Ridge High School: Master Schedule

Board of Education Meeting - December 18, 2017

Why Are We Talking About This?

Survey Data - See RHS Student Survey Spring 2017

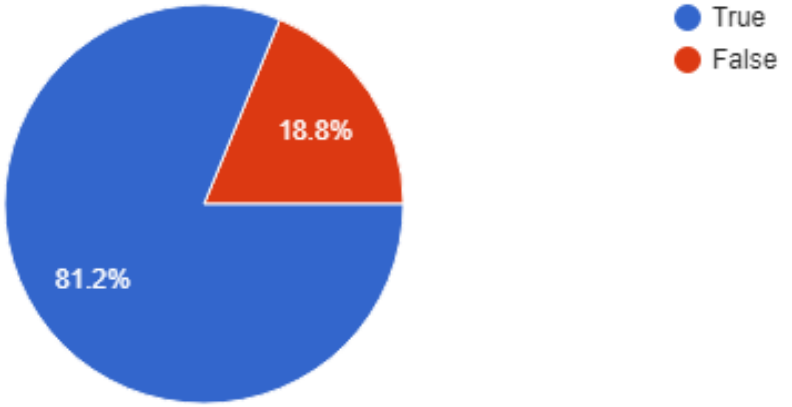
Local data on Mental Health and Wellness - See district report January 2017 and Appendix

Focus on SEL, Achievement and Technology - See District Goals

RHS Student Survey Spring 2017

12) It is common for students at this school to stay home from school when they are unprepared for a test or major assignment.

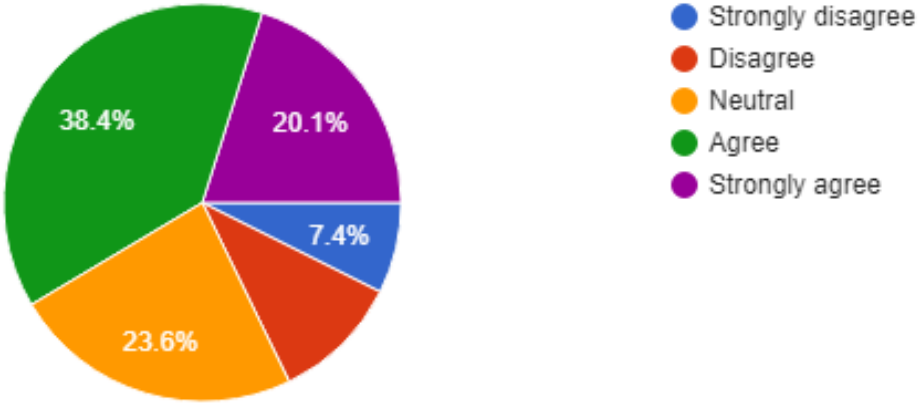
1,027 responses



RHS Student Survey Spring 2017

14) The different weights for GPA of college prep, honors and AP classes motivate me to schedule courses I ma...r that might overwhelm me with work.

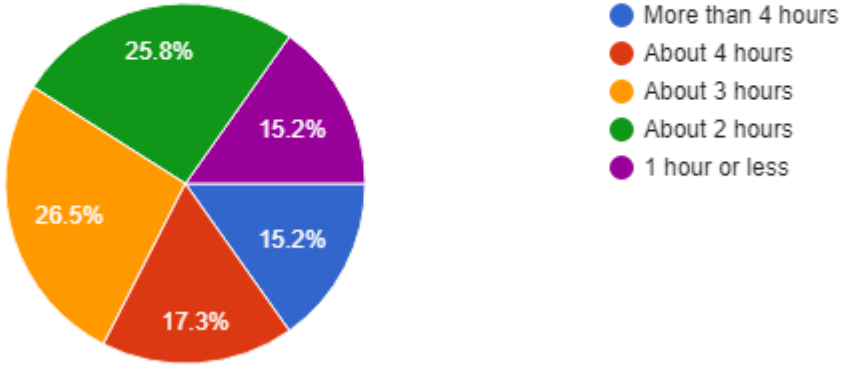
1,028 responses



RHS Student Survey Spring 2017

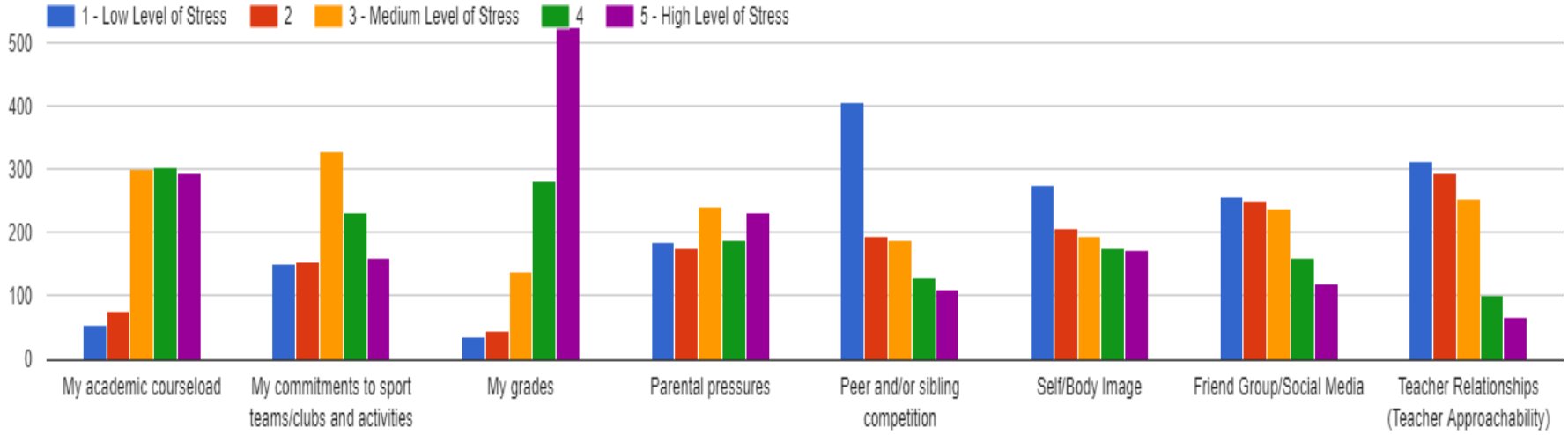
15) On the average night, my homework takes me...

1,027 responses



RHS Student Survey Spring 2017

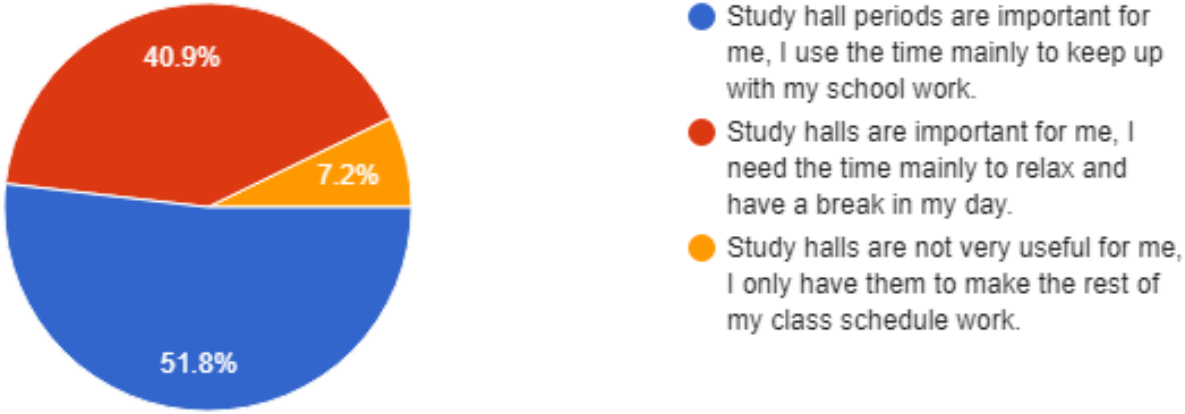
19) Rate how the following contribute to your level of stress. 1 is least stressful and 5 is most stressful.



RHS Student Survey Spring 2017

26) Please read all of the choices below and then select ONE that best characterizes your opinions about stud...periods in your daily school schedule.

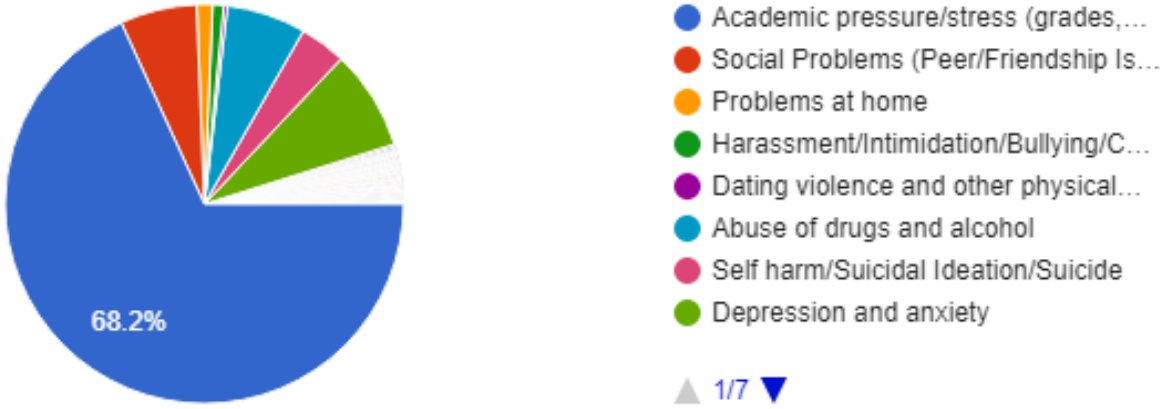
1,011 responses



RHS Student Survey Spring 2017

29) I believe that the ONE single biggest challenge facing Ridge High School students is:

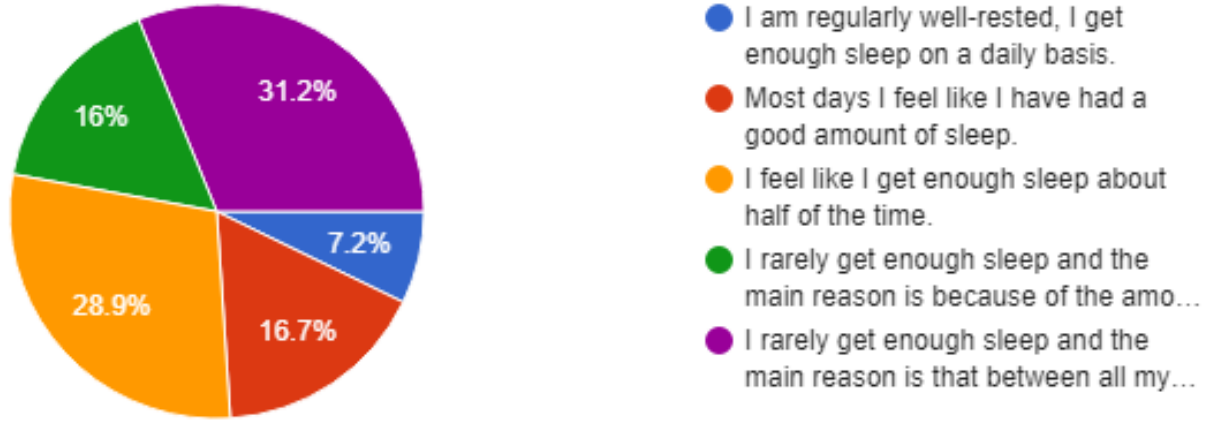
1,011 responses



RHS Student Survey Spring 2017

17) Read each statement below carefully and choose the ONE that best describes your situation with respect ...o read each choice before picking ONE.

1,027 responses



Independent of the Master Schedule We Have...

- School aesthetics and school spirit
- Giving Students a Voice
- Additional support staff in Effective School Solutions
- Additional support for parents, The Nurtured Heart
- Staff training
- Student programming
- Grading and homework practices
- Promoting Supports for Students
- Events Calendar

Also Independent of the Master Schedule, Schools…

- Don’t weight classes
- Mandate study halls
- Pull out only from study hall and/or lunch
- Limit Option 2
- Limit co-curricular/athletic times
- *Stress Relief: Schools Get Creative to Reduce Student Anxiety*
    - Integration of mental health knowledge/relaxation techniques into curriculum
    - Mindfulness classes

What If…

… We Eliminated the Weighting of Courses?

Opportunities & Advantages	Concerns & Unknowns
● Students could take courses appropriate for their skill levels without having it affect their GPAs ● Other competitive high schools are moving in this direction ○ *What if Weighted GPAs are Meaningless?* ○ *Grades Pointless? Some Colleges Don't Care About GPAs*	● Would students take advantage of the opportunity? ● Colleges say that they do not penalize students in the admissions process for the policies or procedures set out by the high school, but we don't know what happens behind the scenes ● Survey of College Admissions Reps (Dec. 2016) ○ 97 respondents ○ 55% recalculate the student's GPA (method varies) ○ 51.7% say that Academic Rigor (Honors, AP courses), not GPA, is the most valuable takeaway from a student's transcript

… We Reduced or Eliminated Option II Athletics?

Opportunities & Advantages	Concerns & Unknowns
● More time for health and wellness education ● Fewer teachers required to supervise study halls and therefore could be reassigned to building safety supervision and or more professional work ● Fewer study halls opens up classroom space	● Students and parents who have come to expect an additional study hall in the schedule ● Increase in Scheduled Study Hall numbers for students who really need it ➜ Loss of an elective

… AP Science Labs Could be Pulled Only From Study Halls?

… We Limited Pull-Out from PE/Health to One Day per Week?

Opportunities & Advantages	Concerns & Unknowns
● More time for health/wellness education ● Students would have to carefully consider their elective choices to ensure graduation requirements are met	● Students would have to choose between double AP sciences and other electives. ○ Would AP science numbers be affected? ● Double AP Science students would lose an elective. ○ How would losing that elective affect the music program? ● Increase in Study Hall Numbers ➔ staffing and room concerns

… We Mandated a Study Hall?

Opportunities & Advantages	Concerns & Unknowns
● Required time during the day to relax, seek extra help, do homework, etc. ● Provides viable time to pull science labs and guidance appointments without impact to other courses ● Montgomery HS has done this for years; unlikely to affect college admissions	● Reduced numbers in elective courses → Reduced staff? ● Increase in Study Hall Numbers → staffing and room concerns ● Less educational opportunities for students because they would lose an elective ● Colleges say that they do not penalize students in the admissions process for the policies or procedures set out by the high school, but we don't know what happens behind the scenes

Current Marking Period 2 Study Hall Snapshot:

Class	Total SHs	OffSite	RHS Sports	Total Option II	Total Not Option II	Students in Grade
2018	364	0	0	0	364	473
2019	663	123	185	308	355	470
2020	550	110	177	287	263	463
2021	477	101	194	295	182	478
Totals	2054	334	556	890	1164	1884

The Master Schedule

The master schedule itself represents an opportunity to have an impact on school climate/culture and the way instruction occurs.

While the discussion to this point has involved actions and ideas that could be implemented with the existing master schedule, changing the master schedule itself is a much larger endeavor that can be considered independently or in conjunction with the other ideas we have talked about this evening.

The Current Master Schedule at Ridge High School

1	7:35 – 8:18
2	8:22 – 9:07
3	9:11 – 9:53
4 (Lunch)	9:57– 10:39
5 (Lunch)	10:43 – 11:24
6 (Lunch)	11:28 – 12:09
7 (Lunch)	12:13– 12:54
8 (Lunch)	12:58 – 1:39
9	1:43 – 2:25

Other Common Schedules

- **Traditional 8 periods**
  - Typically about 48-50 minutes per class
  - Students have seven classes plus lunch.
- **Full block schedule with 8 periods**
  - Typically about 80-90 minutes per class
  - Students have 4 classes plus lunch.
- **Rotating drop schedule**
  - Typically about 55 - 60 minutes per class
  - Students schedule 8 periods plus lunch but only meet 6 periods per day, rotating periods to drop 2 per day
- **Combinations of the above**

Sample of 8 period day (7 classes plus lunch)

Period 1	7:40 - 8:28
Period 2	8:33 - 9:21
Period 3	9:26 - 10:14
Period 4	10:19 - 10:44
Period 5	10:48 - 11:12
Period 6	11:16 - 11:42
Period 7	11:46 - 12:10
Period 8	12:14 - 12:39
Period 9	12:44 - 1:32
Period 10	1:37 - 2:25

In this example, lunches run periods 4 through 8 and students take two classes during that time with one lunch somewhere among those five periods.

Sample Full Block Schedule, Alternating A/B Days (with unit lunch)

Regular Bell Schedule			
Start/End	**"A" Day**	**"B" Day**	**Time**
7:20 - 8:49 (HR)	Block A1	Block B1	84+ (5)
8:53 - 10:17	Block A2	Block B2	84
10:21 - 11:11	Unit Lunch	Unit Lunch	50
11:15 - 12:39	Block A3	Block B3	84
12:43 - 2:07	Block A4	Block B4	84

Sample Rotating Drop Schedule (with unit lunch)

Rotating Drop Schedule (Full Day Schedule)

	Time Slot	DAY 1 Drop 4, 8	DAY 2 Drop 1, 5	Day 3 Drop 2, 6	Day 4 Drop 3, 7
1	7:30 - 8:28	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4
2	8:33 - 9:29	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 1
3	9:34 - 10:30	Period 3	Period 4	Period 1	Period 2
	10:30 - 11:14	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
4	11:17 - 12:13	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8
5	12:18 - 1:14	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	Period 5
6	1:19 - 2:15	Period 7	Period 8	Period 5	Period 6

Sample Combination Schedule

Bell Schedule					
	Monday (R1)	Tuesday (R4)	Friday (R3)	Other (R2)	Minutes
8:00-8:48	Period 1	Period 4	Period 3	Period 2	48
8:52-9:42	Period 2	Period 1	Period 4	Period 3	50
9:46-10:34	Period 3	Period 2	Period 1	Period 4	48
10:38-11:26	Period 4	Period 3	Period 2	Period 1	48
11:30-12:17	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	47
12:21-1:09	Period 5	Period 7	Period 6	Period 5	48
1:13-2:01	Period 6	Period 5	Period 7	Period 6	48
2:05-2:53	Period 7	Period 6	Period 5	Period 7	48

Block Day Schedule			
	Tuesday (Odd Block)	Wednesday (Even Block)	Minutes
8:00-9:26	Period 3	Period 2	86
9:30-10:58	Period 1	Period 4	86
11:02-11:53	Lunch	Lunch	51
11:57-1:23	Period 5	Period	86
1:27-2:53	Period 7	Period 6	86

Somerset County High Schools

High School District	Day	Min. in Day	Periods inclusive of lunch	Period length
Bound Brook	7:30 to 2:52	442	5	80
Bridgewater	7:20 to 2:21	421	9	40
Franklin	7:27 to 2:28	421	7	59
Hillsborough	7:40 to 2:25	405	8	48
Manville	7:45 to 2:35	410	8	51
Montgomery	7:20 to 2:07	407	5	84
North Plainfield	7:40 to 2:35	415	9	42
Ridge	7:35 to 2:25	410	9	42
Somerset Hills Regional	7:45 to 2:41	416	9	42
Somerville	7:35 to 2:20	405	9	42
Watchung Hills Regional	7:30 to 2:15	405	7	56
	Avg:	414		

Why Should We Consider A New Master Schedule? TIME

- More efficient use of time.
- Increased time for instruction.
- Increased professional time for staff.

	RHS Currently (8 classes plus lunch)	RHS (7 classes plus lunch)	RHS (Full Block 8 classes plus unit lunch)	RHS (Rotating Drop 8 classes plus unit lunch)
Minutes	410.0	412.0	410.0	410.0
Number of Passes	8.0	7.0	2.0	4.0
Time Per Pass	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Total Passing Time	32.0	28.0	8.0	16.0
Time for Lunch	42.0	48.0	50.0	46.0
Time for Instruction	336.0	336.0	352.0	348.0
Instructional Classes	8.0	7.0	4.0	6.0
Time Per Class	42.0	48.0	88.0	58.0
Class Meetings	180.0	180.0	90.0	135.0
Course Time/Year	7560.0	8640.0	7920.0	7830.0
Increased Classes Over Current as 42 Minute Classes		25.7	8.6	6.4

Time: Pros and Cons

	RHS Currently (8 classes plus lunch)	RHS (7 classes plus lunch)	RHS (Full Block 8 classes plus unit lunch)	RHS (Rotating Drop 8 classes plus unit lunch)
Pros	We know how it works and the master schedule is built	Most instructional time per course	More instructional time; unit lunch benefits; less time wasted on duties, administrivia and class startup/closure; fewer classes each night	More instructional time; unit lunch benefits; less time wasted on duties, administrivia and class startup/closure; fewer classes each night; classes rotate
Cons	Shortest classes; No common time for students or staff; Least instructional time; Time wasted in passing; Duty time for staff; Most class administrivia	No common time for students or staff; Shorter classes; Time wasted in passing; Duty time for staff; Class administrivia; Loss of student choice; less time slots to schedule science labs	Need to draft a schedule to see if it can work in our facility; need to address facility for unit lunch; science lab scheduling; time lost for science class instruction; difficulty in finding time to schedule music	Need to draft a schedule to see if it can work in our facility; need to address facility for unit lunch; science lab scheduling; time lost for science class instruction; difficulty in scheduling music

Besides Better Use of Time, What Other Benefits Could a New Master Schedule Have?

- Stress reduction for students
  - Don’t have class every day
  - Opportunity for students to be together at lunch
- Creative uses for unit lunch
  - In schools that we visited, some teachers voluntarily had board games and maintained safe places for students to hang out and decompress during unit lunch
  - Time for counselors to have “office hours” and/or to run groups
- Reduction of time in the hallways for behavioral issues
- Quieter halls during academic classes
- Should help with room utilization not having classes every day

Besides Better Use of Time, What Other Benefits Could a New Master Schedule Have?

- Students with extra time accommodations can finish tests in class
- Rotation of classes a plus for some students that are on medication
- Early dismissals for school activities will not pull from same course/less of an imposed burden
- Shared-Time Vo-Tech Students not affected
- Helps with students who are frequently late to school or leaving early from losing credit
- Rotating courses allows staff to test when ready as opposed to being locked into a specific day of the week; balance occurs organically from rotation

A Possible Master Schedule Change for Ridge High School Needs To...

- Build upon our current strengths as a school.
- Meet the needs of students and teachers.
- Allow for academic rigor.
- Maintain instructional time.
- Provide some relief for students from the daily pressures of a rigorous schedule.
- Permit teachers to plan collaboratively.

Option 1: Plus 6.4 Periods

Time	A (4, 8)	B (3, 7)	C (2, 6)	D (1, 5)
7:35-8:33	1	4	3	2
8:37-9:35	2	1	4	3
9:39-10:37	3	2	1	4
Unit Lunch 10:37-11:23	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:23-12:21	5	8	7	6
12:25-1:23	6	5	8	7
1:27-2:25	7	6	5	8

Option 2: Add 6 minutes, Plus 9.6 Periods

Time	A (4, 8)	B (3, 7)	C (2, 6)	D (1, 5)
7:35-8:34	1	4	3	2
8:38-9:37	2	1	4	3
9:41-10:40	3	2	1	4
Unit Lunch 10:40-11:26	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:26-12:25	5	8	7	6
12:29-1:28	6	5	8	7
1:32-2:31	7	6	5	8

Option 3: Add 2 minutes & lunch/study hall, net 0

Time	A (4, 8)	B (3, 7)	C (2, 6)	D (1, 5)
7:35-8:31	1	4	3	2
8:35-9:31	2	1	4	3
9:35-10:31	3	2	1	4
Lunch A Study Hall A 10:31-11:01	Lunch A Study Hall A	Lunch A Study Hall A	Lunch A Study Hall A	Lunch A Study Hall A
Lunch B Study Hall B 11:01-11:31	Lunch B Study Hall B	Lunch B Study Hall B	Lunch B Study Hall B	Lunch B Study Hall B
11:31-12:27	5	8	7	6
12:31-1:27	6	5	8	7
1:31-2:27	7	6	5	8

What Are the Biggest Challenges in Making a New Master Schedule?

Maintaining the excellence and quality of the music program at Ridge High School

- Lessons and Ensemble Training Classes
  - Currently occur during 5 lunch periods
- Allow for greater flexibility in scheduling advanced courses
  - Symphonic Orchestra and Wind Ensemble
    - Currently offered during a lunch period
      - Students who cannot fit the course in their schedule arrange to have lunch during this period, eat lunch and then go to music class (1 to 5 times per week)

What Are the Biggest Challenges in Making a New Master Schedule?

What are other schools doing with their music program?

- Similar profile to Ridge High School
  - Each school has Band, Choral and Orchestral programs (multiple levels)
  - Schedule: Rotating drop
- Different approaches to lesson/ensemble training
  - Offered during all-unit lunch period
  - Offered during school day on rotating period schedule
  - No lessons/ensemble training offered
    - These schools are exploring how to implement
  - Larger facilities and additional staff to make lessons/ensemble work efficiently

What Are the Biggest Challenges in Making a New Master Schedule?

Maintaining the excellence and quality of our Science Program

Considerations for Students

- Course Selection
- SEL
- Curricular & Instructional Redesign

Logistical Considerations

- Room Use
- Staffing
- Labware & Material Costs

What Are the Biggest Challenges in Making a New Master Schedule?

Science:

- **What are other districts doing to maintain lab sciences with extended lab periods?**
  - **Labs pull from a portion of unit lunch**
  - **Labs require a mandatory study hall**
  - ~~***No labs***~~
- **What impacts did switching from a traditional schedule to a rotating schedule have upon:**
  - **Instruction?**
  - **Student Learning & Grades?**
  - **AP/SAT Scores?**

What Are the Biggest Challenges in Making a New Master Schedule?

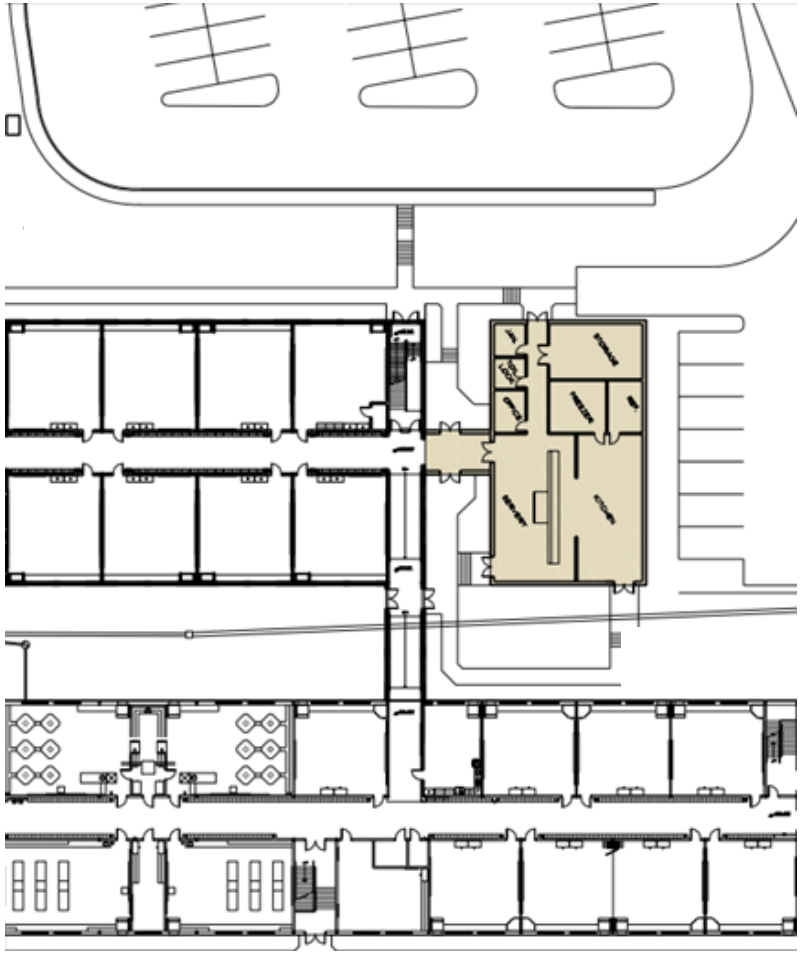
- Instructional Time for Science Now:
  - Now CP and Honors classes have an extra class for lab each week making the total annual minutes, 180 days * 42 minutes plus 36 extra lab classes at 42 minutes or 9072 minutes.
  - Now AP Science classes have two extra classes for lab each week making the total annual minutes, 180 days * 42 minutes plus 72 extra lab classes at 42 minutes or 10,584 minutes.
- Instructional Time for Science in Rotating Drop:
  - 30 minutes from lunch once per cycle: 135*56 plus 45*30 = 8910 minutes
  - 1 extra period from a study hall each cycle: 135*56 plus 45*56 = 10,080
- Making sure lab facilities can accommodate a different schedule in meeting all student needs.

What Are the Biggest Challenges in Making a New Master Schedule?

Unit Lunch

Feeding all students at the same time requires much more food production capacity than the current kitchen can manage. Additionally seating in the cafeteria is limited to 437. A secondary kitchen would address the food production problem.

Possible location of second kitchen/sales and seating space.



Financial Implications of Unit Lunch

- One time capital expenses $3.9 to $4.6 million depending on final design with 21 to 27 months of lead time to design, bid, and build
- Possible ongoing lease payment for five years depending on financing
- Estimated net loss in profit during the first year: $62,821
- Increased Labor cost for kitchen staff: $50,000
- Increased labor cost for custodial: $50,000
- Potential increases in labor cost if minimum wage goes up: $50,000
- Estimated year one budgetary impact: $162,821 to $212,821
- Estimated budgetary impact after year one: $100,000 to $150,000

Kiosks In Lieu of a New Kitchen Facility

- Inability to produce same food choices, significant drop-off
- Estimated ongoing revenue loss: $110,000
- Increased labor cost for kiosk staff: $50,000
- Increased labor cost for custodial: $50,000
- Possible minimum wage increase: $50,000
- Kiosk equipment and installation: $300,000
- Estimated year one budgetary impact: $510,000 to $560,000
- Estimated budgetary impact after year one: $210,000 to $260,000

Curricular Considerations: Pros

- Most alternative scheduling options provide more overall instructional time
  - “How” we use the time matters as much as the total amount of time in the schedule
  - Longer blocks of time for instruction opens up the possibility for different models of instruction, technology use, and assessment styles
- Most alternative scheduling options would produce a daily (hence overall) reduction in homework since courses do not run 5 days a week
- Fewer assessments possible on a given day
- Common planning and PLC time for staff
- Ability to use unit lunch for students to meet with their own teacher

Curricular Considerations: Cons

- At a minimum, most alternative schedules will force us to change the way we schedule our music and science courses
- Increasing the length of instructional periods necessitates a change in daily pacing and instructional strategies - the greater the increase in time the greater the challenge in making a change
- Assessments may span multiple days - academic integrity concern
- Possible loss in schedule flexibility depending on how lunch is scheduled
- Every day counts more - absence has more impact

Special Services Considerations?

- Students who are consistently late to school (or leave early) due to anxiety would miss less class time resulting in fewer instances of loss of credit
- Students who perform well during a certain part of the day will have more opportunities for success due to schedule rotation
- Longer class periods will allow students additional time to process and integrate new information
- Stress reduction due to common lunch period with peers and not having class every day
- Additional time to complete tests
- Most scheduling options result in reduction in homework
- Provides additional time for instruction of a skill or concept through the three modalities (visual, auditory and kinesthetic)
- Additional time to meet with case manager/mentor

Counseling Services Considerations

A particular model would need to be chosen before all of the effects on the Counseling Department can be fully analyzed.

- Will the changes reduce stress for students and/or place more emphasis on mental health and wellness?
- Will the changes make counselors/SACs more available to students?
  - More opportunities for groups? Drop in? Prevention programming?
- Will this change our college admissions rates?
- How would the changes affect our internal college planning process and modules?
  - Rep Visits
  - Group Programming
- How will room utilization and teachers be affected in terms of building the master schedule?
- Will any schedule changes work for all groups of students (Shared time VoTech, AP students, etc.)?

Might There Be Other Challenges?

- Traveling Teachers
- Part Time Vo-Tech Students
- Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Staff Development
- Crafting a master schedule that meets all needs within the limitations of the facility

High Schools Using Rotating Drop

- Livingston
- Chatham
- Watchung Hills Regional
- West Windsor-Plainsboro
- North Hunterdon/Voorhees
- West Morris/Mendham
- Hightstown
- Mainland
- Paramus
- Mount Olive
- Cranford
- Pascack Valley
- Franklin
- North Brunswick
- Randolph
- Montville
- Ridgewood

Where Do We Go From Here?

- Demographer's Report
- It is all in the details, draft master schedules to eliminate unknowns
- Revisit before 7-1-17 in consideration of cafeteria lead time
- Collect thoughts from stakeholders and the BOE
- Continue to look to implement positive measures that are independent of schedule

Appendix

Adolescent Mental Health Articles

- *More NJ Teens are Committing Suicide: Why It's Happening and What Can Be Done*
- *Best, Brightest -- and Saddest?*
- *How Schools Could Prevent Depression*
- *Suicide on Campus and the Pressure of Perfection*
- *Stressed Millburn Students Bring it on Themselves*
- *It Takes a Suburb: A Town Struggles to Ease Student Stress*
- *Why Are More American Teenagers Than Ever Suffering From Severe Anxiety?*
- *A Crusade to Get People to Back Off the Parenting Arms Race*