

BOARD BRIEF

Date: May 28, 2021

BOARD INFORMATION: X

MEETING PREPARATION:

FROM: Terri H. Mozingo, Ed.D., Chief of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership
Peter Balas, Principal, T.C. Williams High School

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Meagan Alderton, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: T.C. Williams High School Bell Schedule for SY 2021-2022

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence

SY 2020-2021 FOCUS AREA

Focus Area 3: Strategic Plan Implementation

Focus Area 5: Academic Disparities

FY 2021 BUDGET PRIORITY

Chronic Absenteeism among Hispanic Students

Outreach to Hispanic Families to Improve Attendance and Graduation

Outreach to Underserved Communities to Increase Engagement

SUMMARY

The purpose of this brief is to specifically highlight the enhancements of the high school daily bell schedule for the next school year (2021-2022), as well as how it will benefit our students. The structure of the new bell schedule will now offer students an opportunity to take eight (8) classes per year as opposed to seven (7). The classes will be on an alternating day schedule while also offering some options for semester-based courses.

BACKGROUND

The new bell schedule for SY 2021-2022, which the Titan teaching staff developed, includes a few new features that will maximize opportunities for our students and align schedules between our multiple campuses. The alignment of schedules across campuses as part of the *High School Project* is important so that students may have opportunities to take classes at different campuses. This will be especially important as we prepare to open the new Minnie Howard Campus in 2024 as a campus with grades 9-12.

BOARD BRIEF

SY 2021-2022 Bell Schedule Overview

- Our schedule will be an alternating red day and blue day schedule.
 - **Red Day:** Periods 1, 3, 5, and 7
 - **Blue Day:** 2, 4, 6, and 8
- Classes will be yearlong.
- There will be some semester-based classes offered. We determine this by the department and consider when this is most developmentally appropriate for students to take semester classes.
- Students will be able to take eight (8) courses per year where “study hall” will be an option for students needing time.
- All students and faculty will have a *Lunch & Learn* block of time during the day. This includes time for eating, socializing, seeing teachers for extra help, and meeting with clubs and organizations.

Student Benefits and Opportunities

This schedule will have many benefits for the Titans, all of whom have picked up to eight classes for next year. Some of these benefits include:

- Increased course offerings and electives for students;
- Study hall for students who need more time for work completion and review of course content;
- Credit recovery options during the school day;
- Opportunities to meet with clubs and organizations during *Lunch & Learn*;
- Flexible scheduling opportunities for students who work; and
- Class schedules that can support early graduation or internship and work-based learning opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information within this brief.

IMPACT

The new bell schedule for SY 2021-2022 incorporates feedback from staff, students, and parents from both our pre-pandemic schedule and our *Titan Virtual PLUS+* schedule. The staff-developed bell schedule will result in more opportunities for high school students as well as align schedules as part of the *Connected High School Network (CHSN)*. This alignment will allow for maximum flexibility for students to explore educational opportunities between both campuses, fulfilling a commitment of the Superintendent and School Board.

CONTACT

Peter Balas, peter.balas@acps.k12.va.us