



# Reimagining the School Day

## Innovative Schedules for Teaching and Learning

By Meg Benner and Lisette Partelow February 23, 2017

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### Introduction

The minutes and hours of the school day are critical to build knowledge, foster student motivation, and drive student outcomes. To make the most of precious instructional time, teachers must first develop engaging lessons that meet the various needs of students. This requires teachers to collaborate, plan, and reflect outside of instructional time. Effective school schedules maximize the time teachers spend with their students but also recognize teachers' additional responsibilities beyond instructional time. Unfortunately, not enough schools successfully balance these priorities.

Teachers in the United States spend far more time engaged in active instruction than teachers in other high-performing countries.<sup>1</sup> Based on self-reported data, teachers in the United States spend 27 hours teaching out of 45 hours of work per week.<sup>2</sup> Compare this with teachers in Singapore, who teach for only 17 hours per week, or teachers in Finland, who teach for a total of 21 hours per week.<sup>3</sup> Schools in these countries prioritize time for planning and collaboration, recognizing that developing and executing lessons take time and preparation.<sup>4</sup> According to a recent analysis of more than 140 school districts, the average length of a U.S. teacher's workday is 7.5 hours.<sup>5</sup> In another analysis of more than 120 school districts, the most common length of time allotted for planning was 45 minutes per day.<sup>6</sup> In this short time, teachers must grade student work, plan for future lessons, engage with families, and complete necessary paperwork. As a result, teachers have little time to plan or collaborate with peers.<sup>7</sup>

The squeeze for time to plan lessons and complete other administrative tasks shapes a school's professional environment and, ultimately, affects the quality of instruction. In a recent survey from the American Federation of Teachers, one of teachers' two most cited "everyday stressors" was time pressure.<sup>8</sup> As teachers are largely separate from other educators during instruction, lack of time for collaboration can be very isolating. More than half of lower secondary school teachers in the United States report that they do not teach jointly or observe other teachers.<sup>9</sup> Such practices can improve teaching quality by granting teachers opportunities to receive feedback on their lesson execution and infuse new best practices into their repertoire.

In addition, providing teachers with more time to plan and attend to other responsibilities throughout the school day creates systematic opportunities to support new teachers and stretch more seasoned teachers—increasing the likelihood of teacher retention. During this structured planning time, new teachers should receive the coaching and personalized training they need to maximize their effectiveness and meet their professional goals. Meanwhile, experienced teachers can pursue leadership roles or coach new teachers.

Fortunately, schools can look to several promising models to change their typical schedules. The Center for American Progress compiled five of these innovative school schedules. Some of these schedules have already been implemented in schools across the country to improve instruction and ensure that teachers have ample time to teach, prepare, and develop their craft. CAP has also included teachers' ideas for alternatives to the traditional school day model.

While each example schedule varies, there were similarities in how school leaders and teachers at each school reimagined the use of time. These innovative schedules all included:

- Additional time for planning and collaboration
- Flexible instructional blocks to differentiate content to student need
- Opportunities for small group instruction or student-directed learning

## Innovative school schedules: Example schedules from schools across the country

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### Guilmette Elementary School, Lawrence, Massachusetts

#### *What's different about this schedule?*

Guilmette Elementary School in Lawrence, Massachusetts, added more than 260 hours of instructional time to the school year and built in common planning time by extending the school day and strategically aligning grade team schedules. The schedule also allows for targeted intervention and enrichment opportunities for all students. (see Table 1) Students follow a similar schedule on Mondays through Thursdays. On Fridays, students participate in high-quality enrichment programming from noon to 2:30 p.m., which is led by community partners. These enrichment activities include art, music, yoga, and cooking. Teachers participate in professional development and planning at that time.<sup>10</sup>

#### *Operations and cost*

The extra instructional hours are a significant cost. The district's teacher contract provides teachers with a stipend of \$2,500 per year for added hours that is distributed evenly across their paychecks. Moreover, the quality of the enrichment programs offered on Friday is dependent on the community partners that teach the programs. Guilmette has worked to find high-quality, affordable partners.<sup>11</sup>

#### *Outcomes*

In the four years since Guilmette has implemented the new schedule, its English language arts and math proficiency scores have steadily improved; since 2013, Guilmette outperformed other elementary schools in the district. More information is available on the school's report card.<sup>12</sup>

#### Objectives

- Add 260 or more instructional hours each school year
- Provide collaborative planning time for teachers
- Create added opportunities for enrichment and targeted intervention that focuses on acceleration

**TABLE 1**  
**Guilmette Elementary School schedule**

Time	Teacher perspective	Student perspective
7:30-7:45 a.m.	<b>Morning procedures:</b> Teacher greets students and leads a short morning meeting.	<b>Morning procedures:</b> Students settle into school and engage with a short morning meeting.
7:45-8:30 a.m.	<b>Phonics/word study</b>	<b>Phonics/word study</b>
8:30-9:15 a.m.	<b>Readers workshop</b>	<b>Readers workshop</b>
9:15-10:00 a.m.	<b>Writers workshop</b>	<b>Writers workshop</b>
10:00-10:55 a.m.	<b>Grade-level targeted intervention:</b> The schoolwide intervention team supports the grade-level team to allow for small group instruction. Teachers group students based on data to provide differentiated instruction to fill in gaps and push toward greater mastery of key concepts.	<b>Grade-level targeted intervention:</b> Small groups of six to 12 students engage with targeted instruction based on data. While students receive needed intervention, the focus is on acceleration to push all students to rigorous academic standards. Some students also use instructional technology during this time.
10:55-11:30 a.m.	<b>Planning/flex time:</b> Teachers have time for preparation and planning.	<b>Lunch/recess</b>
11:35 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	<b>Math block 1</b>	<b>Math block 1</b>
12:35-1:35 p.m.	<b>Common planning:</b> Teachers have common planning time with their grade team. One session per week is led by the literacy master teacher, and one session per week is led by the math master teacher to unpack standards, review student work, and redesign curriculum.	<b>Essentials (enrichment):</b> Students participate in enrichment activities. Depending on the day of the week, students engage with dance, music, physical education, character education, or art. Every Friday afternoon, students have access to different enrichment opportunities led by community partners.
1:40-2:25 p.m.	<b>Planning period</b>	<b>Science</b>
2:25-3:10 p.m.	<b>Math block 2</b>	<b>Math block 2</b>

Source: Schedule provided by Lori Butterfield, principal of Guilmette Elementary School, September 2016.

*What's different about this schedule?*

Greenfield schools, which are a part of the Achievement First network, designed a schedule that leverages four modalities of learning: self-directed learning; small group learning; large group instruction, and immersive expeditions.<sup>13</sup> Students engage in daily self-directed learning to build responsibility and differentiate the pace of their learning. During this time, students use independent work or technology to review new concepts and move through mastery of content at their own pace. Students also participate in small group learning in sections of 14 to 16 students to dig into specific topics and receive individual feedback. Larger group instruction is reserved for seminars, debates, and experiments.

Every eight weeks, students engage in immersive expeditions for one to two weeks that explore a specific issue and apply skills to the real world. Expeditions such as creating a play, television show, or movie allow them to use writing, improvisation, and teamwork skills to bring stories to life. For example, in the expedition “Make your story come to life,” students write and produce scenes or short plays to be performed by other actors. They engage with a professional theater company for storytelling workshops and go on behind-the-scenes tours.<sup>14</sup>

Interactive digital learning is a key element of the Greenfield model. A cloud-based Personalized Learning Platform, or PLP, takes the place of traditional textbooks. Students use a laptop to access their online self-directed content, track progress toward their goals, and take assessments to demonstrate mastery of concepts. This system minimizes teachers’ work and increases transparency of student progress. Teachers or students do not need to input results to track progress; the platform does it automatically. Teachers, students, and families can log in to access student progress anywhere with an internet connection. It also helps the school communicate with parents and families.<sup>15</sup>

Every teacher is responsible for leading one instructional area—either humanities, math, science, writing, or social studies. This specialization allows teachers to focus on achieving ambitious results in their content area. A yearly pacing calendar identifies where students must perform at every point in the year in order to be on track with these ambitious outcomes. Teachers use pacing reports each day to determine where students are performing relative to the bar and to adjust their instruction in ways that will maximize the number of students who are on and ahead of pace.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, Greenfield differentiates teachers’ roles and schedules to allow for specialization, planning, and life balance.<sup>17</sup> This includes collaborative planning time for all teachers, differentiated coaching, and professional development, as well as growth opportunities based on teachers’ skills and experience. Greenfield also offers a staggered teaching schedule for more experienced teachers.

## Objectives

- Allow for accelerated, differentiated academics through four modalities of learning: self-directed learning time; small group learning; large group learning; and immersive expeditions
- Build in time for enrichment
- Foster habits of success in all kids, including curiosity, personal growth, empathy, gratitude, drive, and teamwork
- Emphasize the importance of student, family, and staff motivation
- Differentiate teacher roles based on experience and create more time for planning for all instructional staff
- Reduce turnover by finding ways to accommodate senior teachers who need more flexible schedules

Within each grade, students are organized into goal teams of 10 to 12 students and assigned a goal coach. These teams meet daily in order to set and reflect on academic, life habit, or enrichment goals; deepen relationships with the goal coach and other goal team members; and build habits of success. Within goal teams, students are paired off with another student, called a running partner. These pairs provide mutual support and accountability to one another as they strive for ambitious short- and long-term goals. Goal teams are led by a goal coach who is a staff member in the school. The goal coach works closely with one goal team to build community and to be a primary support for each student and running partner pair.<sup>18</sup>

#### *Operations and cost*

The ongoing operation of this schedule is not more costly than other schedules that Achievement First operates in its network. Core to Achievement First's mission is to operate with the same public dollars as traditional district schools in the geographies where it operates.<sup>19</sup>

#### *Outcomes*

The Greenfield schools piloted the model in kindergarten and middle school grades, all of which saw proficiency exceed or equal the scores of other Achievement First schools in Connecticut after just one year. Kindergartners exceeded 90 percent proficient rates in reading, and 60 percent of students demonstrated at least 75 percentile growth in math. For middle school grades, average scores on English language arts weekly quizzes ranked first or second in the overall Achievement First Connecticut network. Fifth grade math scores exceeded the network average, but sixth grade scores were below the average.<sup>20</sup> For more information on socioemotional growth, review the Achievement First's Greenfield Schools Year 1 Pilot.<sup>21</sup>

**TABLE 2**  
**Greenfield School schedule**

Time	Teacher perspective	Student perspective
7:15-7:45 a.m.	<p><b>Late arrival:</b> Lead teachers are on staggered schedules that require them to be in the building from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. or 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The staggered schedule supports colleagues who do strong work and need flexibility while also acknowledging that some staff—especially newer teachers—may need more time for their own professional development or to be fully ready to drive achievement.</p>	<p><b>Morning work/breakfast</b></p>
7:45-9:05 a.m.		<p><b>Writing/independent reading and grammar practice:</b> 32 students break into two groups to allow for small group instruction. Each group of 14 to 16 students spends 40 minutes in both writing instruction and independent reading and grammar practice. Once per week, a seminar replaces the writing block and allows students to deepen their understanding of a text and strengthen their oral and written argumentation skills.</p>
9:05-9:45 a.m.	<p><b>Instructional planning (part 1):</b> Every teacher receives 80 minutes daily for an instructional planning block. In this time, teachers grade and provide feedback on daily work; examine trends in performance; adjust and practice plans for tomorrow; and plan future weeks' lessons.</p>	<p><b>Enrichment (science, technology, engineering, and math, or STEM, inventions):</b> Students opt into one of two enrichment blocks. Every student has one physical and one nonphysical enrichment each day. Physical enrichments are dance or martial arts. Nonphysical enrichments are STEM inventions or music.</p>
9:45-9:55 a.m.	<p><b>High heart rate:</b> Teachers engage students in short physical activity to keep energy high.</p>	<p><b>High heart rate:</b> Students engage in short physical activity to keep energy high.</p>
9:55-11:15 a.m.	<p><b>Math:</b> Teacher leads two small groups of 14 to 16 students in math problem solving. This block is designed to supplement the strong core knowledge provided during the self-directed portion of the math block. Teachers spiral content and help students apply math concepts to new situations.</p>	<p><b>Math problem solving/self-directed learning:</b> 32 students break into two groups to allow for small group instruction. Each group of 14 to 16 students spends 40 minutes in both problem solving and then math self-directed learning. Students use i-Ready during the self-directed learning, which enables them to access ambitious, grade-level content at their own pace.</p>
11:15 a.m.-12:35 p.m.	<p><b>Math:</b> Teacher leads a different group of students in math problem solving and self-directed learning.</p>	<p><b>Science/self-directed learning:</b> 32 students break into two groups to allow for small group instruction. Each group of 14 to 16 students switches between 40 minutes of science investigations or close reading and science self-directed learning with access to technology, curated texts, or videos that are aligned to the science unit. Three times per week, the small groups engage with science investigations or experiments, and twice per week, students participate in close reading to deepen their understanding of unit-level information.</p>
12:35-1:15 p.m.	<p><b>Daily goal team preparation:</b> Teachers use this time to prepare for their daily goal team time with a small group of students. Teachers review student data to gauge student progress, plan for their conversations with students, and proactively communicate student progress to four to five families per day.</p>	<p><b>Lunch/recess</b></p>

Time	Teacher perspective	Student perspective
1:15-1:55 p.m.	<b>Math:</b> Teacher leads a different group of students in math problem solving and self-directed learning.	<b>Humanities/self-directed learning (part 1):</b> 32 students break into two groups to allow for small group humanities instruction. Each group of 14 to 16 students spends 40 minutes in close reading or a seminar and then self-directed humanities learning. Four times per week, students work with a teacher in close reading to analyze texts. Once per week, students discuss texts in a seminar. For daily self-directed learning, students engage in a series of online playlists to build upon their close reading and seminars.
1:55-2:35 p.m.	<b>Instructional planning (part 2)</b>	<b>Enrichment (dance)</b>
2:35-3:15 p.m.	<b>Math:</b> Teacher leads one small group of 16 students in math problem solving.	<b>Humanities/self-directed learning (part 2):</b> Groups switch from part 1 block.
3:15-3:35 p.m.	<b>Goal team time:</b> Each teacher serves as a goal coach for 10 to 12 students and helps support them in their academic and personal growth.	<b>Goal team time:</b> Students meet with their goal coach and goal team. Every student is part of a small goal team—about 10 to 12 students—that meets daily to set and reflect on goals and build a deep community that supports and holds each other accountable.
3:35-4:05 p.m.	<b>Self-directed vocabulary instruction:</b> Teacher works with his or her goal team to support them with their vocabulary.	<b>Self-directed vocabulary instruction:</b> Students engage in vocabulary instruction at their own pace. Once students finish their vocabulary instruction, they can continue self-directed work on other subjects.
4:05-4:45 p.m.	<b>After school math:</b> The entire math team works with students who need additional support during this time. Each month, teachers use data from weekly quizzes and pacing reports to assign students who need additional support to afterschool intervention.	<b>Optional after school math:</b> Students who are identified for extra support use this additional time to work through the student-directed learning scope and sequence or get targeted small group instruction to support them with skills they most need.

Source: Schedule created in discussion with Jennifer Lindsay, director of the Greenfield Project at Achievement First, October to November 2016.



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## Generation Schools secondary schedule, Brooklyn, New York

### *What's different about this schedule?*

Generation Schools Network's secondary school model creates up to 30 percent more learning time than traditional public schools in New York City and provides opportunities for differentiated instruction. It also reduces student-to-teacher ratios and overall teacher workloads to facilitate the development of supportive teacher-student relationships.<sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, teachers have more time for collaboration and professional development. All teachers, as part of their approximately 180-day work year, participate in a one- to two-week Summer Institute dedicated to collaborative planning in preparation for the school year.<sup>23</sup> In addition, grade teams have two weeks of professional collaborative time staggered throughout the year when their students are in intensives. This is in addition to the collaborative time that teachers have every day.<sup>24</sup>

To reduce teacher workload and increase instructional time, the Generation Schools Network differentiates instructional roles—foundation, studio, and intensive teachers. This allows the school to build on a wider range of teachers' strengths and to design roles and responsibilities that help teachers be effective and reduce turnover. In addition, it reduces teachers' student load. Teachers have 75 or fewer students daily compared with their peers in New York City traditional public high schools, who often teach 150 students daily.<sup>25</sup> The model organizes teachers into grade level teams and a college and career intensives team. The college and career intensives team rotates from grade to grade over the course of the year, spending a month with students exploring college and career pathways. Teachers on that designated grade team are not responsible for students that month and can use that time for collaboration and breaks. By staggering teacher breaks, Generation Schools Network expands the instructional year for students without increasing the number of working days for teachers.<sup>26</sup>

Every student also has a differentiated schedule that fits their needs. Students participate in extended foundation courses—including interdisciplinary courses on humanities or science, technology, engineering, and math, or STEM—which teach required subjects for all students as well as have various studio courses based on their interests. Studio courses include art history, physical education, art, foreign languages, or advanced sciences.<sup>27</sup>

### *Operations and cost*

Generation Schools' model reconfigures the same number of staff members who are employed in a conventional school model so that each school can offer much more planning time to teachers and instructional time to students without increasing staff costs, which are a majority of a school's budget. Depending on how districts budget, this type of schedule may require additional costs for maintenance or transportation.<sup>28</sup>

### Objectives

- Increase instructional time for all students and opportunities to differentiate instruction
- Reduce student-to-teacher ratios and overall teacher workloads to facilitate the development of supportive teacher-student relationships
- Integrate collaborative planning time for teacher teams

## Outcomes

Generation Schools Network has improved student achievement and graduation rates. Brooklyn Generation School, or BGS, has improved attendance, course completion, and graduation rates. At 69 percent, the four-year graduation rate at BGS has matched that for the city overall—70 percent—and outperformed schools with a similar demographic of students. These achievements are especially remarkable, as 85 percent of BGS’ students enter high school behind or significantly behind. In addition, 100 percent of the 2016 graduating class was accepted into college—many receiving multiple admissions and significant financial aid to make the opportunity real.<sup>29</sup>

**TABLE 3**  
**Generation secondary school schedule**

Time	Teacher perspective	Student perspective
9:00-10:30 a.m.	<b>Foundation course 1:</b> Teacher has one section of an interdisciplinary foundation course. These courses include humanities—integrating social studies and English language arts content—or STEM courses.	<b>Foundation course 1 (global studies):</b> All students in 9th grade, for example, have a global studies foundation course. Since there are multiple sections of the same course, students can be grouped by academic, social, or emotional needs to ensure that their needs are met. Foundation courses remain small, with 18 to 25 students per class.
10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	<b>Foundation course 2:</b> Teacher has another section of the same course. This reduces the amount of preparation needed and allows teachers to benefit from teaching the same lesson twice to different students.	<b>Foundation course 2 (integrated algebra):</b> Student participates in the second daily foundation course. While some may have global studies first and then integrated algebra, others will start with integrated algebra and then have global studies.
12:00-1:15 p.m.	<b>Lunch and advocacy groups:</b> Teacher meets with their advocacy group of 12 to 20 students to ensure that each student has an adult advocating for them and to teach the students how to be self-advocates as they progress through school, college, and their careers.	<b>Lunch and advocacy groups:</b> Students meet with their advocacy group. During this time, students build bonds with other students and their advocate. They learn self-advocacy skills and plan for their postsecondary steps.
1:15-2:15 p.m.	<b>Studio course 1:</b> Teacher teaches one studio course. Studio courses are planned to address different student needs. For example, an art history course might be offered one trimester for students struggling in global studies who need more time and a different way to learn the content, or it might be offered in a different trimester as an enrichment course to students who are excelling.	<b>Studio course 1 (art history):</b> Students benefit from a wider range of studio courses. Some studio courses may provide additional academic or social-emotional support to help students stay on track in their foundation courses. Others offer enrichment or advanced work. Studio courses include art, physical education, foreign languages, and advanced sciences.
2:15-3:15 p.m.	<b>Common planning:</b> Grade-level teams, including humanities and STEM foundation teachers, meet for collaborative planning. They have significant time to get to know their shared students and prepare to help those students succeed.	<b>Studio course 2 (physical education)</b>
3:15-4:15 p.m.		<b>Studio course 3 (Spanish):</b> Some studios may be short-cycle courses to meet a student’s short-term needs. Others, such as foreign languages, may be consistent over time if necessary to master the content.

Source: Schedule created in discussion with Jonathan Spear, co-founder and former chief learning officer, and Wendy Loloff Piersee, chief executive officer, Generation Schools Network, July to August 2016.

# Model school schedules designed by teachers

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## Model elementary school schedule

*Created by Lexie Woo, fourth and fifth grade teacher in Queens, New York*

### *What's different about this schedule?*

This schedule allows educators the opportunity to improve their instruction through strategic collaboration with colleagues, additional planning time, and ongoing feedback from administrators.

The timing of instructional blocks rotates to diffuse the negative impact of time-sensitive factors, such as tardiness, early dismissals, fatigue, medication use, and attention span. In addition, each subject has a double instructional block once per week, providing time for innovative educational practices, including multidisciplinary learning; project-based learning; and science, technology, engineering, art and design, and math, or STEAM, and STEM. This allows students to engage in a more self-directed and autonomous educational experience, growing as independent thinkers and doers.

With this dynamic schedule, teachers can select preferred preparation times, allowing teachers to shape their day to fit their working style. In other words, teachers can deliver instruction at the height of their energy.<sup>30</sup>

### Objectives

- Create more teacher planning time and develop more opportunities for teachers to receive feedback on their instruction
- Allow teachers to self-select preparation periods to ensure that the timing works for their teaching and working styles
- Offer double instructional blocks for each subject throughout the week
- Rotate the timing of instructional blocks

**TABLE 4**  
**Model elementary school schedule**

Time	Teacher perspective	Student perspective
8:30-9:20 a.m.	<b>Block 1:</b> subject 4, reading. The timing of each subject will vary throughout the week. For example, the subject at the end of the day on Monday may be at the beginning of the day on Tuesday.	<b>Block 1:</b> subject 4, reading
9:25-10:15 a.m.	<b>Individual prep:</b> Teacher has at least one block for individual planning per day.	<b>Enrichment block:</b> Students learn a language, art, physical education, or music, depending on the day.
10:20-11:10 a.m.	<b>Block 2:</b> subject 3, math	<b>Block 2:</b> subject 3, math
11:15 a.m.-12:05 p.m.	<b>Block 3:</b> subject 2, writing	<b>Block 3:</b> subject 2, writing
12:10-1:00 p.m.	<b>Lunch:</b> Teachers can use the time to eat, plan, or do other administrative tasks.	<b>Lunch/recess:</b> Students are monitored by teacher aids or administrators.
1:05-1:55 p.m.	<b>Block 4 (double):</b> subject 1, science. Each subject has a double block once throughout the week. During this time, teachers can integrate instruction with another relevant subject, offer project-based learning, or use any other innovative instructional approach.	<b>Block 4 (double):</b> subject 1, science. Students engage in a more self-directed and autonomous educational experience, growing as independent thinkers and doers.
2:00-2:50 p.m.		
3:00-4:00 p.m.	<b>Parent engagement time:</b> Teachers and administrators participate in parent engagement time. Educators can also elect to have this time in the morning. During this time, meetings will be held in person with parents, and/or educators will communicate with parents. Another option for this time is to participate in hosting a parent workshop.	<b>Students depart.</b>

**TABLE 5**  
**Model elementary school full-week teacher schedule**

Period	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Individual prep	Subject 4	Subject 1	Subject 2	Meeting time/ individualized education program planning
2	Team prep	Individual prep	Subject 2	Subject 4	
3	Subject 1	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 1	Subject 3
4	Subject 2	Subject 2	Individual prep	Individual prep	Subject 2
5	Lunch				
6	Subject 3	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4
7	Subject 4				
<i>Students go home; teachers stay for planning and professional time.</i>					
After	Professional learning community	Parent engagement time	Common prep: Grade-level educators	Common prep: Subject area educators	Planning time for the week ahead

## Model high school schedule

Created by Crischelle Navalta, high school teacher in Donna, Texas; Jillian Harkins, high school teacher in New Haven, Connecticut; Mary Kreuz, high school teacher in Toledo, Ohio; Megan Williams, eighth grade teacher in Washington, D.C.; and Amanda Zullo, high school teacher in Saranac Lake, New York

### What's different about this schedule?

This schedule strategically minimizes teachers' workloads to ensure that they have time to build their content expertise. In addition, teachers have additional time apart from active instruction to collaborate with their content team, plan independently, or assume a leadership position.<sup>31</sup>

**TABLE 6**  
**Model high school schedule**

Time	Teacher perspective	Student perspective
7:30-8:00 a.m.	<b>Homeroom:</b> Teacher meets with a small group of students for team building, academic advising, and general check-ins.	<b>Homeroom:</b> Students meet with a teacher and a small group of their peers.
8:05-9:05 a.m.	<b>Course A (physics):</b> Teacher teaches two groups of students for the same subject.	<b>Period 1 (physics)</b>
9:10-10:10 a.m.	<b>Course A (physics)</b>	<b>Period 2 (algebra)</b>
10:15-11:15 a.m.	<b>Planning/prep:</b> Depending on the day, teacher has a common planning period with content team or time to prepare for a teacher leadership role, such as content leader or grade team leader.	<b>Period 3 (English literature)</b>
11:20 a.m.-12:50 p.m.	<b>Lunch/administrative work:</b> Teachers can use the time to eat, hold office hours for students, tutor, and attend faculty meetings or professional development.	<b>Lunch/Study Hall:</b> Students have lunch for 45 minutes. For the remaining 45 minutes, they receive tutoring or attend student organization meetings or study hall, depending on needs.
12:55-1:55 p.m.	<b>Course B (chemistry):</b> Teacher teaches two groups of students for the same subject.	<b>Period 4 (Spanish)</b>
2:00-3:00 p.m.	<b>Course B (chemistry)</b>	<b>Period 5 (European history)</b>
3:05-4:05 p.m.	<b>Planning/prep:</b> Depending on the day, teacher has a common planning period with content team or time to prepare for a teacher leadership role, such as content leader or grade team leader.	<b>Period 6 (choir)</b>

### Objectives

- Reduce instructional load by ensuring that teachers teach no more than two different course subjects, and limit teaching time to only 60 percent of a teacher's day
- Build in approximately 40 percent of the day for conference time, leadership roles beyond the classroom, common planning time with content or grade team, and professional development

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## Conclusion

Tasked to deliver differentiated, high-quality instruction that prepares students for the social and academic challenges in college and beyond, schools must push their thinking on how they allocate time throughout the school day. Innovative school schedules should meet diverse student needs and ensure that all teachers are primed to deliver engaging, rigorous content. As this issue brief demonstrates, various models already exist to accomplish these goals. As schools across the country reimagine their school day schedules, they will be most successful if they customize the use of time to meet content needs rather than adapting content to fit a fixed schedule.

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## Endnotes

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