plan and district waiver process.
Science	3.0	Expected sequence: Biology, Chemistry, Physics. Required: Two credits must be in a lab science. (Third credit may be met by a course that aligns with Personalized Pathway/High School and Beyond Plan including parent/guardian signature). See counselor for details.
Social Studies	3.0	Required: Contemporary World History/Geography/Problems; US History/Government; 0.5 credits of Civics (content may be embedded in another social studies course); 0.5 credits of Social Studies elective.
Health and Fitness	2.0	Required: Health (0.5 credit) and PE (1.5 credits).
Visual and Performing Arts	2.0	1.0 credit may be substituted as part of a Personalized Pathway/High School and Beyond Plan including parent/guardian signature.
Career and Tech Ed (CTE)	1.5	Required: 0.5 Technical Literacy, which is a new course to learn technical skills necessary to be successful in other high school and post-high school endeavors. One credit may be an Occupational Education course that meets the definition of an exploratory course as described in the CTE program standards.
Electives	9.5	
Total Required	30*	

\*2 elective credits may be waived through district process demonstrating hardship/exceptional circumstance.

Note: Additional credits (compared to class of 2017 requirements) are highlighted above.

### C. Time Schedule Recommendation

Presently, all four of our high schools are on very different schedules. All three comprehensive schools currently employ some kind of block scheduling, though again, they vary in the length and frequency of classes. One of the reasons for shifting to the eight-period schedule is to align all our high schools on the same schedule to develop consistency around course offerings and to increase flexibility and the ability for students to access programs across our system

See the chart on page 7 for the advisory group’s recommended schedule. The Monday, Tuesday, Friday schedule (left side chart on page 7) does not include the student support advisory class (currently called THOR, SSR-RtI or Anchor at our comprehensive high schools). The Wednesday and Thursday schedule (right side chart on page 7) does include the “TSA” (which stands for THOR, SSR-RtI and Anchor). See Section D for more details on student support recommendations.

The advisory group reviewed and discussed many different options, including pros and cons of consistent lunch breaks (35 minutes every day) vs. consistent instructional time (varies from 80 to 90 minutes, depending on TSA); the importance of the 9:55 a.m. ten-minute passing time for snack/bathroom breaks on days students don’t have TSA; and when announcements should occur during the day to have the least impact on instruction (group recommends five minutes maximum).

For consistency and because some students may be dual-enrolled, the group felt it was important that high schools use common language when referring to their schedules: using A day (periods 1, 2, 3 and 4) and B day (periods 5, 6, 7 and 8).

	Monday, Tuesday, Friday			Wednesday and Thursday	
	Mostly 85 minute periods			Mostly 80 minute periods	
	Longer passing time in morning			AM TSA (THOR/SSR/Anchor)	
	2nd block=5 min. announcements			Announcements in TSA	
start times			start times		
8:30 AM	Period 1	Period 5	8:30 AM	Period 1	Period 5
	85 minutes	85 minutes		80 minutes	80 minutes
9:55 AM	Ten min. passing	Ten min. passing	9:50 AM	TSA	TSA
	snack	snack		30 minutes	30 minutes
10:05 AM	Period 2	Period 6	10:20 AM	5 min. passing	5 min. passing
	90 minutes	90 minutes	10:25 AM	Period 2	Period 6
	incl. announcements	incl. announcements		80 minutes	80 minutes
11:35 AM	First Lunch	Five min. passing			
	35 minutes	11:45 AM	11:45 AM	First Lunch	5 min. passing
		Period 7A		35 minutes	11:50 AM
12:10 PM	Five min. passing	45 minutes			Period 7A
	12:15 PM		12:20 PM	5 min. passing	40 minutes
	Period 3	12:25 PM		12:25 PM	
	90 minutes	Second Lunch		Period 3	12:30 PM
		35 minutes		85 minutes	Second Lunch
		Five min. passing			35 minutes
		1:05 PM			5 min. passing
		Period 7B			1:10 PM
		40 minutes			Period 7B
1:45 PM	Five min. passing	Five min. passing			40 minutes
1:50 PM	Period 4	Period 8	1:50 PM	5 min. passing	5 min. passing
	85 minutes	85 minutes	1:55 PM	Period 4	Period 8
				80 minutes	80 minutes
3:15 PM					
			3:15 PM		

#### D. Student Support Work Party Summary Recommendation

Student support comes in many forms at our schools. The advisory group’s recommendation regarding student support specifically addresses student support advisory classes (currently called THOR, SSR-RtI or Anchor at our comprehensive high schools), which in their current form, vary from school to school. In addition to the required twice weekly student support class, the advisory group is recommending optional electives targeting academic support and leadership.

After considerable dialogue and analysis of both student and staff survey data, the student support work party made the following recommendation, which the advisory group recommends as well:

- a. Offer two support classes per week of not less than 30 minutes each.
- b. Schedule the support time as part of the school day, in the morning attached to the first block two days a week - each Wednesday and Thursday.
- c. Assign all full time teachers, regardless of planning period, to a support class or group of students.

The recommendation to consider 30 minute support time twice per week is based on both student and staff feedback, and also prioritizes the importance of providing all students with an equitable opportunity to access support from teachers during the school day. The advisory group learned from survey data and anecdotal comments from students, staff and parents that some students clearly use TSA more effectively than others.

Our high schools have taken significant steps over the last few years to add a variety of supports for students, including increasing AVID\* classes to all three comprehensive high schools, developing Link\*\* and mentorship programs, offering leadership and tutoring opportunities and developing after-school homework centers.

*\*AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination and is a college readiness program designed to increase learning and performance in all classes and particularly support students in successfully completing rigorous course content.*

*\*\*Link programs are advanced leadership classes where students develop skills in individual and group mentoring, team and climate building and communication. Students plan, conduct, and evaluate events such as freshman orientation. They also follow up with underclassmen tutoring and goal setting.*

### **E. Instructional Implications Summary Recommendations**

#### **Teachers:**

1. Use the 5D+ instructional framework to develop high quality and engaging 80-85 minute lessons.
2. Given that students will be enrolled in eight courses and a longer school day, mixed experiences with the value of homework, together with parent and student requests to provide time for work completion during the school day, we offer the following:

### **Homework Guidelines for Teachers**

- A. Consider purpose of homework. Is it for practice, to check for understanding on which to base instruction or an opportunity for students to apply new skills? Match homework to learning targets and make it efficient.
- B. Ensure that assignments are critical to student learning and meaningful for all learners.
- C. Ensure that all students can access and accomplish the assigned work; differentiating homework is effective practice (not all students need the same tasks, deadlines, support, etc.).
- D. Adjust/prioritize curriculum and instructional practices to new time frame; don't increase homework to make up for reduced instructional minutes.
- E. Collaborate around big projects and assessments to consider the effect on shared students.

3. Continue to learn and implement instructional practices appropriate for a new schedule including evolving technology. The one-to-one technology initiative provides an opportunity for us to leverage technology integration to enhance our classes.

### **Bellingham Public Schools as a system:**

4. Form a study group/steering team to begin in the spring of 2017 focused on homework and formative assessment practices with representatives from all of the high schools. Goals include:
  - o involving the larger staff before summer so that staff can think about before starting the year, and
  - o developing a longer term comprehensive plan.
5. Form a representative small group to develop Academic Workshops as optional classes for students to provide extra support, expanded learning opportunities and time to complete schoolwork. A group of staff worked together on Dec. 14, 2016 to outline course proposals.

### **F. Physical Education Waiver Process Recommendation**

The 4 x 8 schedule allows Bellingham Public Schools to expand our offerings in all of our subjects, including physical education. The advisory group spent considerable time discussing physical education (P.E.) waiver requirements. While we are not abandoning P.E. waivers entirely, we anticipate that students will be excited about some of our new courses and will now be able to take advantage of more educational opportunities.

The following guidelines were agreed upon by the advisory group, however, we did not reach consensus regarding when (what grade) students can obtain a waiver. Some believe students should be in grades 11 or 12, to ensure some participation in physical education in ninth and/or tenth grades, while others think waivers should be available to students in grade 10. This was one area where there were strong opinions and even after consulting with P.E. teachers, the group was not able to reach consensus.

The advisory group recommends changing some processes for students, as well as a time limit for a P.E. waiver. Documentation and alternate activity must be completed within the academic year in which the waiver is requested (see Student Procedures on page 11).

### **Physical Education Preamble and Guidelines for Waiving High School PE Courses**

The Bellingham Promise commits to developing students who are healthy and active individuals. The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 supports the Bellingham Public Schools by recognizing physical education in the definition of a well-rounded education. Bellingham Public School physical educators have embraced the definition and goal of physical education as articulated by the SHAPE (Society of Health and Physical Educators) organization in the National Standards for K-12 Physical Education.

“The goal of physical education is to develop physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity.”

**Students develop the physical literacy—knowledge, skills and confidence—they need to grow into healthy and active individuals in physical education classes. The State of Washington requires 2.0 credits of health and fitness for high school graduation.**

#### **According to WAC 392-410-136 Physical Education Requirement:**

The fitness requirement shall be met by course work in fitness education. The content of courses shall be determined locally pursuant to WAC 180-51-025. Students may be excused from physical education pursuant to RCW 28A.230.050. Such excused students shall be required to substitute equivalency credits in accordance with policies of boards of directors of districts.

The following categories qualify as allowable reasons for the department leader and principal to consider waiving Physical Education graduation requirements:

1. **Physical Disability:** Attach documentation from a doctor or healthcare professional indicating that participation in a physical education class will be detrimental to the student’s health.
2. **Employment requiring a reduced schedule:** Attach verification from employer including days and time of employment.
3. **Religious Belief:** A student’s religion stipulates against participation in physical education. Written verification from parent/guardian is required.
4. **Directed, School Athletics:** Participation in school district extra-curricular programs that requires at least 90 hours of substantiated physical activity/education. Students must complete the full season in good standing.
5. **Community-Based Physical Activity:** This would include club team, organized fitness that requires at least 90 hours of substantiated and confirmed physical activity/education.

**Student Procedures:**

1. Contact physical education department leader or counselor to discuss physical education course options and waiver idea.
2. Obtain waiver paperwork and information from the physical education department leader or counselor. Documentation and alternate activity must be completed within the academic year in which the waiver is requested. A student may request to waive .5 credit per semester.
3. Document 90 hours of alternate activity using Form B.
4. Complete the competency portion of the Physical Education waiver outlined in the Preamble and Guideline document.
5. Submit completed documentation to the Physical Education department leader and a separate copy to the counselor. Department leader will forward documentation to building principal.

First Waiver Request	Student must demonstrate proficiency/competency (70% or higher) on the <b>‘Concepts of Health and Fitness’</b> assessment developed by OSPI. Study guide and expectations are available from PE Department Leader.
Second Waiver Request	Student must demonstrate proficiency/competency (70% or higher) on the <b>‘Fitness Planning’</b> assessment developed by OSPI. Study guide and expectations are available from PE Department Leader.
Third Waiver Request	Student must demonstrate proficiency/competency (80% or higher) on a <b>‘Fitness Plan and Portfolio.’</b> See the PE Department Leader for expectations and plan/portfolio requirements.

**Accompanying procedural forms:**

**Form A:** High School Physical Education Waiver

**Form B:** Student Activity Log representing a minimum of 90 hours of physical activity

**Form C:** Procedure form indicating completion of the OSPI assessment and/or district fitness/portfolio plan

## **V. Conclusion**

We know implementing a new schedule districtwide involves both known and unknown challenges; we believe our recommendations will help the implementation process for staff, students and families. We've taken the initial steps in a complex process; we know more planning and collaboration is needed on many levels, some of which is already underway. At the same time we present these recommendations to you, staff members representing our high schools and every department are taking steps to align current course offerings and expand their programs by outlining new courses in our next districtwide course catalog.

Thank you for the opportunity to explore the new schedule and engage so many different groups in and around our schools. We believe the eight period schedule is what is best for our students, staff and families in help fulfilling The Bellingham Promise and look forward to helping implement it!

The advisory group looks forward to your feedback and comments. Please let us know if you have any questions about any of the recommendations or need further clarification.