

## HS Schedule Ad hoc Committee 2025

September 30, 2025

3:30-5 p.m.

**Attendees:** Mike Copland, Kate Manthey, Marty Atkins, Bethany Barrett, Stephenie Burgess, Sonia Cole, Meghan Dunham, Linda Foster, Ben Goodwin, Samatha Haley, Aramis Johnson, Katie Jones, Sonya Morrison, Gwen Nyman, Kristin O'Malley, Mary Marshall, Scott Smartt, Dana Smith, Heather Steele, Ronni Weston, Matt Whitten, Kathryn Weilage

### Welcome Back

Mike Copland opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Members introduced themselves and their roles in the district. Mike recapped the meeting last week; review of the committee charter, financial options and questions raised.

### Making Sense of Different Schedule Options

#### 7 Period Schedule Options

Bellingham High School staff dug into a research brief on the trimester schedule and walked the committee through their findings. The team explored the options to see what would make the most sense. Discussion included the monetary impact for the schedules compared to the current schedule, percentage of teaching time and planning time, district wide reduction in FTE compared to current FTE, student load and instructional consistency for the following schedules:

- Straight 7
- 3.5 (3 classes every other day blocks with daily half periods near lunch)
- 3.5 (3 classes every other day blocks with daily half period last period)
- Cascading Schedule
- Cascading Schedule v2
- 3 Straight 7s, 2 block Days w/1 weekly early release

#### 5 Period Trimester Options

Students have 15 choices in their yearly schedule, focusing on 5 at a time.

The team reviewed examples of what a music, CTE, AP student's schedule might look like.

They embedded the current 4x8 schedule for Math and Science at BHS into a 5 Period trimester schedule and discussed some positive and potential limitations.

#### Trimester Feedback from Other School Districts

Mike shared input from his conversations with superintendents from Sunnyside School District and Kelso School District and a registrar from Renton High School regarding the trimester schedule. Feedback from each conversation is compiled in the OneNote.

Mike shared a rubric used by Kelso School District; the committee will review and consider if a rubric could be helpful for our process to sort /prioritize different schedules.

## **Staff Feedback by school**

### **Bellingham High School**

- Trimester schedule limits students keeping the same teacher throughout the course/year.
- Trimester schedule provides opportunity for students to move farther in math classes.
- Trimester schedule allows students to repeat a class if needed before the end of the year.
- Math teachers are generally supportive of the trimester schedule.
- Teachers of elective classes are concerned with the reduction in elective opportunities for students – for all the models explored.
- Trimester Schedule supports students transferring mid-year, more so than semester schedule.

### **Options High School**

- Staff who teach split classes (fall and spring) do not have concern about retention loss and/or the increase of re teaching ; it is working.
- Benefits of split schedule require more intentional planning; classes must be finished at the end of the trimester; no carryover. Split classes work if carefully planned.
- Benefit of a split schedule is the opportunity to restart with your same group of students.
- Teachers are happy with current 4x4 schedule and prefer it. If they had to pick a schedule to move to it would be a 3.5 schedule.
- Trimester schedule requires tighter alignment thematically.
- 7 period option not supported: for students and prep time for teachers.
- Prefer current 4x4 block schedule.
- Staff would prefer 3.5 schedule over trimester or 7 period.

### **Sehome High School**

- Concerns expressed regarding the timeline of the 5 period trimester schedule with classes finishing in March and students not engaging in the material until September.
- Wonder the same about AP classes finishing early.
- Questions about consistency/content alignment with a yearlong program. Wondering about having all teachers stop at the same place instructionally so transition to another teacher works.
- Teachers are tired, many on survival mode – tough time to look beyond personal capacity wondering if/where the relief could/would come from with a change. Change with staying with the same schedule or moving to different schedule indicate increase class size with reduction in planning time. Staff are not interested in a change.
- So many unknown variables that cannot be nailed down. It is difficult to really engage with all the unknowns.
- Teaching 6 of 8 classes compared to other schedules all include more students and less planning time.
- Budget unknown. The levy could help alleviate some staff reductions; we will not know that until after a decision/recommendation is made.

- Do we just stay with what we have – all options lean towards more students and less planning time.

### **Squalicum High School**

- Overall staff are not supportive of the 5 period trimester options.
- Potential interest in exploring 7 period schedules.
- There is interest in 7 period **or** 6-period block with consistency.
- Concern over transferring students from trimester districts. It is easier to send students to a trimester schedule than to receive students from a trimester schedule.
- Every department has their reasons for requesting year-long classes; how would that be decided. Departments want autonomy on yearlong courses.
- Anticipate increased number of students attending to Running Start because the schedules are aligned.

**Key Questions from last week.** Mike addressed a few questions brought forward at the last meeting.

- The Financial Analysis presented at the last meeting has been updated and now includes impacts of a 5-period trimester on staff reductions.
- Data is still pending on questions around AP students in the district. The number/percentage of AP students and how many students take multiple AP classes.
- Data is still pending on the number of Juniors/Seniors with open periods.
- Middle school schedule alignment will not be considered at this time due to cost implication.
- The Options High School block schedule could be considered as an option districtwide, but it does not meet the criteria of the committee which is that the recommendation needs to support a cost differential.

### **Next Steps**

- Review updated financial calculator.
- Review planning time comparisons (estimates) by schedule in a typical week.
- Read the rubric (potential guide for decision-making) from Kelso School District. Is this something we want to build out for our purpose?
- Continue to create scenarios and refine options.
- Discuss what level of cuts specific schedules can accommodate.
- A decision needed by around the end of October if there is a schedule worth developing.
- Committee members asked to continue to gather colleague feedback before the next meeting.

**Next Meeting:** Tues., Oct. 21, 2025, 3:30-5 p.m., District Office room **202/203**