

# **NEW WEEKLY TIMETABLE 2015/2016**

## **FAQs FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS**

### **Why are we doing this?**

- We've heard from our students they are too busy and sometimes can't get the time and help they need. We are giving them time to focus on what they need/want to focus on during the day. This should mean less homework, less stress, and more enjoyable learning.

### **Did students have input?**

- In putting this together, we consulted with hundreds of our students (random classes) to be sure that there was input from the student body.

### **How is it different from our current timetable?**

- The current 4 TAG/1TAP system is replaced by a 1 Advisory/4 Focus Block system where students have less time with 'little' to do in TAGs, and more time to work toward their learning needs and interests. They will consult with their Advisory teachers on Monday to plan out the weeks' best use of the Focus Blocks.
- Also, to accommodate scheduling of some teaching spaces we had to shift periods so that the day starts at 8:25 (but the days end earlier at 3:05, Mon-Thurs, and 1:55 on Fridays).

### **What are Advisory Blocks?**

- Advisory Blocks will be once per week on Monday and organized like TAG
- Advisory teachers will keep track of Focus Block attendance, student marks and work effort, and advise/support students re the use of their Focus Blocks accordingly

### **What are Focus Blocks and why are they called 'Focus'?**

- Focus Blocks will be Tuesday to Friday and organized like TAP, but with required attendance. This time is to complete assignments/project work, get extra help, or work with teachers in areas of personal excellence and interest,
- They are called 'Focus' Blocks because they provide time in the timetable for each, unique, individual student to 'focus' on their own learning needs and interests. It is school-related learning and/or project time - not social or free time.

### **Is there still a 'sleep-in' for students?**

- Students will still have a 'sleep in' morning on Thursdays, every second week for the first period Team Planning block, if they wish to do so. We do, however, encourage students

to use that time to advance their school-related learning goals. A Math/Science and a Humanities teacher will be provided for student assistance but student attendance is optional for these times. Students are still expected to attend the Focus Block following Team Planning.

**When do the days end?**

- Monday to Thursday, they end at 3:05 (8 minutes earlier than now).
- Friday ends at 1:55 (29 minutes earlier than now).

**How long is lunch?**

- Same as last year

**What about Morning Break?**

- We were advised by students that it is mostly a waste of time and that they would prefer to remove it so we could end the day earlier.

**Why do students have to attend Advisory?**

- This is a once/week block to take care of school organizational matters, build relationships, and to make decisions with the advice of the Advisory teacher regarding which Focus Block teachers/spaces to go to. Students will write their choices into their Daily Planner on a week-by-week basis.

**Why do students have to attend Focus Blocks?**

- This time is taken from classes (5 minutes from each class) and remains time that students are required to use for legitimate school-related learning goals/projects. If their grades are good and their Advisor agrees, they may use the time for things such as fitness workouts, and working on arts, applied skills or service projects, as well as doing homework, studying or getting extra help. Students are expected to be under the supervision of a teacher during these times.

**Can I move from place to place during Focus Blocks?**

- In the same way that students are assigned to a room for each class and can only leave that room for a good reason with the agreement of the teacher, students must go to the room they 'assigned' themselves and stay there unless there is a good reason to leave with the agreement of the teacher.

**How will Advisory teachers know whether or not students go to the Focus Blocks they chose during Advisory Block?**

- During the Focus Blocks, each teacher will stamp the Daily Planner of each student who attended and was productive. Advisory teachers will check the Daily Planners to know if students are following-through.

**What happens if students miss an Advisory Block?**

- If a student has an excused absence, he/she completes the daily planner on his/her own and carries on.
- If a student develops a pattern of not cooperating with the Advisory teacher and/or the Advisory/Focus Block system, he/she will be referred to the administration as a discipline issue but we hope that students will see this as a real plus for them, and that doing their best will make their lives easier and richer. The goal is not 'compliance to the rules' but the development and demonstration of responsibility, and we will do everything we can to help students to develop this.

**What if Monday is a holiday?**

- Tuesday becomes Advisory for that week.

**What if a student gets an assignment and wants to change their decision regarding which teacher they go to during Focus Blocks?**

- Our goal is only that students use the time responsibly. The pattern that the Advisory teachers will look for is good use the time in relation to each students' personal needs and goals. Making smart adjustments during the week is a good thing to do.

**How does this affect a student 'spare'?**

- It doesn't affect a student spare. Attendance at Advisory is mandatory and attendance at all Focus Blocks is mandatory, although students have an informed choice of which teaching or study space they can use in the school in their Focus Blocks. But if they were given a free period in their computer printout timetable, it remains free to use as the student wishes, although we also encourage them to use it to advance their school-related learning goals.

**What are some examples of the way a week of Focus Blocks might look?**

**1. A student who is strong in Humanities, struggles with math and loves dance:**

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Mr Spray	Work area	Ms. Yarr	Ms. Alana
(Math)	(homework)	(Writing)	(Choreography)

**2. A student who is an athlete and doing well in all classes:**

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Mr. Cristante (fitness)	Mr. Fast (coaching)	Work area (homework)	Mr. Jacques (C4C)

**3. A student who is struggling in most classes:**

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Ms. Horton (Math)	Ms Mann (Science)	Ms. Chow (Resource)	Mr. Jardine (English)