

Block Schedule 101

On the 4x4 block schedule the school year is divided into two terms; First Term is from the middle of August to the middle of December. Second Term is from the beginning of January to the end of May. Classes taken during First Term are completed in December and students begin four new courses for Second Term in January. Students complete 8 classes each school year.

The schedule consists of four approximately 90-minute blocks of instructional time each day. Because the classes are longer than those in a traditional schedule, students complete the entire two-semester course in one term.

Students who take a full day of classes during all four years of high school will take a total of 32 classes compared to a total of 24 in a traditional sixth period day schedule. This permits students to study particular subject areas in depth without giving up elective course choices beyond high school and college entrance requirements. It also permits students the opportunity to repeat failed courses during the school year instead of attending summer school.

Student Benefits:

- Over the course of four years students have the opportunity to take 32 classes instead of the 24 on a traditional schedule.
- Opportunity to assume more responsibility for their own learning.
- Fewer courses each day decreases student stress.
- Increased ability to manage their educational program.
- Fewer classes to prepare for in 24-hour period.
- Increased opportunity for more individualized and personalized attention and instruction due to longer duration and varied instructional strategies.
- Reduction in the number of books and materials for students to manage in a 24-hour period.
- Better preparation for class and high quality homework.
- Exposure to a variety of teaching strategies.
- Improved attendance and reduction of tardies and trancies.
- The need for summer school is virtually eliminated.

Teacher Benefits:

- Planning periods long enough to do significantly more planning and collaboration without interruption.
- Classes are longer allowing for more individualized instruction.
- More time for effective student evaluation.
- Less time overall used for attendance, start-up, and clean-up.
- Offers lab oriented classes adequate time for lab experiences and appropriate closure.
- Encourages a wide variety of teaching methods.
- Less fragmentation of instruction with more quality assignments.
- Enough time to present a complete concept with time for guided practice and appropriate closure.
- Increase time for field trips, community guest presentations, and inter-disciplinary activities.
- Greater opportunity for team teaching within departments and inter-disciplinary teaming.
- Fewer teaching assignments per day means better preparation for class and high quality instruction.
- Expanded time for parental contact.
- Greater accessibility of staff to meet student and parental needs.

Examples: 4x4 Block Schedules

9th Grade	
Term 1	Term 2
English 9	Beginning Composition
Lab Physical/Earth Science	Geometry
Physical Education	Spanish 1
Elective	Elective

10th Grade	
Term 1	Term 2
English 10	Algebra II
Chemistry	Spanish 2
Team Sports (may be deferred)	World Cultures
Elective	Drivers Ed/Health

UC/CSU (Four Year Plan)

9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
English 9 Honors English 9	English 10 Honors English 10	English 11 AP English Language	English 12 AP English Literature
Transitions to Algebra Algebra I Geometry	Algebra I Geometry Algebra II	Geometry Algebra II Pre-Calculus	Algebra II Pre-Calculus AP Calculus
PE 9	Drivers Ed./Health	PE 10-12	
World Language	World Language	World Language	World Language (AP)
Geography (proposed)	World History AP Euro	US History or AP	Gov/Econ or AP
Physical Science Biology	Biology Chemistry AP Chemistry	Chemistry AP Chemistry AP Environmental Science Physics	AP Chemistry AP Environmental Science Physics AP Physics
Two Electives	Two Electives	Two Electives	Three Electives