



**ACPS High School Schedule Design Brief
Number 6: October 12, 2010**

Department of Instruction

Each high school has approached its bell schedule and course schedule with the unique styles that we have become accustomed to in Albemarle County. This flexibility is necessary so that school staff can create schedules, and it is necessary so that they can respond to student needs. School schedules are intended to be a hybrid or blend of course formats.

The schedule design team will continue to meet every three weeks during this school year and will move to monthly meetings next year. On the team, we have student and parent representation, as well as school and central office staff.

High School Schedule Goals

We should strive for a school schedule that is flexible enough to provide more learning time for students who need it and more choices for those who seek enrichment. Our design team is considering the following goals for our high school schedules:

On a short term basis, we are seeking to...

- Balance the workload of students.
- Balance the workload of teachers.
- Provide extended learning time.
- Provide time in the master schedule for extra support.
- Consider policies and grading practices that focus on teaching and learning.
- Increase the amount of time students are actively engaged in their learning.
- Maintain high expectations for all students.

On a long term basis, we are seeking to...

- Increase graduation rates county-wide.
- Reduce dropout rates county-wide.
- Increase the percentage of graduates who continue to college or specialized training after high school.
- Accommodate increased graduation and course requirements as mandated by Virginia law beginning in 2011-12.
- Increase the percentage of students earning an Advanced Studies Diploma.
- Improve student academic performance.
- Increase the percentage of students taking college level courses while in high school.

Goal Measurement Schedule

We have metrics in place to measure progress with these goals, and they are reported annually to the School Board. We realize that while these goals are laudable, we have many facets of the high school schedules that need improvement. Many of these aspects were present prior to the new schedules.

The Board and the Department of Instruction realize that we need feedback from our stakeholders regarding their schedules so that we can make improvements going into our *Program of Studies* review. Further, school schedule development will begin once again in

January. We will use surveys to collect feedback from students, parents, and school staff regarding schedule outcomes.

- Students are currently being surveyed this fall, and will be surveyed again in the spring with items added into the School Climate Surveys. Items were developed by the High School Schedule Design Team and revised by the County Student Council before being added to the survey. Items for student surveys are listed below.
- Parents will be surveyed this fall as part of a stakeholder survey conducted by Albemarle County Schools Communications Office. At an Albemarle High School PTSO meeting on October 7, Dr. Haas collected survey item ideas for development.
- Dr. Haas is currently attending meetings with school department chairs to gather feedback and to develop survey items for all teachers to respond this fall and spring. This began with a meeting at WAHS on October 7th.

Data collected from these surveys will be reported as part of the ongoing updates from the High School Schedule Design Team. This data will help us prioritize our work, and it will inform needed additions and adjustments to the school system's new student information system, Gradespeed.

School Schedule Questions or Concerns

All documents related to the Implementation of the 8-Period Hybrid Schedule are located [HERE](#). Regular Updates or "Design Briefs" have been published and distributed to parents since March 2010. This site is a "one-stop shop" for all communications to parents about the schedule since the Board voted to implement it.

You may also [read our 8-Period Hybrid Schedule FAQ](#), which is updated weekly as new questions are submitted. You may submit a new question for the 8-Period Hybrid FAQ [HERE](#). We are using this online FAQ so that when we answer a question for one parent, everyone may be aware of the answer.

As your child works with the course schedule, your child can visit a school counselor with questions or concerns. Parents can also contact school counselors and principals with questions or concerns about their child's schedule.

Student Survey Items

Agree or Disagree

- I have all needed core courses this year.
- I am taking the required courses for a diploma.
- I was able to make any necessary schedule changes.
- I feel semester courses provide a high quality learning experience.
- My schedule is balanced academically.
- My homework load is appropriate for the courses I am taking.
- The pace of instruction is right for me.
- I am satisfied with my schedule this year.
- I believe the school schedule will continue to meet my learning needs.

Only answer the following questions if you are enrolled in study hall.

Agree or Disagree

- I intentionally enrolled in study hall.
- Study hall is helpful to me.