

# NFHS Scheduling Committee Update

December 21, 2023



# Committee

**James D'Amico, Principal**

**Scott Rohwedder, Assistant Principal**

**Ernest Fabrizio-Garcia, World Language Chair**

**Jean Gephart, Science Coach/Chair**

**Kim Laughlin, Counseling Chair**

**Andrew Gadwah, Music**

**Cynthia Risch, Science**

**Kim Tobey, Social Studies**

**Kyle Kressu, Special Education**

**Erick Alarcon, Class of 2023**

**Courtney Weir, Class of 2024**

**Tim Blair, Board of Education**

**Natalie Whitters, Parent**

**Bonny Marsicano, English Chair/Interventionist**

**Stephanie Cheung, Counseling Chair**

**Cathy Hall, Math Coach/Chair**

# Committee Work Review

- **Spring 2022**
  - Analysis of current schedule
  - Exploration of schedule models
  - Review of Research and Literature
- **2022-2023**
  - Discussion/processing of analysis
  - Development of information-gathering tools
    - Focus on a few key areas that may impact student learning:
      - Time spent preparing for school/homework
      - Balance with after school activities
      - Length of classes/Use of time
  - Conducted surveys and student focus groups
- **Fall 2023**
  - Development of initial conclusions
  - Implementation of trial schedule
  - Surveys and focus groups following trial schedule



# Trial Schedule

- **Conducted trial schedule based on concepts of:**
  - Increased frequency of meetings from 50% to 75%
  - Combination of shorter and longer block periods
    - 49 minutes/70 minutes
  - REBEL block on a regular or rotating basis
  - Maintaining regular bells each day

10/3 (Tues.)	10/4 (Wed.)	10/5 (Thurs.)	10/6 (Fri.)
"A" Day	"B" Day	"C" Day	"D" Day
Red 1	Red 4	Red 3	Red 2
Red 2	Red 1	Red 4	Red 3
REBEL	REBEL	REBEL	REBEL
Red 3	Red 2	Red 1	Red 4
Blue 1 <small>*Senior Privilege should stay in cafeteria during lunches.</small>	Blue 4 <small>*Senior Privilege should stay in cafeteria during lunches.</small>	Blue 3	Blue 2
Blue 2	Blue 1	Blue 4	Blue 3
Blue 3	Blue 2	Blue 1	Blue 4

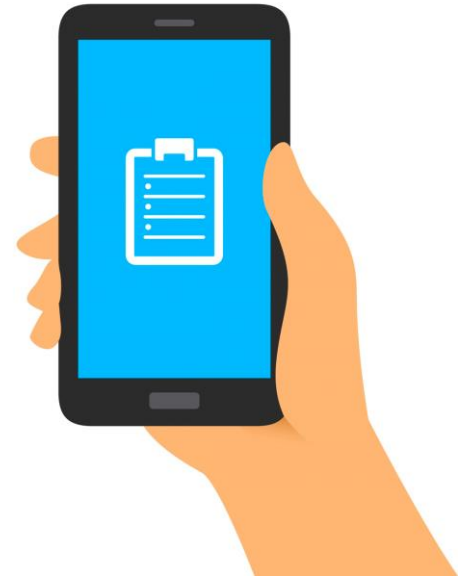
# Feedback

- **Surveyed students and staff**
- **Conducted student focus groups**
- **Committee review of all feedback**



# Student Feedback Summary

- **Rotation was confusing**
  - Frustrating for seniors with late arrival/early release privileges
- **Shorter periods did not help with attention (87%)**
- **Prefer longer study halls over more often (79.6%)**
- **Primary uses of REBEL**
  - Individual studying (46.1%)
  - Extra Help (25.1%)
  - Small Group studying (13.2%)
- **REBEL Length Too Short**
  - 20 minutes during trial
- **Homework for more classes took longer**



# Student Feedback Summary

- **Highly value simplicity, predictability**
- **More transitions made the day feel longer, more tiring**
- **49 minute periods felt rushed, too short in many cases**
  - Discussions, getting help/attention from teachers
- **Worried about times to complete projects, hands-on activities**
  - Construction, culinary, English came up frequently
- **For students with sports and jobs it felt harder to balance**
- **Social challenges of having rotating lunch groups**
- **Potential loss of REBEL would be difficult, particularly for arts students**
- **Many students did see the benefits of seeing teachers more often and having study halls regularly**
- **Overall, resistance and skepticism to change**



# Staff Feedback Summary

- **Some skepticism about change, with caveats**
- **Frequency of meeting is very important to most, as long as class lengths are sufficient**
- **Prefer to not have different length periods in the same day**
- **Mixed review about rotation of periods**
- **Students' attention with shorter periods:**
  - Improved (39.7%)
  - No difference (31%)
  - Negatively impacted (29.3%)





# Committee Process

- **Analysis and discussion:**
  - Survey and focus group input
  - Review of themes from spring surveys
- **“If not this, then what?”**
  - Review of other potential models that fit needs of NFHS
  - Review of challenges to any change to the schedule
  - Review of timeline in which a change needs to be made for 2024-25
- **Formulation of Recommendation**



# Committee Recommendation

- **A change to the schedule should be made**
  - Greater frequency is valued and desirable by professional staff
  - Moving away from a “pure” A/B block schedule will yield more instructional time
  - Disruptions to continuity have been problematic
- **Feedback from trial and focus groups support the following parameters:**
  - Class lengths the same in a day, not mixed on same day
  - Preservation of REBEL block with student choice/control
  - 60 minute periods seem ideal for most, based on spring surveys, some research
- **Committee looked at a schedule that incorporates feedback, improves on trial**



# Committee Recommendation

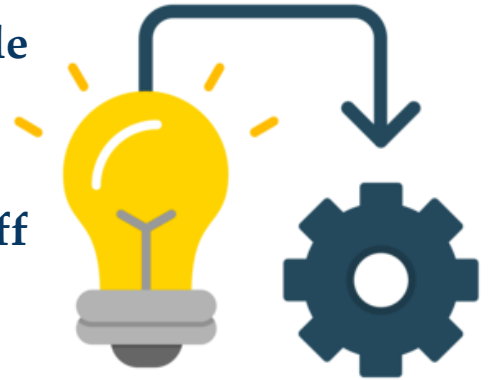
- Plan to move to schedule in 2024-2025 modeled on the Milford, CT high schools
- **6-Day Model**
  - Classes same length on any given day
    - 4 days of classes of ~60 minutes
    - 2 days of current block w/REBEL
  - Increases frequency from current schedule
  - Yields 40+ minutes per class over the 6 days

*\*Note: Image is of schedule at JLHS in Milford.  
NFHS rotation and times TBD*

A	B	C	D	E	F
1	1	1	2	1	2
2	2	3	3	COMMON TIME/ ADVISORY	
3	4	4	4	3	4
5	5	5	6	5	6
6	6	7	7	7	8
7	8	8	8	7	8
4,8	3,7	2,6	1,5	2,4,6,8	1,3,5,7

# Implementation Considerations

- **Potential Impact of later start/end time**
- **Support sharing staff with other schools**
- **Planning for part-time and shared staff within the schedule**
- **Planning for specialized programs such as Child Development, Lifeguard Training**
- **Working with special education, intervention, support staff to structure time with students**
- **Modification of Math Lab model**
- **Strategies and training on maximizing “help” time without daily REBEL block**
- **Deciding to conduct another trial or move forward with planning**
  - Purpose would be focused on troubleshooting, not whether to make change



# Next Steps

## January

- Administration develops timetable
- Back office entry of schedule into PowerSchool

## February

- Release new schedule to staff for feedback

## March

- Final report to the Board
- Release new schedule to students and families
- Begin scheduling classes for 2024-2025 using new timetable

