

In addition to the Q&A below, we have added an FAQ page to the Naperville 203 Innovative School Experience webpage. Many of the Board's questions asked were used to help create the published FAQ's. Those can be found at this link:

[Innovative School Experience FAQ](#)

BOARD SUBMITTED QUESTIONS - JANUARY 21, 2025

8.05 Why Innovation?

Early childhood: (slide pg 21) Can you share the current schedule for ECE to be able to compare with the suggested changes?

Community students currently attend 4 days a week for 2.5 hours.

IEP students and Preschool for All students attend 5 days a week for 2.5 hrs.

The recommendation for 4- and 5-year-olds will provide the same schedule currently being implemented.

Early childhood: (slide pg 23) can you please share more details about the home visiting requirement? How many home visits does a teacher have to provide? How frequently? Is the home visiting requirement only for 3 yr olds?

There is not a specific requirement for the number of home visits provided, however, research reflects that implementing targeted and developmentally appropriate practice requires deep knowledge about each child, including the context within which each child is living.

Elementary: (slide pg 29) I like how we start the schedule with more academic, and end the day with more engagement activities. Will this be the structure of all grades and classrooms? If not, will each grade have a consistent schedule for every school?

It is not possible to have the academic instruction and specials classes the same at all grade levels in a building, as different grades go to specials at different times throughout the school day and by nature of the schedule there are some grades that have to have their specials classes in the morning. Also, due to the differences in staffing at each building, shared staff among buildings, and space availability differences in each of the buildings, it will not be possible for every grade to have the same schedule across the district. With that being said, our goal is for every classroom throughout the district to start their day with a morning meeting. At this time, some schools are doing morning meetings while others are not, and even in the schools that are doing these meetings, some classes in the building do them in the morning while others might do them in the afternoon because of specials schedules. With the addition of time to the school day, our goal is for every classroom to start their day with a morning meeting.

Junior High: (slide pg 35) Can you tell me more about the Advisory period. Is this like Homeroom for High School?

The advisory period is a weekly co-taught period with 2 teachers to focus on building social-emotional skills such as team-building and executive functioning. There could be lessons/activities personalized to the school or specific team's needs—and the course is approximately, 30 minutes in length per week.

High school (slide pg 41) What is "Tier II"?

Tier II interventions are designed for students who need more support than what is provided in the general education classroom but are not at the point of requiring individualized instruction. These interventions are usually small-group and more focused than the universal supports provided at Tier I (general education level).

Students receiving Tier II interventions are identified based on data that shows they are not meeting expectations in key areas (e.g., academic performance, behavior, attendance). Regular progress monitoring is conducted to assess the effectiveness of the intervention and to determine if the student is making adequate progress. Interventions at this tier often focus on specific areas of need, such as reading comprehension, math skills, or behavior regulation. Tier II interventions are typically implemented in short, targeted sessions (40-minute sessions several times a week) with more frequent follow-up than the general classroom instruction.

Examples of Tier II Interventions:

- Small-group tutoring or academic coaching for students who need extra practice in specific subject areas.
- Behavioral support programs for students who need help managing behavior but do not need intensive one-on-one intervention.
- Peer mentoring or study groups where students can work with peers to strengthen academic skills.
- Check-in/check-out programs where students have brief daily meetings with an adult to monitor behavior and academic progress.

High School (slide pg 39) in the current schedule what is currently happening on MWF when there is Homeroom on T&Th?

In the current schedule classes are 50 minutes long on Monday and Friday. Classes are shortened to 45 minutes to allow for Homeroom/WIN/SOAR on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Classes are shortened to 42 minutes on Wednesdays to allow for PLC time in the morning and a delayed student start.

High school (slide pgs 39 & 41). With the new block schedule will the students actually lose classroom time? For example, if you add up all the instructional time for period 2 in a current week vs the time for course 2 in the new schedule. In the current schedule students receive 238 minutes of instruction, where in the block they will receive 170 minutes of instruction for the same course. That seems like a lot of missed curricula.

In the current schedule, students receive 232 minutes of instruction across five days. Some of those minutes are utilized for opening and closing the course each day. In the proposed schedule, there are 216 minutes of instruction across three days. The design committee believes the difference in minutes was the opening and closing routines of the course across the two additional days. There are no plans to alter any curriculum.

Structural changes (slide pg 48) Will changing the schedule for the school start and end times have any impact on older siblings that may need to watch and care for their elementary age siblings after school?

Our operations team had this in mind when they worked on proposals for start and end times and made every effort to minimize this.

Are we expecting to implement these changes starting the 2025-26 school year?

That is our preference and will be part of our formal recommendation when it is presented in February.

EC-

What is meant by Targeted Instruction?

Targeted instruction is instruction designed to meet the unique needs of individual learners including student's interests, strengths, skills, cultural experiences, and linguistic backgrounds.

Does being out on Fridays follow research and best practices? How do home visits weave into improved outcomes?

Research reflects that implementing targeted and developmentally appropriate practice requires deep knowledge about each child, including the context within which each child is living. School staff obtain this information through respectful, reciprocal relationships with children's families. As a result, it is important for staff to seek out and value the families' expertise about their own children. While Fridays will be used for home visits, they will also be used to provide community events in which educators can connect with families and provide information that parents can use in the home setting. Research shows that parents are students' first teachers and when parents learn from certified educators, they can tailor their environment at home in a way that supports learning that is done in classrooms.

JH-

What is the recommended amount of math instruction?

Middle school students should dedicate around one hour per day to learning mathematics, including both classroom instruction and guided practice. The recommendation would allow for 53-60 minutes of math instruction per day plus an additional 20 minutes of WIN attached to the math course which would allow for intervention or enrichment for math or other services as needed.

Elem-

I see WIN as an opportunity to learn more self-advocacy skill development and autonomy over learning. I am thinking about it right outside of additional time for needed instruction?

WIN will be a time when the needs of different students will be addressed. As a result, if there are students who need to develop self-advocacy skills more than others, this could be a focus of what those individual students are doing during the WIN Block. There will likely be times when students are working in small groups, 1:1 with a teacher, or independently, so teachers will need to work to develop executive functioning skills in students and foster student's ability to work independently and have autonomy over learning.

HS-

Is there a large staff consensus for the block schedule?

Yes. A formal survey was not done to give an exact percentage, but the school staff is significantly in favor of the shift.

This proposal came from the design team, correct? (Bottom up suggestion?)

It was. In September the design team was presented with the work from last year along with other options. The team came back to this schedule on their own.

What does research tell us about pros and cons of block scheduling?

Pros of High School Block Scheduling

- More time for engagement: Longer periods allow teachers more time to explain complex concepts, engage in discussions, and facilitate deeper learning activities.
- Less rushing: Teachers have more time to address individual student needs and provide more personalized instruction.
- Fewer transitions: Students experience fewer transitions between classes, which can reduce the feeling of "starting over" with each subject.
- Deeper learning: With extended periods, teachers can incorporate a variety of teaching methods (group work, experiments, discussions) that keep students more engaged.
- Project-based learning: Block schedules are conducive to project-based and hands-on learning, where students can work on long-term assignments and activities without the constraint of short class periods.
- More time for critical thinking: Longer class periods can support activities that promote critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis of ideas.
- Fewer disruptions: With fewer class changes, students may be less distracted by hallway transitions, reducing the amount of time needed for classroom management between periods.
- Fewer days missed per class: In some block scheduling formats, students attend fewer classes per week, meaning fewer opportunities to miss a subject in a given week.

Cons of High School Block Scheduling

- Difficulty maintaining focus: While some students thrive in longer classes, others may struggle with maintaining focus and attention for extended periods. Teachers will need to adjust lesson plans to ensure they fit within a longer period while changing up activities to keep students engaged.
- Classroom management: Managing a class for 85 minutes can be more demanding. The shift to longer classes can put additional pressure on teachers to plan more engaging, diverse lessons that can sustain student interest and engagement over extended periods. Teachers may plan their lessons in smaller chunks to maintain student engagement. These chunks may incorporate a variety of active learning activities such as group discussion and collaboration, case studies, problem solving tasks, or the use of technology. Movement is especially important, as is setting clear expectations and goals.
- Unbalanced workload: In some cases, block scheduling can lead to uneven distribution of assignments or assessments, creating a situation where students are overloaded on the days they have certain subjects. This can be mitigated through intentional scheduling, but it may not work out in all cases.

Will staff have adequate time to prepare for a shift if this is approved to begin in the fall?

Middle School: there is a detailed professional learning plan for this spring with potential summer opportunities. Curriculum teams/committees will have time to meet to be ready as well. The focus of the 25/26 professional development will be on how to best support students and staff with these recommendations. Much of the professional learning will be more applicable when the shifts are implemented. The anxiety that exists about change will still somewhat exist regardless if this is 25/26 or 26/27. Sometimes a longer lead way builds the anxiety with what staff are asking support with.

For my own understanding-can you provide some examples of Tier II interventions?

Please see above.

Who else in our area is utilizing some of the models proposed throughout?

The following Districts are just a few of those using a modified block in the Chicagoland area:

- District 214
- District 211
- Glenbard 87
- Downers Grove 99
- Deerfield/Highland Park
- New Trier

How will we measure the educational, engagement and social/emotional impact of these changes?

Information regarding success criteria and measuring impact will be shared at the February 3rd Board meeting.

How do we expect these changes to impact working families, particularly at the EC and Elementary level?

When families inquire about early childhood programs, they often inquire about requesting fewer days of preschool for three-year-olds. When looking at private preschool options, many other programs also reflect options that range from 2-5 days. Currently, working families often pair early childhood with another daycare option if it is needed. We do provide transportation to daycare facilities within our boundaries and would continue to do so. As a result, families who are already enrolling students in day cares would make a plan for their 3-year-olds to attend day care on Fridays.

At the elementary level, we are anticipating that there may be fewer families who need childcare before school hours since the proposal is to start 30 minutes earlier, however, we have already started conversations with both the YMCA and Champions program directors about our change of times and they are collaborative partners in adjusting their schedules and offerings in our buildings to support our change in times.

How much later do we expect our junior high sports to begin? This is an important consideration for being able to do both junior high and club sports. Given the impact on belonging for sports, I know we want to ensure that kids can continue to do both.

Currently, our students are getting picked up around 3:45 PM for conference sports due to our nested transportation structure and transportation constraints. With our recommended dismissal at 3:40 and buses being available to depart right away after dismissal we see little to no actual difference for conference athletics. Collaboratively, we may set a 4:15 instead of 4:00 start time especially for indoor sports to provide us with a buffer.

Will any of the feedback from the Focus 203 meetings be shared this evening, or will that be reported out at the next Board meeting?

A team is meeting to review and consider all of the feedback from both sessions and the Board of Education meeting and the transportation consultant tomorrow to finalize recommendations. Feedback from the Focus 203 meetings will then be incorporated into the February 3rd meeting.

How was feedback on the proposals solicited from students and from teachers and school staff?

Middle School:

6-8 student survey

6-8 staff survey

Innovative School Day Design Team (35 admin, certified staff, and paraprofessionals)

Listening Tour at all 5 middle schools

Middle School Student Leadership Culture Group feedback session

Second Additional Survey

Opportunities for ongoing question submission

SSAC on 1/24

8.05 Innovative School Day

When do we intend to implement if this is passed by the board? I want to ensure that staff has enough time to change all of their lesson plans and to feel supported in this huge change.

Our desired begin time will be August 2025. We will make that part of our final recommendation.

Can we review communication that has gone to our parent community on this topic including timelines.

Communication to our parent community has occurred throughout the past several years, starting with the development and publication of our strategic blueprint. Communication also occurred following the Innovation Summit in the summer of 2023, when we shared administrative teams have been working on three problems of practice, including innovating the school experience and published a video of that work. We began communication regarding our two part Focus 203 series on November 1st (viewed by 21,557 stakeholders). when we sent a Save the Date in Talk203 and posted it on our website. We have continued to communicate regarding our Focus 203 events in our Talk 203s and maintain it on our website every week since that time. We have seen a significant increase in the number of visits to our Focus 203 webpage across the past several months, with 1724 total views to that page since it was published at the end of October. We have had 218 registrants for the Focus 203 events.

For the Focus 203 videos posted on our page we have received the following views

- Session 1 = 752 Views (not including anyone who watched live)
- Session 2 = 796 Views (not including anyone who watched live)

For comparison purposes, our 12/16/24 Board of Education meeting had 392 views and our 10/7/24 meeting had 325 (dates chosen at random).

Additionally, individual schools included this information in their newsletters, it was shared at Home and School meetings and at other community group gatherings.

Our plan is to increase the frequency of communication and share our final *proposed* plan to ensure clarity and transparency after all details are finalized this week, including opportunities for feedback via a Let's Talk link.

What empirical evidence is being used to support block scheduling?

The High School Level Design Team used a number of different resources to inform it's decision on how to structure the school day. Below are a few of the ones that mention how a block schedule can help to improve student outcomes. (It is worth noting that some of the resources considered the impact of a 4-day week. The level design team chose not to pursue this.)

<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/reimagining-the-school-day/>

<https://www.redesigninghighschool.org/>

<https://unlockingtime.org/school-schedules>

<https://www.nbpts.org/blog/2016/11/03/why-more-high-schools-should-have-a-block-schedule/>

<https://www.aasa.org/resources/resource/the-effects-of-block-scheduling>

<https://rdw.rowan.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2400&context=etd>

<https://www.proquest.com/openview/b85903463a7dee37c63b959f79eb0c82/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=48109>

<https://today.uconn.edu/2024/01/around-the-block-evaluating-school-schedules/#>

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1356890.pdf>

One of the most valuable resources was the Redesigning High School site maintained by the Learning Policy Institute. Here is an excerpt from their work:

“Effective schools create structures that allow for the time and space needed to support positive developmental relationships between adults and young people, and among young people themselves. Teachers can help young people learn more effectively when they know their students well, both emotionally and intellectually. Students need support from adults and classmates they know and trust. When schools are designed to encourage such relationships, they can create a cultural context that reinforces cognitive development and allows young people to thrive. This is particularly important for adolescents, who seek strong senses of connection, belonging, and personal identity.

These kinds of relationships are difficult to develop in schools designed on the factory model, where students may see seven or eight teachers a day for 45 or 50 minutes at a time over the course of a semester, and teachers see 150 students or more every day. This structure precludes teachers from getting to know each student well, which is made even more difficult when teachers work in isolation from one another with little time to plan together or share their knowledge about what students need. Despite the fact that teachers care deeply about their students, it is not possible to care effectively for all of their needs in this structure. As a result, a recent survey of U.S. secondary school students found that less than 30% felt they were in a school that offered a caring environment.

The lack of close supportive relationships may lead students—especially those who have experienced trauma or who have unmet needs—to behave in ways that trigger punishment rather than support. The environment often focuses more on enforcement of rules and control of behavior than on getting to know students well so that their needs can be understood and addressed.

A California high school student in a large factory-model school explained his experience: “This place hurts my spirit.” An administrator in the same school voiced the dilemma of caring educators caught in the disjunct between students and the system: “My spirit is hurt, too, when I have to do things I don’t believe in.”¹⁰ Heavily stratified within and substantially dehumanized throughout, the factory-model school, which we inherited from the efficiency experts of so many years ago, creates a context in which many students experience schools as not caring, even adversarial, environments, where “getting through” becomes the goal when getting known is impossible. But school does not have to be like this...

Many secondary schools also reduce pupil loads for teachers by having teachers teach fewer groups of students for longer blocks of time. Some forms of block scheduling strengthen relationships by reducing course loads for both teachers and students. Many high schools use either a “4x4” block schedule, in which students take four courses in the fall semester and four in the spring semester, or an “A/B” block schedule, in which students may take courses on alternating days of the week for the full year. Each course meets for approximately 90 minutes per day rather than the typical 45 minutes. This system cuts teachers’ typical pupil loads in half and allows teachers to plan lessons that include engaging elements such as group work, hands-on problem-solving, presentations, and project-based learning. Meanwhile, students can focus on fewer subjects at once and do more rigorous work in each one, with more time in class for peer collaboration and inquiry-based learning along with direct instruction. Some schools operate daily block schedule courses for the full academic year, which gives students an even more in-depth experience in each area. Research suggests that this full-year model of block scheduling is particularly important for success in math courses.”

How was the decision made to pursue block scheduling?

The level design team decided early on that a block schedule met the needs of Naperville 203. Specifically, the longer amounts of time afforded in a block schedule can help increase a student's sense of belonging through the development of positive relationships with teachers and allow more time for deeper learning experiences. The block also makes it possible for the school day to be compressed and shortened while preserving instructional time.

How are community responses being utilized in the decision making process?

Community feedback from our two Focus 203 sessions and Let's Talk submissions was analyzed for themes. Our administrative team then determined action steps based upon the themes identified. Details regarding the specific action steps taken were shared in our February 3rd Board presentation.

If the community responds negatively to block scheduling, what will the administration do?

The block schedule was determined by the design team to be a very important part of the solution to a number of our identified problems of practice. Additionally, a significant majority of the high school teachers agree that this shift should occur. The District has done as much as it can within the constraints of the current schedule to meet the needs of our students. A new way of thinking is needed to solve the problems that lie ahead of us. It is our hope that we can provide our stakeholders with information that would help them understand the problems we are trying to solve and how the new schedule addresses them. Education on the "why" is an important part of this change process. That is why the Focus 203 events were so important. Once the block schedule is implemented, feedback from students, staff, and other stakeholders will be collected. Any concerns will be looked into and solutions will be considered. We understand that this is the first step in a process of innovation and that iteration and change is likely to occur to improve the outcomes for our students.

BOARD SUBMITTED QUESTIONS - FEBRUARY 3, 2025

Why is this the right time to implement this?

Is a 2026-27 implementation feasible?

Have any surrounding districts that have block scheduling seen an improvement in scores, grades, etc.? If so, how long before they saw a positive impact?

What additional exploratories will be offered at the Jr High level?

These would be created and added over the next 3-4 years, so that we can properly develop the curriculum, select resources, and provide necessary professional learning. We will continue to work with staff and students based on their interests and what they have identified as needs. We are also working on developing courses that promote the development of our profile of a learner skills as well as review our pathway alignment with the high school and ever changing ISBE mandates. Below are a few course topics we have been discussing.

- Health & Wellness (6th & 7th)-restructure the current health course to meet ISBE mandate and provide a more comprehensive experience for our students and their needs

- Music Appreciation/Theory and Music Production
- Cultures or Global Citizenship
- Computer Science Pathways

I think it might be helpful to highlight to the public the driver shortage and difficulty for bus vendors to find drivers even when we look outside for help.

This is part of the presentation this evening. This has been added to the FAQ's.

Please inform the community on how activities will or will not be impacted by time shifts.

This will be part of the presentation this evening and will be added to the FAQs.

Current elementary schedule/instructional minutes: Request from last meeting

In this chart, you will see that there is not currently an allotment of minutes at the elementary level for morning meetings or a WIN Block. In addition, the elementary recommended minutes do not take into account the transitions that happen throughout the school day in the same way that middle school and high school do with their passing periods, however, there are transitions for elementary students for things like lunch, recess, specials, or other transitions that occur between content areas and are not reflected in schedules.



K-5 Instructional Minutes

Grade/Subject	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Total Weekly Minutes/1875	1645-1745	1645-1745	1675-1775	1755-1785	1685-1835	1685-1835
Literacy Block	150-170 (daily)	150-170 (daily)	150-170 (daily)	150 (daily)	120-150 (daily)	120-150 (daily)
Math	60 (daily)					
Science/Health	30 (3x per week)	30 (3x per week)	40 (3x per week)	50 (4x per week)	50 (daily)	50 (daily)
Social Studies						
Art	50 (weekly)	50 (weekly)	50 (weekly)	50-60 (weekly)	60 (weekly)	60 (weekly)
Music	25 (2x per week)	25 (2x per week)	25 (2x per week)	30 (2x per week)	30 (2x per week)	30 (2x per week)
LC	50 (weekly)					
Physical Education	25 (2x per week)	25 (2x a week)	25 (2x per week)	25-30 (2x per week)	30 (2x per week)	30 (2x per week)
SEL	30 (per week)					
Additional Recess	15 (daily)					
Lunch/ Daily Physical Activity PM	20 lunch/20 recess (daily)					

*These are guidelines for minutes of instruction per content area. *Revised April 2022

Given that we are considering shortening the EC hours will the fees be adjusted should these changes go through?

When comparing the fees of the Early Childhood Center to other preschool programs in the area, the fees are comparable for 3-year-olds, even with the change in hours that are recommended. As a result, the recommended fees for EC will stay the same.

For EC, how do these fees compare with private preschool?

The fees are in line with what private schools are charging for 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds, with multiple local programs charging more for 4-year-olds and 5-year-olds in comparison to the time or number of days being offered. There are private preschools that are charging the same for 3-year-olds for two days versus our offering of 3 days.

Innovative School Day:

Thank you for your efforts to compile information regarding the process. It is appreciated.

EC:

How does a 2 hour day compare with other private preschool options?

Private programs vary in their offerings in regards to number of days per week and hours per day with some only offering 2 days a week for 3-year-olds and others allowing families to choose the number of days per week up to five days, however, in comparing to private programs there is a trend of programs offering 3-year-olds two days a week programs for 2.5 hours a day, versus our proposal of 3 days a week for 2 hours.

Elementary:

Concerns have been raised by our EL teachers that the students most in need of some of the early in the morning activities (morning meeting) are often tardy. Could we please have some data about elementary school tardies by student population? Did the design team consider this? What is their proposed solution?

Unfortunately, staff are making assumptions based on EL status and socio-economic factors. We are currently gathering data to understand if this is factual. It is clear we need to continue to work on our professional learning in the area of culturally responsive practices and equity with our staff based on some of these assumptions. Our Director of Language Acquisition will work personally with families to ensure they understand the shifts and remove barriers that may be in place for them. We are also planning to bring awareness and conversation to BPAC to create a common understanding and coordinated effort so that all EL families know and understand the shifts.

Many Elementary schools currently run activities before school. Will these activities be switched to after school given the earlier start?

We anticipate that elementary schools will look at offerings for clubs and activities that are currently being offered before school and make changes to run many of those in the afternoon, however, there may be a few that are still held before school, depending on what the clubs are and the availability of staff involved in the clubs. Currently, clubs and activities are running both before and after school and this may continue, but likely there will be fewer clubs running before school hours.

Do we have any research regarding sleep/start times for elementary school students?

Research shows that both elementary and adolescent students benefit from adequate sleep, but their sleep needs differ significantly due to developmental and biological factors.

Elementary-aged children (ages 5-10) generally require 10 to 11 hours of sleep and tend to thrive when they have structured routines for bedtime and waking up. Unlike adolescents, younger children's natural circadian rhythms make it easier for them to wake up earlier in the morning. Studies indicate that with consistent bedtime routines, younger children naturally wake up earlier and can be alert and engaged earlier in the day.

In contrast, adolescents experience a biological shift in their circadian rhythms during puberty, which causes them to feel more awake later in the evening and struggle to wake up early in the morning. This shift is not simply behavioral but tied to changes in how their bodies regulate melatonin, the hormone that promotes sleep. As a result, research strongly supports later start times for middle and high school students to align with their sleep cycles and improve academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being.

Junior High:

Concerns have been raised by the community regarding the gap between the elementary school start time and the junior high start time. Concerns have also been raised about the impact of the lateness of the junior high end time on afterschool sports and clubs. Placement of junior high sports/clubs before school instead of after school could mitigate these concerns, however, this would bring questions about the impact of that change for students who ride the bus to school. I know that sports competitions have already been factored into consideration. What has been considered regarding sports/club placement, including how any changes will impact all student populations?

Principals and athletic directors continue to have conversations to brainstorm how best to support a school day time change and extracurriculars. The athletic directors have also brainstormed ideas for consideration and the Assistant Superintendent for Middle Schools will be meeting with them and the principals again in the near future. The transportation department does believe they would have athletic buses available at dismissal (proposed 3:40). Currently, our 4:00 start times rarely start on time as both D203 & D204 have bussing delays and typically arrive after 4:00. We do feel a 4:15 start time is doable. We have heard from some working families that this would be nicer as they would have an opportunity to attend their children's events. For the day of the conference cross country meet, the team is also considering the possibility of releasing our student participants 10 minutes early if the 15 minutes of daylight is a major barrier.

There have always been students whose school participation is impacted by outside club teams. We do feel it's important that people know that 3-20% of a student population at the middle school level is in conference athletics at one time with the largest being during Track & Field and Cross Country. There is still approximately 80% of any school community that isn't in a conference athletic event throughout the year. Although any percentage is important, It's important to keep in mind the percentage of students that we are talking about.

Many of our community partners that offer extracurricular activities have expressed that they will alter their times for our families as we are a significant customer base.

In addition, principals will work with their staff and students on continuing to offer our students a balanced amount of offerings before and after school, so that all students have access to clubs, intramurals, & athletics. Principals and the Assistant Superintendent for Middle School monitor participation rates & sense of belonging data. All schools have SIP goals tied to this and accountability measures built into their plan. This allows us to closely monitor changes and shifts and be responsive.

During Board consideration at the previous Board meeting, the final 20 minutes of math were outlined as a time for students to work with staff for extra help. How will this 20 minutes be staffed (ie math specialists)?

Middle School:

<p>What is the purpose of the Back 20 of the math block at the middle school?</p>	<p>Students will now have a daily 20-minute "What I Need" (WIN) period for personalized support, allowing them to receive targeted help or enrichment in math, address learning gaps, extend their skills, or work with certified staff such as counselors, social workers, speech pathologists, interventionists/specialists, learning behavior specialists or multilingual teachers. The math core teacher will still be the primary teacher of the classroom. Any of the roles mentioned above can push in to reduce the ratio based on the need. This time is designed to meet each student's unique needs and support their individual growth. It provides additional access to all students for personalized time or minutes.</p>
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High School:

Several area high schools were mentioned who have implemented block scheduling. Have we reached out to districts who are implementing? What are their lessons learned from implementation?

Maine Township: Incorporated professional learning before the pandemic and delayed implementation until after COVID measures were removed. Our administrators have been in contact with administrators there to discuss their experiences

Downers Grove: Principals had been in discussions with the Downers principals since they implemented the block 3 years ago. Lessons learned included their experience with scheduling PLC's, professional learning. It is worth noting we have intentionally designed our system differently than Downers did. A 203 team also conducted a site visit.

Glenbard: We have had a connection for several years about interventions (WIN). They are in year 1 of implementation. The Assistant Principals of Instruction are working to create a network for the Department Chairs in these three districts to share information about lessons learned and best practices in a block.

I thought it was incredibly helpful at the SSAC meeting to talk about how a student who is struggling in math could combine the large block, plus the SOAR/WIN sessions to see their teacher daily, and receive high intensity support during SOAR/WIN. Will you please outline this for the BOE and the considerations in this regard for students who are most in need of services

(IEP/504/Students with achievement gaps)? How will this be intentionally scheduled for students?

At each high school students have the option to choose a support through Infinite Campus. Teachers also have the option of pulling the student for support. If a student does not choose a location for SOAR/WIN, building administrators review grades and choose a support location for each student. We anticipate the continuation of this procedure in the new structure. One of the current challenges we face in scheduling SOAR/WIN is the limited number of time slots available. There are two blocks a week for this purpose, and often homeroom takes one of these slots. With more time slots available for support the interventions provided during WIN may be more intentionally scheduled.

The presentation mentions the concerns about unstructured time. However, if students choose not to attend SOAR/WIN sessions with teachers, they have a large block of unstructured time twice a week. Will students be required to attend at least one session with a teacher?

Students are required to be in a WIN/SOAR session. If a student does not select one, a session is assigned to them. Students who do not have any pressing academic concerns may use the time to work independently or in groups on coursework.

Having a student who has done an internship, this appears to pave the way for more students to be able to experience work based learning. Will you please outline the ways that you expect to use this model to allow more students to receive a career pathway endorsement? Please include how this schedule would work for TCD, etc.

The longer periods of time will allow our students to experience more authentic learning experiences in the courses they are currently taking. The model itself does not add any additional course slots, however, it allows students the opportunity for extended periods of time to engage in these experiences during their school day. The availability of the courses will have that impact. The schedule will not impact a student's ability to take coursework at TCD.

Concerns have been mentioned regarding the impact of this change on subjects that require repetition, such as foreign language. What do you believe the impact of these changes will be on these classes?

Middle School: All middle school exploratory classes including World Languages will meet daily.

High School: Daily practice of language can occur in multiple ways. Students may listen to or watch videos to practice listening skills. Students may use digital tools to record themselves speaking as a part of a homework assignment. Reading and writing in the language may also be assigned as homework for students to practice the necessary literacy skills when they are not in class. Students requiring additional assistance will have additional SOAR/WIN periods to access teachers for help.

High School:

When teachers inevitably have absences, how will it work for students to catch up on what would be two current days of learning?

Teachers can use canvas and other digital tools to update students and keep learning moving forward. Teachers can also use the additional WIN/SOAR time to work with students that need supplemental instruction to get caught up.

General Questions:

You have shared a lot of information about models that have been considered, thank you. One of our community members suggested a modified schedule based on the Wednesday late start model. Was such an idea considered?

Days of different lengths were considered. Ultimately the short days, and shorter periods of time that go with it, were not recommended in favor of a consistent schedule which builds in teacher planning time up to 5 days a week.

Given the many changes that will occur simultaneously, have we considered implementing the model first during the 25-26 school year, and the start time changes second, during the 26-27 year?

The design team recommendation for the high school includes shortening the school day by 35 minutes and the recommendation from the elementary school design team includes lengthening the school day by 15 minutes. In the image below, you can see current schedules, proposed schedules, and how the schedules would work if we maintained the current start times and implemented the proposals. Unfortunately, this creates additional barriers as it would add 30 minutes of unsupervised time for elementary students and 60 minutes of unsupervised time for middle school students at the end of their school days.



Regarding the listening/feedback sessions at all of the buildings-were these mandatory for staff to attend or was it a drop-in format where individuals stopped in if they wanted?

Voluntary for all levels.

Innovative School Day

We have been inundated with emails regarding the change in transportation scheduling. Can you please provide more rationale for why each section's start and end times, with a particular emphasis on junior high school? I am concerned about the significant gap in start and end times for junior high compared to elementary and the impact this will have on families for before care.

Research supports later start times for adolescents, improving their well-being and meeting their physiological needs. Moving elementary schools to start minimizes the change to their start/end times and may minimize the need for before-school care. It also ensures that buses are available during the day for field trips and extracurricular activities. Middle schools ending last, allow high schools to finish earlier to support participation in conference events at varying distances from Naperville, participate in internships, and seek/retain employment. We do not recommend Elementary starting last as our Elementary bus routes utilize our entire fleet and we would not have buses available for after school activities. These operational changes shorten bus routes and ensure nearly all buses drop off close to the start of the school day and are waiting at dismissal.

We have two community partners that are willing to offer before-school programs in our middle schools which should provide families with a good option for those that need it. Both do offer waivers and reduced fees for students who are eligible for the free/reduced lunch program.

Are there any significant financial implications or efficiencies for shifting to the innovative school day?

There are no significant financial implications in the innovative school day recommendations. Our teams have worked to develop recommendations that have no new costs associated with them.

On the HS survey, there were only 173 responses. Why are these numbers so low compared to the middle school survey rates?

The survey was given near the end of the year. There may have been "survey fatigue" from the recent 5 Essentials administration and the SAT administration. Furthermore, the survey was fairly long and took some time and effort to complete due to the open-ended nature of the questions.

Will there be childcare options available before school, especially for middle school students, and after school, especially for elementary? Will these programs consider family need (e.g. free and reduced lunch status) in their cost structure?

We have two community partners that are willing to offer before-school programs in our middle schools which should provide families with a good option for those that need it. Both do offer waivers and reduced fees for students with FRL.

The partners that are willing to provide programming at middle school are already offering programs at the elementary level. The changes in start and ends times have been shared with them and they are willing to adjust their programming to reflect the change in start and end times at elementary schools. They currently start programming at 6:30 a.m. at the elementary level and go until 6:00 p.m. after school.

In the chart with start / end times for other unit districts, all of them go HS - JH - Elem. Are there other districts that you know about that have a schedule similar to the one being proposed with

Elem - HS - MS? If so, did you reach out and ask about implementation challenges in those districts?

One example is Barrington School District 220. The start and end times of their schools were shifted at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. The order of their school start times has been successfully implemented since 2017-2028 and is the same as what we are proposing: Elem - HS - MS.

In making the transition, they reached out to community partners to share the proposed changes and worked with them to make changes to childcare offerings and times that extra-curriculars were offered within the community. We have already initiated those conversations with our community partners and received positive responses that our partners are willing to work with us and can accommodate changes on their end.

Frequent reminders and communication with families about the changes that were being anticipated once the decision was made was also key. With us starting the conversations with our community in January, we will continue to communicate with them about the changes and plan for those changes from now until the start of school in August. This will allow for time for us to consider challenges that arise as we receive feedback and make plans accordingly. We will continue to communicate frequently providing reminders and information as to how challenges are being addressed, for example, adding childcare options at the middle schools to accommodate for the later start time.

Sleep needs for JH / HS students are well documented. What does the literature say about elementary school students and early start times for elementary?

Research shows that both elementary and adolescent students benefit from adequate sleep, but their sleep needs differ significantly due to developmental and biological factors.

Elementary-aged children (ages 5-10) generally require 10 to 11 hours of sleep and tend to thrive when they have structured routines for bedtime and waking up. Unlike adolescents, younger children's natural circadian rhythms make it easier for them to wake up earlier in the morning. Studies indicate that with consistent bedtime routines, younger children naturally wake up earlier and have the ability to be alert and engaged earlier in the day.

In contrast, adolescents experience a biological shift in their circadian rhythms during puberty, which causes them to feel more awake later in the evening and struggle to wake up early in the morning. This shift is not simply behavioral but tied to changes in how their bodies regulate melatonin, the hormone that promotes sleep. As a result, research strongly supports later start times for middle and high school students to align with their sleep cycles and improve academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being.

One of the outcomes for 25-26 is "plan, design, and implement effective instruction." Ideally, planning and designing should be well underway if the goal is implementation next year. What is the current state of planning and designing and what kinds of professional development will be provided for teachers and staff, especially those moving to block schedule where an active classroom is really essential to keep students engaged longer?

Questions:

How will this impact bussing? Will this create an opportunity to expand the radius of the area around schools that are eligible to take the bus? Will the changes allow more families to opt in? **Transportation eligibility is governed by policy 4:110 which, like all districts, comes from state law.**

Are there other districts we know of that have made or are making this level of change? How have the other districts managed the roll-out? Over what time frame? How did the results track during the roll-out?

As we look at other districts that have implemented block scheduling, are there examples of districts that also implemented changes to start times at the same time?

Will there be adjustments to building opening times to facilitate/accommodate students being dropped off early?

What are we doing or planning to do to partner with local business partners to offer services to support the transition? (i.e. YMCA program expansion) especially to support the middle school schedule change

We have two community partners that are willing to offer before school programs in our middle schools which should provide families with a good option for those that need it. Both do offer waivers and reduced fees for students with FRL.

What support can/will be offered to help with the transitions to manage the key logistical issues families will need to manage as part of this transition?

What consideration was given to the changing workforce dynamic of organizations (Return to office etc..) and the impact on how this transition can be managed?

Can we compare/Contrast what W.I.N. looks like at the High School /Middle School /Elementary School level?

Elementary WIN will be offered 4 days a week for 30 min. During that time interventions, support, and extension will be provided to students. Support and interventions may be provided by the classroom teacher, interventionists, support staff, or other certified staff or service providers depending on the needs of students. The subject areas addressed with students during the WIN block will also be dependent upon the needs of the individual students.

Middle School WIN will be offered daily for 20 minutes for all students. Students can also take a intervention course (EL, Newcomer, Literacy, or Mathematics) as one of their exploratory classes (35-41 minutes per day, 5 days per week) if they need further support than the WIN time attached to the math block.

High School WIN/SOAR will be offered every week. 4-40 minute time slots will be available for homeroom and WIN/SOAR each 4 or 5 day week.

What professional development has or will be offered to help with the transition for Teachers?

What are we anticipating being the biggest challenges to implementation and what are our mitigation plans for those scenarios

What information do we have about how block scheduling impacts neuro-divergent kids? What research is available on that?

Positives: Longer class periods can allow students with IEPs more time to focus on complex tasks without feeling rushed. This can benefit students who need extra time to process information or complete assignments. With fewer class periods per day, students may have fewer transitions between classes, which can be less overwhelming, especially for students with anxiety, autism, or attention-related challenges. Longer blocks can facilitate more group work or peer interactions, which could be beneficial for students with social or communication challenges. The extra time can also support the inclusion of assistive technology and accommodations. Finally, the additional WIN/SOAR time will allow students more time to seek assistance and support.

Challenges: Long class periods can be difficult for students with attention, concentration, or energy challenges (e.g., ADHD, learning disabilities). They may find it harder to stay engaged for 90 minutes without breaks. Taking breaks during class, allowing for extended time for assignments/tests, or changes in classroom layout could help students with disabilities stay engaged. A block schedule means fewer class periods per week, which can result in longer periods without feedback or check-ins. With fewer, but longer, periods, students might have more difficulty managing their assignments, tests, and long-term projects if they struggle with executive functioning. Visual schedules, check-ins, and other time management strategies may help students structure and organize these longer blocks of time and prevent them from feeling overwhelmed.

Overall, the impact of a block schedule on students with disabilities varies depending on the nature of the disability, the specific accommodations provided, and the support systems that are put in place for the student. For more information please feel free to look at these resources:

<https://www.nbpts.org/blog/2016/11/03/why-more-high-schools-should-have-a-block-schedule/>

<https://www.aasa.org/resources/resource/the-effects-of-block-scheduling>

<https://rdw.rowan.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2400&context=etd>

<https://www.proquest.com/openview/b85903463a7dee37c63b959f79eb0c82/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=48109>

<https://today.uconn.edu/2024/01/around-the-block-evaluating-school-schedules/#>

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1356890.pdf>

What information do we have on the impact of this type of scheduling on student cohorts that are experiencing achievement gaps?

Block schedules provide more time for teachers to implement differentiated instruction strategies. Teachers can offer multiple entry points to the content and tailor lessons to different learning styles and needs. For example, while some students might benefit from more direct

instruction, others may thrive in collaborative activities or project-based learning. A teacher may also use the extended class time to break the class into small groups based on ability levels or learning styles. This gives each student more personalized attention and support, making the instruction more accessible.

The extended time in a block schedule allows for more complex, long-term projects that can engage students at all levels. Projects that require critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving give students opportunities to demonstrate their learning in diverse ways and can be adjusted for different levels of difficulty to meet students where they are. Projects may also be designed to make connections to real-world issues, increasing motivation and engagement for students from all backgrounds. Finally, with more time in each class period, teachers can conduct ongoing formative assessments, such as quizzes, written reflections, or quick check-ins. Teachers can use this data to adjust instruction in real-time, ensuring that gaps in understanding are addressed before they become bigger issues.

The proposed schedules also increases the time for professional learning communities (PLC's) to meet. Teachers can use this time to work with colleagues to share strategies, discuss students' progress, and adjust instructional practices accordingly. For example, teachers can analyze data (e.g., test scores, assignment grades) during their PLC time and tailor future lessons to focus on areas where achievement gaps are most evident.

Are we having conversations with other districts to align times for extracurricular activity starts? Prior to start/end times being shared, conversations took place with District 204 administration. They are the only district in the middle school conference.

This proposal looks to move from a nested schedule to a staggered schedule. The other examples listed in the presentation have high school starting first and elementary starting last. Are there examples of districts that have moved to a schedule where Jr. High starting time is that late, and that big of a gap between Elementary and Junior High
Barrington starts their middle schools at 8:52 and ends them at 3:40. D300 (Algonquin, Carpentersville, Hampshire) starts their middle schools at 8:55 and ends the day at 3:40. Elmhurst 205 starts middle schools at 8:30 and they end at 3:30. Barrington and Elmhurst have a 2-tiered busing model and so the elementary schools start closer to the middle schools. D300 has the high schools start first, then the elementary schools, with the middle schools last.

Any examples of districts where elementary starts that early? If so, what were the challenges faced by that district and what did they do to overcome them?

St. Peter and Paul in Naperville start their elementary day at 7:45 a.m. with students arriving at school at 7:35 a.m. Also, their early childhood students begin arriving at school at 7:45 a.m.

Barrington starts elementary students at 8:00 a.m. They shifted the elementary start time from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. several years ago and report that the change has been positive. This was a change for their students starting one hour earlier than their original time compared to our proposal of elementary students starting 30 minutes earlier than our current time, and

Barrington administration reported students adjusted well to the time change even with it being an hour difference. Barrington administration also reports that their elementary buses start arriving on their campus with students as early as 7:30- 7:35 a.m. in the morning.

How do we plan to measure the effectiveness of these changes? And what is the expected trajectory of those metrics? Would like to see a prototype scorecard and targets for those metrics and what the contingency plan will be to course correct if we are not on track

Please refer to the Innovative School Experience Outcomes and Measures document in Board Docs.

What alternatives were examined in terms of phasing this roll-out as opposed to doing it all at once?

Is the block scheduling necessary because of a lack of transportation resources?

The District's Operational Steering Committee oversees operational decisions and transportation. This was not a topic of the Innovative School Day committee and the experience or bell structure that would be best for students at each level. They are two separate recommendations.

Now that we have shared with the larger community. Are we seeking input from staff beyond the Design Teams?

How have we allowed for student voice in this process? How will we gather that input moving forward?

Did we have feedback from all four unions on this new initiative?

In the development of the plan, NUEA had the largest representation. There was limited NESPA representation on the design teams. In the past month, we have had more conversations with our union leadership, mainly NTA and NESPA. NUMA has not expressed specific concerns. NUEA, NESPA, and NTA have all expressed and agree that more time is needed and that an implementation a year from now would give time to plan and help members adjust to the changes. They state if members had a year to plan it would be appreciated and help the plan to move forward successfully.

I have heard a ton of questions from staff on logistics, how are those going to be addressed?

Are we anticipating the need for students and staff to have a break during an 85 minute period and how does that look?

Yes. Using movement, stretching, and other forms of "brain breaks" will be important in maintaining student focus and engagement. It should be mentioned that our K-5 grades already incorporate these into their daily routines. Alternating between lectures, multimedia

presentations, collaborative small-group discussions, short formative assessments, and other activities will also help keep the energy up in the classroom.

Are there a large number of students truant or called out for SOAR/WIN in our current schedule? How many students? I was not aware that this was a problem and how will we address it with more time in those blocks?

Data from this January and February showed that on any given Tuesday/Thursday about 4-8% of students will miss HR/SOAR/WIN for any number of reasons but be present at other times of the day. This data will be monitored when the change in schedule occurs as one of the measurements of the success of the change.

BOARD SUBMITTED QUESTIONS - FEBRUARY 18, 2025

Innovative School Day:

I know you have heard a lot from the community over the last two weeks. Is there a way to summarize the feedback?

The most common themes are being incorporated in the FAQs.

Could we please have the numbers for first period absences and tardies compared to other periods for both NCHS and NNHS?

We will take a look at this for when we bring our recommendation back to the Board.

I think it would also be helpful to see senior year absenteeism at both high schools compared to other class years, to reflect on student engagement for our seniors.

We will take a look at this for when we bring our recommendation back to the Board. This information is also available for SY24 and prior years on the [Illinois Report Card](#) by school and grade level.

Have we had any more conversations about how to make practices for junior high sports work for students who are also club athletes?

Principals and athletic directors continue to have conversations to brainstorm how best to support a school day time change and extracurriculars. The athletic directors have also brainstormed ideas for consideration and the Assistant Superintendent for Middle Schools will be meeting with them and the principals again in the near future. The transportation department does believe they would have athletic buses available at dismissal (proposed 3:40). Currently, our 4:00 start times rarely start on time as both D203 & D204 have bussing delays and typically arrive after 4:00. We do feel a 4:15 start time is doable. We have heard from some working families as this would actually be nicer as they would have an opportunity to attend their child's events. For the day of the conference cross country meet, the team is also considering the possibility of releasing our student participants 10 minutes early if the 15 minutes of daylight is a major barrier.

There have always been students whose school participation is impacted by outside club teams. We do feel it's important that people know that 3-20% of a student population at the middle school level is in conference athletics at one time with the largest being during Track & Field and

Cross Country. There is still approximately 80% of any school community that isn't in a conference athletic event throughout the year. Although any percentage is important, It's important to keep in mind the percentage of students that we are talking about.

I am very curious after the last board meeting and the several discussions with the NUEA how some of the recommendations for ISE have evolved. To me it seemed like a big ask was to slow down and pace the implementation into block scheduling. Are there others?

Throughout our conversations, this continues to be the key factor with NUEA.

BOARD SUBMITTED QUESTIONS - MARCH 10, 2025

ISD update: While reading through the update I started wondering about 2 things. First, is the proposed amount of class time for the high school age appropriate? I've heard concerns that it may be too long because kids may not have long attention spans but I get that stamina is a necessity. I'm just curious how the number of minutes was decided.

Blocks of 80-90 minutes are common for most schools in a block schedule. The longer lengths of time are necessary for the changes we want to see in instructional practice- more time for project based, deeper learning activities. The stamina conversation has been a counterpoint for those opposed to the block for some time. Teachers can mitigate fatigue using any of the following techniques:

- Frequent movement: Give students opportunities to move around. This could include group activities, partner discussions, or even short physical activities (like stretching or standing breaks).
- Interactive lessons: Use hands-on activities, real-world applications, or collaborative work to keep students engaged.
- Gradual Increase in Complexity: Start with more manageable tasks and increase the difficulty or length of assignments gradually to build endurance.
- Student choice: Allow students some degree of choice in how they approach tasks, whether it's choosing a project topic or a method of demonstrating learning. This autonomy keeps students mentally invested.
- Real-world connections: Relate lessons to real-life scenarios or student interests to keep them focused.
- Multimedia: Integrating videos, podcasts, and visual aids into lessons can keep things interesting and provide a break from traditional lecture-based learning.
- Chunking tasks: Help students break down long assignments or tasks into smaller, manageable pieces.

Most teachers **already use these strategies** in their 50 minute classes. After all, students are currently in our high schools for more than 7 hours a day. Teachers that are instructing at the end of a school day are mindful that their students may have already had 5+ hours of instruction that day already! These are characteristics of good instruction. Incorporating them more frequently into an 85-minute lesson will be a part of the PLC work and staff development for the next 18 months.

Second, I'm wondering how later start times will be a positive step to reduce disciplinary issues. Is there any research or evidence that incidents decrease with later starts? Have we seen

anything with our own late starts on Wednesdays? I know my fuse gets much shorter when I am tired and I am hopeful that extra sleep (and less unstructured time) will help reduce the number of problems.

There is some research that links later start times to improved behavior. It is hypothesized that later start times improve sleep quality leading to reduced irritability, improved impulse control and mood regulation, more patience, and more effective learning. We do not currently have any internal body of data that looks at our own late starts at the high school level and discipline.

However, there is this [ARTICLE](#) on sleep and behavioral health which states:

“A growing body of research provides evidence that sleep deprivation is associated with a variety of negative social, behavioral, and health-related outcomes (Colten and Altevogt, 2006, Shochat et al., 2013, Womack et al., 2013). Among other things, insufficient sleep has been linked to delinquency and risk-taking behavior (e.g., Clinkinbeard et al., 2011, O'Brien and Mindell, 2005), anxiety (Talbot et al., 2010), diabetes (Beihl et al., 2009), depression and suicidal ideation (Roane and Taylor, 2008), poor school performance (Curcio et al., 2006), and workplace deviance (Christian and Ellis, 2011). It is believed that much of the influence of sleep deprivation operates through the mechanism of impairing cognitive functioning and self-control (Altena et al., 2008, Kamphuis et al., 2012, Meldrum et al., 2013, Walker, 2008). Such deficits, in turn are believed to contribute to behavior regulation problems (Pratt and Cullen, 2000) and poor health (e.g., Miller et al., 2011).

Also, eliminating the majority of the unstructured time before/after school is where we are confident it will help behaviors that end with discipline and exclusionary issues. For many students, this would eliminate 30-60 minutes of unstructured time from their day at the 6-12 levels.

Regarding the innovative school day, I appreciate the one year delay on rolling it out so that professional development can be done. However, I think a number of the concerns from the community will still remain. Are there expanded references addressing things like the success of certain groups of students under some of the proposed schedule changes, e.g. students with IEPs and 504 plans in block schedules? It seems like a number of important questions that have been raised haven't been addressed in the community facing FAQs.

Research on block scheduling specific to students with learning needs (IEP, 504s, ect) shows many benefits, such as, additional time for differentiation, enhanced teacher-student relationships and allowing more time for deeper understanding of instruction. Similar to the research on block scheduling for all students, there are also challenges that need to be considered and purposefully planned for; such as sustaining attention and executive functioning needs. Changing the timeline to add a full school year to prepare for schedule changes will allow ample opportunities for professional learning that allows staff to be prepared to support these challenges for all students in a block scheduling model. The changes proposed in the ISE will not impact how we recommend or provide services to students with an IEP. We will continue to make service recommendations based on educational needs and IEP goals. We will continue to provide services through co-teaching and pull-out models.

Middle School Specifically:

The proposed middle school schedule increases dedicated mathematics instruction time while ensuring a 20-minute daily intervention block for all students. Additionally, intervention courses will continue to be offered as part of the exploratory options, providing additional targeted support for students who require intervention or IEP goal minutes in multiple areas. Under the new ISE recommendation, students receiving intervention during one exploratory period will still have access to another exploratory class. Currently, the middle school schedule does not allow students needing additional support—whether for IEP services, 504 accommodations, general education interventions, or multilingual learning—to participate in exploratory courses if they need more extensive intervention or have services that require extensive direct instruction/minutes. In addition, currently, students who are in Band-Choir-Orchestra are pulled from core instruction for lessons and the whole group takes place during times where intervention is often provided. The new recommendation would offer 2 exploratory periods so that Band, Choir, & Orchestra could be exploratory options and students would not need to miss core instruction or intervention to participate. This change aims to provide equitable access to both intervention and enrichment opportunities for all students.

Innovative School Day:

Thank you so much for attaching the research! I especially love the report from the University of West Georgia. So much data about the impact on discipline.~Could we get the details about how to access the proquest article? Thank you!

West Georgia article:

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1356890.pdf>

Others:

Science Direct:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0091743514000929#bbb0030>

Journal of Psychosocial Nursing and Mental Health Services

<https://journals.healio.com/doi/abs/10.3928/02793695-20110802-02>

Sleep

<https://academic.oup.com/sleep/article-abstract/40/1/zsw004/2660404>

Preventative Medicine

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.4137/CCRPM.S7955>

Behavioral Sleep Medicine

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/s15402010bsm0303_1

My earlier question about the high number of absences in first period might really help this dialogue in terms of laying the groundwork for a later start time. Will this data be presented?

We shared the data regarding 1st period tardies for MS and HS in the January 21st presentation and will include it this evening.

Innovative School Day

With the current proposal I am glad that you are taking time for implementation; however, are there any actual suggested changes to the proposal besides when it will be implemented?

I think there needs to be a plan around helping parents and the community adjust to the schedule change as well. Are there any other options for the start and end times verse what was presented?

If start/end times are compressed to allow the earliest level to start later and the latest level to dismiss earlier, the challenge with unsupervised time for students due to early bus drop off and late pick up while drivers complete their routes. The times are already compressed tighter than ideal based on input from our transportation consultant. In the event this is direction provided by the board, there would need to be additional supports put in place that come with a cost. Those could include before/after school care where currently not offered, funding for staff to provide supervision, consideration of an activity bus, etc.

8.06 Innovative School Day Update

Implementation being pushed out one more year was only one of the concerns that was expressed over the presentations. What have we done to address the additional concerns of the Innovative School Experience? The change of pushing out implementation one year will not be enough to gain my support for this initiative.

Administration hopes to gain a better understanding of what additional concerns you wish to be addressed.

When will the vote for the Innovative School Day take place?

At a future meeting. The date has not been selected.

BOARD SUBMITTED QUESTIONS - MARCH 24, 2025

Innovative School Experience:

As I stated in the meeting and in Board Prep, I think it would be helpful to understand the impact of adjusting the start times to be closer (costs, actual times, etc.)

Estimate Transportation Analysis & Cost Summary

To address the issue of students arriving excessively early while maintaining current start/end times, significant additional resources would be required:

Additional Buses Needed:

- **60 Full-size buses**
- **19 Half-size buses**
- **3 Wheelchair buses**
(82 additional buses total, inclusive of spares)

Estimated Bus Costs (these are diesel costs):

- Full-size buses (60 x \$151,342.15) = **\$9,080,529.00**
- Half-size buses (19 x \$152,097.45) = **\$2,889,851.55**

- Wheelchair buses (3 x \$162,899.55) = **\$488,698.65**
Total Bus Cost: Approximately **\$12.5 million**
(Note: Manufacturing time required)

Infrastructure Considerations:

- Need space to accommodate an additional **82 buses**. Two potential options:
 - A location for all buses (existing 132 + additional 82 = 214 buses)
 - A smaller location exclusively for the new 82 buses, plus office/shop
- Additional needs:
 - At least **2 additional office staff**
 - At least **2 additional mechanics**
 - Possibly a dedicated fuel island
(Specific site selection and cost remain undetermined.)

Driver Shortage Overview:

- Currently have **107 drivers** with **5 on long-term leave**.
- **111 route packages** exist, indicating a shortage of **9 drivers daily**.
- Additionally, **4-7 drivers** are typically absent or scheduled off each day.
- Consequently, Office Staff, Mechanics, and Print Shop staff frequently cover routes or routes are cancelled.

Additional Driver Requirements:

- To support the added buses, approximately **75-80 new drivers** would be required.
- Past three-year hiring average has been about **12 drivers per year**, highlighting significant hiring challenges.

Driver Cost Estimate:

- Based on a minimum of **4-hour daily guarantee** to incentivize hiring:
 - **Hourly wage:** \$23.35
 - **Daily Cost:** \$93.40 (4 hrs/day)
 - **Annual Cost per Driver:** \$16,251.60
 - **Annual Total (75 drivers):** **\$1,218,870**

- Please note that a 4 hour work day does not qualify a driver for health insurance benefits. This lack of benefit would make recruitment much more difficult.

I also asked during the BOE Meeting how WIN/SOAR time would work for students who are not requested or required to attend a session with a teacher. Would this be an unstructured study hall? What will our expectations be for our teaching staff in terms of offering opportunities for students to expand their learning during SOAR/WIN in addition to their work to help students catch up?

Each High School has a process for when a student is not assigned or does not request to work with a teacher; NCHS- the student is hand scheduled into a session with a teacher based on the student's lowest grade. NNHS- The student is assigned to a classroom session or they attend an independent study hall. If a student is assigned to a teacher, but signs in for the independent study hall, the student is sent to the assigned classroom.

The expectations for teaching staff related to SOAR/WIN will not change from current practice. Teachers will continue to request students that require extension activities, reteaching, additional time on assessments to attend a SOAR/WIN session. When we expand the opportunities for access to WIN and SOAR in the future we will revise the process to be more supportive of students who may struggle in more than one area.

One of the main objections to the start time seems to be parents with sixth grade students that will need supervision. What would it cost to have additional staff at the junior highs to supervise students from 8 am on?

We are looking at a Zero hour option. Potentially, we could bargain this to minimize the cost (meaning that with some recommended bargaining language we could flex some staff to start one period earlier at the middle school level and then be released one period earlier to cover as part of their assignment). Otherwise, it would need to be paid at an established contract rate (currently being bargained). We are also in conversations with NEF about running a Zero hour stem/pathways program before school for the 26/27 school year that they would help fund. More to come on this super exciting project. Between intramural opportunities in the morning (many of which already exist, moving homework club to the morning (currently funded by NEF), a possible zero hour program, and the opportunity for childcare with no wait lists at all 5 middle schools (fee based; however, reduced costs or waivers for FRL) we are confident that families will have a plethora of options for their middle school students.

Morning Care Opportunities for Middle School Families

District 203 has explored partnerships with two community organizations to provide morning care solutions for middle school students.

Community Partner 1 offers flexible scheduling from **6:30 AM until school begins**, with options ranging from drop-in care to consistent weekly schedules (1-2 or 3-5 days per week). There are no waitlists, and capacity would be determined based on enrollment numbers per school. Pricing varies based on usage, and activities follow a structured, engaging curriculum.

Community Partner 2 proposes "The Morning Lounge," allowing drop-off as early as **7:00 AM** until school begins. Each middle school could host up to **50 students** with a guaranteed 1:15 staff-to-student ratio and a minimum of two staff members per site. The program emphasizes leadership skills, homework support, SEL lessons, physical activities, community service projects, STEAM education, and team-building exercises. Flexible enrollment options include:

- **5-day monthly rate:** \$195
- **3-day monthly rate:** \$153
- **Punch Card:** 20 visits for \$240
Financial assistance is also available

Both partnerships provide safe, structured, and flexible care options aimed at supporting working families and enriching students' school experiences.

Another concern that I continue to hear is about junior high sports. I would love to hear that we are developing a work group of all of our junior high athletic directors, representatives from students and parents, representatives from club sports and representation from 204 to ensure that we develop plans for practice and competition timing that will work for our families and competitors and still allow for participation in both junior high and club sports.

Prior to the recommendation a conversation took place with District 204 administration. Furthermore, there have been ongoing discussions with our athletic directors among our building administrators and level superintendent. The athletic directors from 204 and 203 meet regularly and this has been a topic of discussion. In addition, we have an upcoming spring meeting with all athletic directors and principals from the two districts. If we have to adjust start/end times, we believe it could be a 15 minute difference. Currently, many of our events are not starting at 4:00 PM anyway because of the transportation issues shared. Many days they start around 4:15 PM (sometimes later) due to when buses can transport the teams (no buses available at dismissal to leave). In addition, we are looking at other options especially for fall sports that "chase the sunlight hours." The high school releases these athletes for many events 30-40 minutes prior to the dismissal of school. If needed, the middle school could do this for our large whole conference events (all D203/D204 Cross Country meet) and release approximately 10-15 minutes early. We will continue to look at viable options that still allow our athletes to participate in our conference activities. Solidifying an implementation start date would be super helpful for all stakeholders, so that plans can be formalized and working groups can continue to be expanded and included.

Have there been "field trips" for the level design teams and/or other educators to districts that have similar start/end times and scheduling that we are proposing so that they can see all of this happening firsthand?

Members of the Middle School ISE team did virtual and in person site visits with over 8 different districts locally and nationally. There are also more opportunities planned for our year long professional learning with those implementing block for the first time or WIN similar to what we

are recommending. HS and elementary has also conducted site visits as well to look at innovative schedules and programming. Some visits were on site and others virtually. Glenbard, Downers Grove, Leyden and Kaneland are just a few that we collaborated with. Leyden is a good partner and is doing many innovative programs to meet the needs of students and cross content collaboration.

do we know the magnitude of the downside of the new proposal for families? Last meeting I asked for a financial impact assessment. Do we have that analysis?

This is hard to predict because it would depend on exactly what a parent does now and what a parent would do in the future. Below is a pricing structure that has been provided for us by one of our current partners.

Pricing Structure

- We will provide parents the opportunity to sign up for a 3-day option or a 5-day option
- A 5-day monthly option will be \$195 a month per student
- A 3-day monthly option will be \$153 a month per student
- We currently offer financial assistance for families who are in need.
- A flexible schedule option for parents would also be available. Parents can purchase a 'Punch Card' for 20 visits at a price of \$240 per card. Once all 20 punches have been used, an additional punch card can be purchased. Parents have the option to buy multiple punch cards per semester. We ask that all families need to be registered for the program prior to purchasing a punch card.

Do we know what portion for the population will be negatively impacted by the changes va. The portion negatively impacted by the changes

why do we need to commit to these changes now if the new recommendation is to implement in 2026? Couldn't we use the time to get teachers and parents on board and address the many concerns raised by these stakeholders before making a "Launch" Decision?

Primarily to prepare for the changes. Feedback we heard was that families and teachers need time to prepare. That includes needed professional development.

why wouldn't we get more input from parents to address the concerns before committing to the changes?

The need to stagger our start and end times is not just a logistical adjustment—it is an ethical imperative. While we have all heard the concerns about new start times, keeping things status quo is not right either. Right now, some of our students—our youngest learners, our dual language students, our gifted students, and many others—are being asked to start their day hours before their peers, simply because of the inefficiencies in our transportation system. A high school student with a 7:45 AM start time should not have to board a bus at 6:10 AM, nor should a middle school student in the dual language or gifted program be expected to begin their commute before 6:30 AM. The inequities grow even starker when we consider the longest bus routes, with elementary students traveling over 25 miles one way just to access the education they deserve.

