

MEMORANDUM

TO: Greg Baker, Superintendent

FROM: Michael Copland, Deputy Superintendent, on behalf of the 2026 High School Schedule Work Group

RE: Recommendation on High School Schedule for fall 2026

DATE: March 19, 2026

I. Introduction

The following document describes the process of the High School Schedule Work Group 2026, summarizes the group's deliberations, and outlines a set of recommendations. Meeting notes and agendas are also memorialized at the work group's webpage.

This work group was convened in January and February 2026 to continue the work of the High School Schedule Ad Hoc Committee, which met during the fall and winter of 2025-26.

Purpose(s)/Goal:

The 2025 High School Schedule Ad Hoc Committee had recommended:

- Changing to a seven-period schedule for fall 2026 for the three comprehensive high schools.
- Convening additional work group(s) to solicit feedback on the various seven-period schedule options. These work group(s) would:
 - Make recommendations about bell schedule, planning time, class size and role of advisory class.
 - Support the development of Options High School's alternative schedule.

Basis for Establishment:

During discussions of potential budget reductions during district-BEA bargaining in the spring of the 2024-25 school year, a direction to review the high school schedule arose. BEA and district representatives agreed to examine and compare the schedule with alternatives, with an eye toward ways to reduce costs. We formed the High School Schedule Ad hoc Committee, which met seven times over the course of the fall and winter of 2025-26.

The committee reached consensus to recommend changing from an eight-period schedule to a seven-period schedule as one step toward solving the impending district budget shortfall for the 2026-27 school year. Unlike other cost saving decisions that can happen later in the school year, the high school schedule must be decided in time to meet the constraints of master scheduling

and student registration. Given this, the committee further recommended that a work group be convened to define the specifics associated with the schedule change.

Decision-Making Process:

- Recommendations will be presented to the superintendent.

II. Meeting Discussions and Consensus Items

The group met five times between January 27 and February 12, 2026. A scheduled February 4 session was cancelled by consensus of the group during the February 3 meeting.

During the first three sessions, the group reviewed various model seven-period schedules and discussed their implications, including placement of block days, advisory placement, instructional load, FTE challenges and impacts on specialized programs and student supports.

The first three meetings generated consensus on the following:

- The recommendation for a CCABC mixed-block schedule with an early dismissal on B days (Thursday).
 - C days have 7 periods, approx. 48 minutes apiece.
 - A days have periods 1, 3, 5 and 7, approximately 75 minutes apiece.
 - B days have periods 2, 4, 6 and an early dismissal.
- Placement of an advisory period only on the A block day (Wednesday).
- Elimination of straight-seven and other more complex seven-period models (e.g., “waterfall”).

After the first three meetings, the group’s next steps included refining advisory length and discussion of crediting, exploring transportation and lunch-schedule feasibility, coordinating with Options High School, addressing early-dismissal implications and preparing materials for bargaining and districtwide logistics.

At the final two meetings, the group discussed logistics for advisory, High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) completion, 9th grade mentoring program logistics, club meeting time, lunch configurations, passing periods, assembly schedules and challenges for Options, part-time staff and subs.

The final two meetings generated consensus on the following:

- Keep a once-weekly 35-minute Wednesday advisory.
- Dedicate advisory time to intervention (RTI) and completion of High School and Beyond Planning (HSBP).
- Maintain a consistent CCABC weekly structure that includes a weekly early dismissal on Thursdays (B days).
- Refer the schedule to the school district’s Human Resources and Payroll departments to update language around half day certificated substitutes.
- Ensure alignment with the needs at Options High School.

- Options High School will continue with an eight class per semester (four per quarter, every day) schedule as the current model.
- Options High School believes their schedule, although it would no longer be exactly aligned with the comprehensive high schools, can accommodate shared staff, shared students and specialized programs that may be hosted at Options.

After the final two meetings, the group's next steps included drafting, reviewing and submitting the final recommendation, developing a districtwide CCABC calendar, continuing to work through staffing logistics and preparing visual materials for communication with staff, students and families.

Finally, the superintendent will note that the recommended schedule includes two lunch periods on all days of the week. Some members of the committee voiced support for one lunch on block days if possible, and this generated a lively discussion and the need for some follow up. The argument was made that the split period that encompasses the first lunch on the block days (A/B days) is disruptive to instructional time and provides a tempting opportunity for students to miss part of a block period. One lunch on block days, it was argued, would ensure that instructional time would not be divided. While staff from Sehome High School and Bellingham High School advocated for this option, it was also noted that one lunch poses a different set of logistical challenges, especially for Squalicum High School.

Follow up conversation with Lindsay Ahrens, Director of Food Services, shared the following findings regarding the question about one lunch versus two lunches:

- **Staffing costs and considerations:** One lunch would require additional staffing support in each school, costing Food Services more, and would necessarily alter staffing arrangements on block days.
- **Participation data from 2025-26:** Our Food Service team has gathered data on one lunch participation during the early dismissal days this year (2025-26) shows that far fewer high school students participated in school lunch on those days than on the two lunch period days, and this impact was most significant among the population of students eligible for free/reduced price meals.

So, given these findings, one lunch on block days is not a feasible alternative moving forward and will no longer be considered as a feature for the weekly bell schedule.

III. Recommendation to the Superintendent

Weekly Schedule:

The work group recommends a “mixed block” schedule with three core bell schedules (C, A, B). See Fig. 1 and Fig. 2.

- Monday, Tuesday & Friday: C days, all 7 periods.
- Wednesdays: A days, four block periods (periods 1, 3, 5, 7) plus advisory.

- Thursdays: B days, three block periods (periods 2, 4, 6) plus an early dismissal.

Recommended schedule is included in Figures 1 and 2 below.

Figure 1. CCABC Schedule Proposal: C Days (Monday, Tuesday, Friday)

Monday, Tuesday & Friday

1st	8:30 - 9:18		
2nd	9:23 - 10:11		
3rd	10:16 - 11:04		
1st Lunch	11:13-11:43	4th	11:09-11:57
4th	11:48-12:36		2nd Lunch
			12:06-12:36
5th	12:41 - 1:29		
6th	1:34 - 2:22		
7th	2:27 - 3:15		

Figure 2. CCABC Schedule Proposal: A/B Days (Wednesday, Thursday)

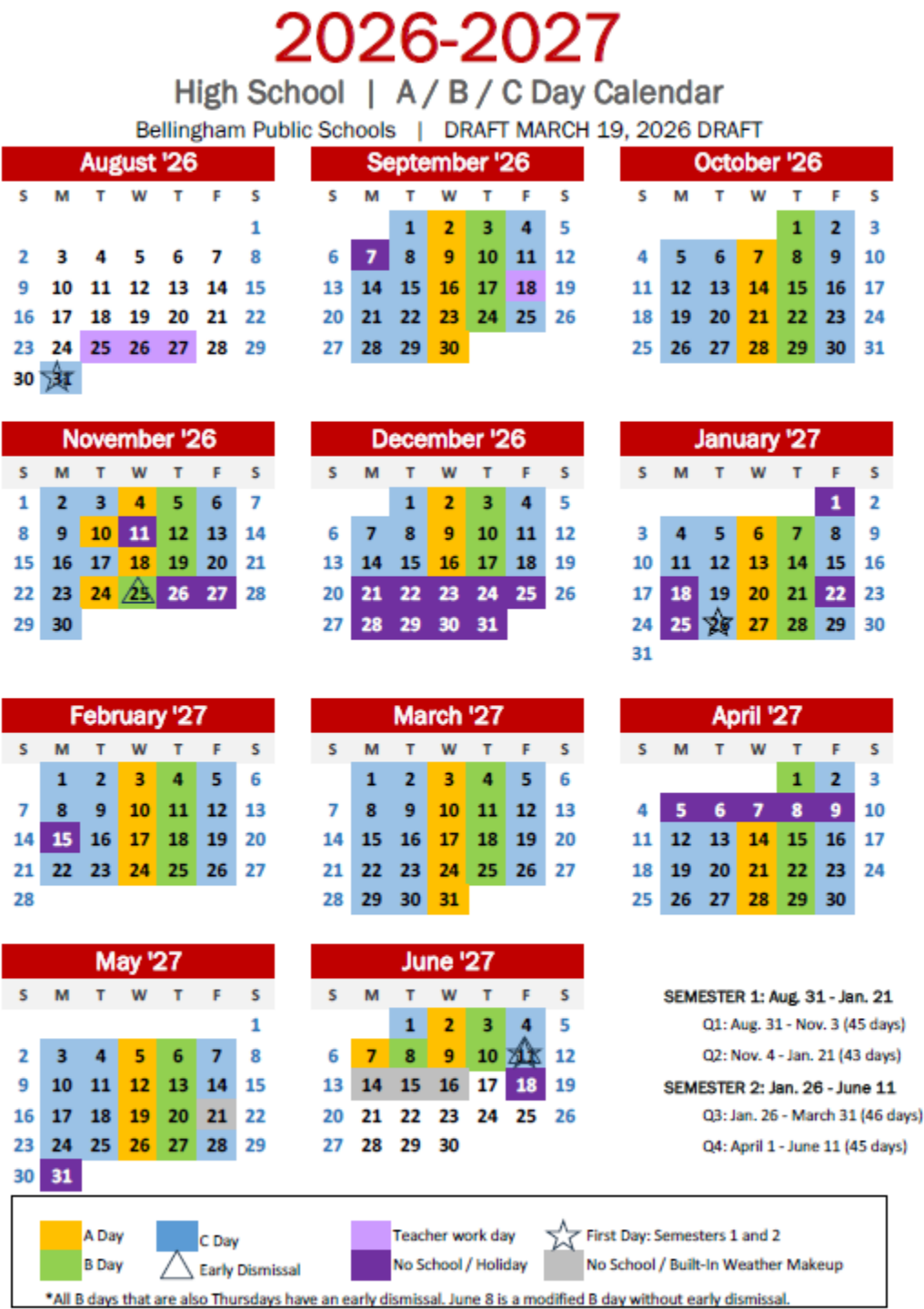
Wednesday & Thursday			
1st/2nd	8:30-9:45		
3rd/4th	9:55-11:15	3rd/4th	9:55-10:35
		1st Lunch	10:45-11:15
2nd Lunch	11:25-11:55	3rd/4th	11:20-11:55
5th/6th	12:00-1:15		
Wednesday		Thursday	
Advisory	1:20-1:55	Early Dismissal	
7th	2:00-3:15		

Additional considerations:

- We are working with BEA to ensure the language changes regarding planning time needed in the teacher contract are agreed upon.
- We have confirmed that overall district annual seat time requirements are met with the inclusion of the early dismissal schedule across the district.
- We have produced a calendar of A, B and C days for the comprehensive high schools that guide what happens with schedules on weeks where there are not five school days. Draft included below as Addendum A.
- We have worked out schedules that allow for assemblies, etc. that crop up during the school year. Draft included below as Addendum B.

Addendum A

Annual Calendar of HS Days by Schedule Type



Addendum B

Morning and Afternoon C-Day Assembly Schedules

<i>Morning Assembly</i>			
1st	8:30 - 9:10		
Assembly	9:20 - 10:05		
2nd	10:10 - 10:50		
3rd	10:55 - 11:35		
1st Lunch	11:45-12:15	4th	11:40-12:20
4th	12:20-1:00	2nd Lunch	12:30-1:00
5th	1:05 - 1:45		
6th	1:50 - 2:30		
7th	2:35 - 3:15		

<i>Afternoon Assembly</i>			
1st	8:30 - 9:10		
2nd	9:15 - 9:55		
3rd	10:00 - 10:40		
1st Lunch	10:50-11:20	4th	10:45-11:25
4th	11:25-12:05	2nd Lunch	11:35-12:05
5th	12:10 - 12:50		
6th	12:55 - 1:35		
7th	1:40 - 2:20		
Assembly	2:30 - 3:15		