

Frequently Asked Questions

TRANSITIONING FROM AN EIGHT-PERIOD ROTATING BLOCK SCHEDULE TO SEVEN PERIODS FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

WHY ARE THE SCHOOLS MOVING AWAY FROM AN EIGHT-PERIOD ROTATING BLOCK SCHEDULE?

Moving to a traditional schedule where students attend the same class four or five times per week will help students retain class material, help teachers pace lessons, and ensure that students connect with their teachers more than once or twice per week. The cost of implementing a block schedule at four schools has become increasingly challenging, costing the district an additional \$3.6 million each year.

WILL THE SCHOOL HAVE A STRAIGHT SEVEN-PERIOD DAY?

Not necessarily. Each year, school staff determine the best schedule to meet the needs of the students served. Schools will utilize student course requests to build a schedule that meets the needs of our students and school programming, as done every year.

WHEN WILL THE BELL SCHEDULES AND NUMBER OF PERIODS PER DAY BE FINALIZED FOR 2025-26?

Schools determine bell schedules in May for the following school year. Schedules are determined based on various factors, including projected student enrollment, staffing, student schedule requests, and unique program needs. In some cases, faculty members may need to vote to approve the schedule in accordance with their contracts.

WILL THIS TRANSITION IMPACT A STUDENT'S ABILITY TO GRADUATE ON TIME?

No. Students, in any grade level, will not experience delays in completing their high school graduation requirements.

WILL THE CHANGE AFFECT A STUDENT'S PATHWAY TO GRADUATION?

No. The State of Florida has two pathways to graduation, an 18-credit accelerated pathway, and a 24-credit traditional pathway, which are viewed as fully academically equivalent in all regards by universities and colleges across the state and nation.

WILL PERFORMANCE-BASED COURSES, LIKE ARTS OR STEM, STILL HAVE ENOUGH TIME FOR STUDENTS TO PRACTICE COMPLEX SKILLS?

Yes. All high schools in Pinellas County can run "blocked classes" in their schedules to ensure that courses that require extended time for students to master the content and skills are able to do so. This is standard practice in the schedules of all our high schools and this highly effective practice will carry over into this transition for the current eight-period schools.

WILL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NEXT YEAR HAVE LESS ACCESS TO, OR VARIETY OF, COURSES IN THE FINE, PERFORMING, OR PRACTICAL ARTS IN ANY WAY BECAUSE OF THIS TRANSITION?

No arts programming is being cut because of this transition. PCS is committed to ensuring that the arts play a key role in enhancing student success. We are keenly aware of the role the arts play in providing students with a broader understanding of the world and enduring lifetime benefits.

WHAT ROLE CAN PARENTS PLAY IN PLANNING WHAT THEIR STUDENT'S SCHEDULE WILL LOOK LIKE FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 2025-26?

Parents can help by discussing their student's goals and reviewing the school's curriculum guide and course request sheets before making course selections. This is an important part of the planning process.

WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

Students and families can contact the school Principal, the Assistant Principal and School Counselor as they are the best, immediate resource for questions about your student's plans for the next school and their futures. They should always be your key resources and those you reach out to first to address your needs and concerns. If you need more assistance after consulting with the personnel at your school, you may contact Rita Vasquez, Ed.D, executive director of high school education. She can be reached at vasquezr@pcsb.org or 727-588-6302.