

Proposal for a Modified 7-period Schedule

As an alternative to considering a 5x5 schedule, Principal Grant has proposed a modified 7-period schedule. This schedule would be far more similar to the schedule at Oly Jr. now but provides some important benefits to the students. This proposal allows Oly Jr. to keep all of its current electives and teachers.

The schedule Monday through Wednesday would look the same as it does now, with the students attending all 7 classes. This same schedule would be used on a Thursday for a short week when there is no school on Friday.

The Thursday and Friday schedules would allow more time during each class. On Thursday, students would attend 4 classes (Periods 1-4) for approximately 75 minutes each and would also have a 40 minute “teacher advisory” period. On Friday, students would attend 3 classes (Periods 5-7) for approximately 80 minutes each, and have a 30 minute teacher advisory period. The longer class times on Thursdays and Fridays allow teachers to provide more activities and in depth learning experiences while keeping all of their class time. These hands on type of activities help students master the concepts they are being taught.

During the “teacher advisory” time each student would be assigned to a homeroom teacher. During this time the teachers would be able to provide remediation time for students who need extra time on a concept, enrichment activities to allow students to work together on projects related to the required academic core standards, and other school-wide programs. It also allows the school to provide assemblies with less disruption to class time.

The teacher advisory time provides several benefits to our students and can be crafted to meet the needs of our particular student body. It allows students to build a relationship with their homeroom teacher, who can do grade checks, provide character development programs, and give extra time to accomplish projects and homework. The time allows students to do projects together that will enhance their learning experience, including service learning projects and peer mentoring. It allows teachers time to meet with students who need remediation or just extra support on a concept in their classroom. 9th graders can receive credit for their teacher advisory period.

This modified schedule proposal is based on the schedule used at Copper Mountain Middle School, with great success. At this school, on Thursdays the teacher advisory time allows students remediation time (when teachers can call their students into their class for extra help) or participate in enrichment activities based on core curriculum standards. There is also the ability to study and learn study skills and take missed tests during this time. On Fridays the students stay in their classroom with their homeroom teacher and use the time to do character development and other school-wide programs. The homeroom teacher also acts as a support system for the students by doing grade checks and teaching life skills.

Copper Mountain Middle school reports that its test scores have improved and subject mastery has increased with the longer blocks and teacher advisory time. One of the biggest benefits though has been the relationship building amongst the students and between students and

teachers. One student reported that “our school cares about our learning and well-being.” The students like the freedom they are able to exercise during the teacher advisory time in a structured environment. They are able to perform collaborative learning activities to enhance their classroom education.

Our teachers would be primarily responsible for organizing and implementing the teacher advisory time in a way that would best meet the needs of our students. At Copper Mountain Middle School the teachers are paid through School LAND Trust funds for professional development and resources to implement the teacher advisory time. [School LAND Trust funds are budgeted and spent at the direction of the Community Council.]

Process:

This is a decision that will be made by the Community Council after discussion and hearing parent, teacher, and administration input. The community council has begun soliciting information from different places such as other schools and community councils.

This will be discussed at the Community Council meeting on November 9 (at 3:15 in Room 315). This is a public meeting and all parents and teachers are invited and encouraged to attend. There will be time for parents and teachers to express their thoughts on the proposal. Time to speak will be limited by person to approximately 3 minutes so that everyone who wants to speak will have a chance. A vote will not be taken at that meeting.

The Community Council recognizes that this is a very important decision. We are committed to gathering information to help us make an informed decision for what is best for our kids. We appreciate the parents and teachers who are open to what is best for our kids and willing to learn as much as needed to support an informed decision. Thank you for your involvement and input.