

# An in-depth look at new class scheduling at OCHS

## New schedule rotates same amount of classes over four days to increase instructional time per class period, have 'Community Lunch' to bring all students together to give them time to bond and do additional activities

In February, the Ocean City Sentinel and Upper Township Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kathleen Taylor. This page is meant to answer questions about the new schedule and to show students and parents how students will be affected.

Jamison about the new scheduling he proposed and with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kathleen Taylor.

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There is a question-and-answer session with Dr. Jamison and Dr. Taylor, sample schedules for a freshman and a senior (below), and highlights of the new scheduling taken from the principal's PowerPoint presentation to the school board earlier this year.

According to Dr. Jamison, the change was made after extensive study of scheduling in other districts.

The new six-period rotating schedule would involve eight instructional periods of 55 minutes each. Classes would rotate on a four-day schedule,

with each class meeting three of the four days. All students would be together during a single lunch period, which would last 55 minutes.

Current classes are 42 minutes long, and the current lunch period is 21 minutes. The school operates on a

12-period day, with a typical student schedule including eight classes per day.

With the proposed four-day rotation schedule, at six periods a day, the students would have the same amount of instructional time in each class as they presently do, Jamison explained, but it would be delivered in longer blocks of time that give students and teachers more time on task.

Daily instructional time would increase, providing longer periods for research, testing and labs in sciences. The rotating schedule would make for more interesting days for students, Jamison continued, and having six of their eight classes on any given day would also allow students to focus and manage their homework assignments more.

Also with the proposed schedule, the order of classes would change in each day of the rotation. Jamison said that would benefit both teachers and students.

"If class one is AP calculus, the student and teacher would meet in their instructional episode at a different time each day of the schedule, at different times of the day," Jamison said. "That means one class is not 8 a.m., five days a week, 180 days per year. Let's be honest. Some people are just not morning people."

The new lunch schedule, Jamison said, would give students more social time, building a sense of community, as well as additional time for meeting with school guidance counselors and research time in the media center.

Jamison put anticipated start-up costs at about \$50,000, primarily related to establishing the new set up for a school wide single lunch period.

### START-UP COSTS

- Electrical wiring for kiosks
- Food Cart Accessories
- Wireless ID scanners
- Trash/recycling containers
- Courtyard tables, benches
- Patio tables
- Courtyard upgrades
- Additional Clocks
- Estimated cost is \$45,000 to \$50,000

## Schedule Q&A

With OCHS Principal Dr. Matthew Jamison and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kathleen Taylor

What is the new schedule for students at Ocean City High School starting next school year?

Rather than eight 42-minute class periods per day, the schedule starting in September will have six 55-minute periods daily to give teachers more instructional time per class.

Does that mean students will only be able to schedule only six classes instead of eight?

No. Students will be able to schedule eight classes as they have been doing.

Does that include electives such as concert band, art, and music?

Yes.

Do all of the eight classes meet an equal amount of days and time throughout the year?

Yes. There is no change in the amount of teaching time, but the new schedule emphasizes longer periods (55 minutes instead of the current 42) to give teachers more time on their subjects per class.

How will the schedule work?

Classes will rotate over a four-day schedule. All eight classes meet over the four days, but only six classes meet on any given day. Each class will meet on three of the four days of the four-day rotation. After four days, the schedule begins again.

If the schedule changes every day, how will the students know what day of the schedule it is?

There will be a monthly calendar on the school's web site and the day of the schedule will be announced daily and posted around the school.

The schedule also rotates each class to different times during the day. Why?

Rotating class times makes for a more interesting day, creating variety for different styles of teachers and students. For example, students who aren't "morning people" won't have the same first-period class every day. And students who participate in sports or other activities and have to leave school early won't miss the same classes at the end of the day.

Will only one lunch be served?

Yes. Only one lunch will be served for all students at the same time. It is referred to as "Community Lunch."

Can all the students fit into the cafeteria at once?

Only certain parts of the school will be used during Community Lunch. Basically the East wing of the first floor will be the Community Lunch area. In addition to the cafeteria, students will be permitted to eat on the patio just outside of the cafeteria, the North Courtyard, the gymnasium, and there will be high-top tables in designated areas of the hallway. This plan was developed after visiting schools that run the six-period rotation schedule. Students will be able to purchase food in the cafeteria and in two other locations. These two other locations will have food court type kiosks and will have food service personnel operating them. It is important to note that science labs will be carved out of the lunch period, so all students will not be purchasing food at the same time.

The new lunch period will be 55 minutes long and all high school students will eat lunch together. Is this better for the students?

We wanted to create a lunch that would gather all the students together and help them become more of a community by spending extra time together socializing. Students would also be able to use the longer lunch period to work on assignments, go to the library and guidance programs, and get extra help on school work. We would also like to explore and implement programs during community lunch that we simply don't have with the current schedule such as peer and faculty mentoring, music/art expositions, large group counseling without jeopardizing instructional time, and student government/leadership meetings.

Will seniors be allowed to leave school grounds during lunch?

We haven't made a final decision. There are many factors to consider, including student safety off campus. Most schools - certainly the ones we visited - are not located on a barrier island with the beach/ocean 200 meters away. This decision will involve the greater community including police and fire department input. With all things, student safety is paramount. We will be reviewing the idea this spring.

What are the benefits of six longer periods - instead of eight shorter periods - during the school day?

There is more time for continuous instruction and fewer disruptions by changing class as frequently. The longer periods also provide various learning activities such as primary source research, writing, group tasks, and discovery. A wider range of assessments will also be used in terms of formative assessment (i.e., quick understanding checks) before a more formal assessment like a test or quiz. Also, fewer subjects daily give students the chance to focus on their homework after school.

Is changing the schedule going to be expensive?

We estimate the one-time cost at \$45,000 to \$50,000. Much of that will go to changes to allow for the Community Lunch period - improvements to the courtyard, adding courtyard tables and benches, patio tables, food carts and kiosks (to allow more places for students to purchase food) and wireless ID scanners. We also plan to add additional clocks and video screens throughout the school to make it easier for students to learn the new schedule.

What made you decide to change the high school schedule?

We are always looking at ways to improve the education and school experience for our students. We looked at research on longer class periods, visited schools that use this type of schedule throughout the state and talked with other school administrators in New Jersey and beyond. Through our research we concluded the change to the new schedule will benefit students, faculty and the Ocean City High School community.

### SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR A FRESHMAN

Time/Day	1	2	3	4
7:50-8:45	HN Eng 9	HN Biology	HN Wrld His	Span 2 ADV
8:50-9:45	HN Biology	HN Wrld His	Span 2 ADV	HN Eng 9
9:50-10:45	HN Wrld His	Span 2 ADV	HN Eng 9	HN Biology
10:45-11:40 Lunch/Labs				HN Bio Lab (ends 11:00)
	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:40-12:35	HN Geometry	Intr Engineer	TIES/Fin Lit	Hlth/PE 9
12:40-1:35	Intr Engineer	TIES/Fin Lit	Hlth/PE 9	HN Geometry
1:40-2:35	TIES/Fin Lit	Hlth/PE 9	HN Geometry	Intr Engineer

### SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR A SENIOR

Time/Day	1	2	3	4
7:50-8:45	AP Calc 2 B/C	Hlth/PE 12	AP Govt	Study Hall
8:50-9:45	Hlth/PE 12	AP Govt	Study Hall	AP Calc 2 B/C
9:50-10:45	AP Govt	Study Hall	AP Calc 2 B/C	Hlth/PE 12
10:45-11:40 Lunch/Labs				
	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	AP Phys Lab (begins 11:10)			
11:40-12:35	AP Physics B	AP Eng Lit	Span 4 ADV	Engin Dsgn
12:40-1:35	AP Eng Lit	Span 4 ADV	Engin Dsgn	AP Physics B
1:40-2:35	Span 4 ADV	Engin Dsgn	AP Physics B	AP Eng Lit

### THE SIX PERIOD ROTATION SCHEDULE

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4
1	2	3	4
2	3	4	1
3	4	1	2
LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
5	6	7	8
6	7	8	5
7	8	5	6

Classes, each represented by a number above, meet three times each four days. (As also seen on the sample schedules for freshmen and seniors.) After every four days, the schedule begins again. As an example, if the four-day schedule begins on a Monday, Day 1 is Monday, Day 2 is Tuesday, Day 3 is Wednesday and Day 4 is Thursday. Day 1 begins again on Friday.

### QUICK FACTS

- \* Students enroll in up to 8 courses plus lunch (same as the current schedule)
- \* 6 of the 8 periods meet on a daily basis
- \* The schedule works on a 4 day rotation
- \* Classes meet 3 of the 4 days
- \* Classes are 55 minutes
- \* Total instructional time is equal to current schedule's instructional time

### ADVANTAGES OF SCHEDULE

- Longer periods for more active learning opportunities
- More time for differentiated assessments
- Increased daily quality instructional time
- Instructional process has fewer disruptions
- Rotation of classes make for a more interesting day
- Longer periods provide time for research, reports, debriefings, closure, and other active learning strategies and performance assessments
- Fewer subjects daily allow students to focus better during homework hours
- Fewer times in hallway - two in morning, two in afternoon
- Lunch does not disrupt instructional time
- Rotation of classes creates variety and supports different styles of teachers and students

### COMMUNITY LUNCH

- Builds a sense of community
- Extra time to use the library
- Extra time for enrichment
- Opportunity for peer counseling
- More access to guidance programs
- Time to get extra help with school work
- Time to socialize and talk with friends
- Extra time for peer and faculty mentoring