High School Schedule Task Force: Meeting 3 Summary

Meeting: High School Schedule Task Force, Meeting 3
Date: Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 5:36 p.m.
Location: UNCONFIRMED
Facilitator: Hutch Hill , with support from Timely
Presenters: Ameka Hunt-Principal-Weiss HS
Jon Bailey-Principal-Pflugerville HS
Michael Grebb-Principal-Hendrickson High School
Dr. Lacey Ajibola-Principal-Connally High School

Purpose and Charge

The High School Schedule Task Force is studying whether Pflugerville ISD should change the bell schedule its high schools use. The task force's charge covers four measures: maximize learning time, ensure equitable access, support staff well-being, and reduce costs. At the previous meeting, members chose 12 attributes under those four measures. Those attributes now make up the rubric used to evaluate each schedule model.

At this third meeting, the task force moved from defining criteria to reviewing actual models. Four schedule models were presented. For each one, members heard an overview, its strengths and challenges, how it fits the rubric, and its estimated savings compared with the current schedule. Members then asked questions and scored each model.

Membership and Operating Norms

The facilitator reviewed the norms that apply to all district optimization task forces. The task force is a recommending body. Its recommendation goes to the district Executive Cabinet and the Board of Trustees, and final decision authority rests with the Executive Cabinet. If the task force does not reach a recommendation, the decision passes to the Executive Cabinet.

The other norms were reviewed as well:

- Meetings start and end on time.
- Draft discussions and materials stay confidential until they are released.
- Members do not post about meetings on social media.
- Members wait 48 hours before discussing a meeting publicly.
- Discussion stays civil, with members critiquing ideas rather than people.

Meeting materials, agendas, and summary notes are posted on the district's optimization website.

Meeting Schedule and Public Engagement

The facilitator shared the remaining timeline:

- **Tuesday, October 20, 2026:** The task force continues its model review and narrows the options to one or two proposals for public input.
- **Tuesday, October 27, 2026:** A public hearing in the Board room, where community members can give public comment on the proposals.
- **October 27 through November 10, 2026:** A community survey for people who cannot attend the hearing. Staff, parents, and students can all respond. District staff said the survey will focus on what supports people would need under a new schedule, not on choosing a model.
- **Tuesday, November 10, 2026:** Target date for a final recommendation to the Executive Cabinet.

Background: The Current Schedule and How Costs Are Driven

The district's high schools currently use an A/B block schedule. Students take four 90-minute classes each day, alternating between two sets of four classes, for eight courses in total. Teachers teach six of the eight blocks and have a 90-minute conference period each day.

The consultant used Hendrickson High School as the test case for all four models. District staff chose Hendrickson because it falls near the middle of the four high schools in enrollment and staffing. Hendrickson has about 110 core and elective teachers, not counting special education staff. Using an average cost of $75,000 per full-time teacher, which comes from district Human Resources data, those positions cost about $8.25 million a year.

The consultant explained what drives cost. Switching from A/B block to a traditional eight-period day does not change the budget by itself, although it does change the student and teacher experience. The main cost driver is how many periods each teacher teaches. Moving teachers from teaching six of eight periods to seven of eight reduces the number of teachers needed by about 14 percent.

All four models include some or all teachers moving to seven of eight. The consultant said every model also meets these conditions:

- It meets state and local instructional minute requirements.
- High school teachers get at least as much daily planning time as the district's elementary and middle school teachers.
- Special education students keep their accommodations and programming.
- Students keep the same access to resources and programming during the school day.

The modeling used Hendrickson's actual 2026-27 student course requests and kept all current course offerings. In some departments, class sizes would rise. For example, the fine arts ratio would go from about 20 students per teacher to about 24.

Model Overviews

Model 1: Traditional eight-period day, one conference period for all teachers. Students attend all eight classes every day. Periods would run about 46 to 50 minutes, and always under 55. Every teacher teaches seven periods and has one daily conference period.

- *Strengths:* daily contact with students, an even workload across departments, and the largest savings of the four models.
- *Challenges:* higher risk of teacher burnout, little built-in time for professional learning communities (PLCs) and data review, and less planning time than today. Shorter periods may also make labs harder.
- *Estimated impact at Hendrickson:* 14 fewer teachers and about $1.05 million in annual savings.

Model 2: Traditional eight-period day with STAAR planning. Teachers of STAAR-tested courses (English I, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History) teach six periods and have two daily planning periods. All other teachers teach seven periods with one conference.

The presenter noted that under state legislation, the English II STAAR end-of-course exam is expected to be eliminated beginning in 2027-28. Students in the classes of 2026 and 2027 will still take it. After that change, only English I would need the second planning period, which slightly increases savings.

- *Strengths:* common planning time for the courses where state accountability is measured.
- *Challenges:* it may create a perceived divide between teachers who get the extra period and teachers of upper-level core, fine arts, CTE, and elective courses. Class sizes in STAAR-tested courses may also rise somewhat.
- *Estimated impact at Hendrickson:* 12 fewer teachers and about $900,000 in annual savings.

Model 3: Traditional eight-period day with core planning. All core content teachers (math, English language arts, science, and social studies) teach six periods and have two daily periods, one for conference and one for PLC work. Fine arts, CTE, elective, and physical education teachers teach seven periods with one conference.

- *Strengths:* strong collaborative planning time for all core teachers, and no line drawn between tested and non-tested subjects. Core teachers would keep about 90 minutes of planning time daily, similar to today.
- *Challenges:* it saves the least of the four models, and non-core teachers would carry heavier loads.
- *Estimated impact at Hendrickson:* 5 fewer teachers and about $375,000 per campus in annual savings.

Staff noted that Model 3 does not meet the district's minimum savings target. It was presented so the committee could see it for comparison.

Model 4: A/B block, one conference period every other day for all teachers. This model keeps the current four-by-four block schedule with 90-minute classes. Every teacher would teach seven of eight blocks and have a 90-minute conference every other day.

- *Strengths:* it keeps longer periods for deeper instruction, labs, and CTE, and students and teachers already know the format.
- *Challenges:* teachers would have days with no planning period, which raises burnout concerns. Travel to the new CTE Center may also take more instructional time than under some other models.
- *Estimated impact at Hendrickson:* 14 fewer teachers and about $1.05 million in annual savings, the same as Model 1.

A handout had listed an "Option B" for Model 4 with a 45-minute daily planning period. Staff clarified that this was included by mistake and is not under consideration.

In the side-by-side comparison, Models 1 and 4 produce the largest savings, Model 2 the second largest, and Model 3 falls below the minimum target. District staff cautioned that staffing differs across the four high schools. Savings seen at Hendrickson will not necessarily be the same at every campus, so all four campuses would need to be modeled.

Strategy and Considerations

CTE Center. District staff shared an update on CTE Center planning. Six programs are currently proposed to move to the center: advanced manufacturing, automotive, construction, fire and EMT, health sciences, and culinary arts. These plans are not final. Travel is estimated at about 20 minutes each way.

- **Block schedule:** students would typically need about 180 minutes at the center per visit.
- **Traditional schedule:** students could attend about 90 minutes daily, which may allow more flexible sessions and buffer time for travel.
- **Shuttles:** staff noted that a traditional schedule would likely need a different operating schedule at the CTE Center and additional shuttle trips.
- **Funding:** staff mentioned a pending state legislative item that could affect CTE funding for districts on block schedules. They stressed that the outcome is uncertain.
- **Work-based learning:** staff explained that the district's current practice of double-blocking these courses is a local practice, not a state requirement. State expectations would still be met under the models.
- **CTE transportation funding:** The district will be reimbursed for transporting students from the home campus to the CTE Center and from the CTE Center to the home campus.

Double-blocked courses. District leadership encouraged the task force to review which fine arts, athletics, and CTE courses are double-blocked today and whether each still needs to be. The consultant observed that prioritizing daily courses on the current schedule can make it harder for students to fit CTE pathway courses into their schedules.

PLCs and planning time. Staff confirmed that PLCs remain a district expectation under every model. They noted that elementary campuses already meet this expectation with one planning period. Leadership suggested looking at how contractual time before the student day begins could support planning and teacher well-being.

Staffing. Staff said staffing changes have typically been handled through attrition, meaning positions are not refilled when teachers leave. This was shared as general practice, not as a formal commitment. District leadership acknowledged that fewer staff could mean added responsibilities for the staff who remain, including in programs with significant after-school commitments.

Teacher well-being. Members asked how teacher burnout is measured. Staff described fall and spring staff surveys and a staff advisory group that meets with the superintendent. Staff noted that high school teachers gave extensive feedback during the district optimization process. They also acknowledged that any model that reduces planning time will be felt by teachers.

Seven-period day. Members asked why a seven-period day was not modeled. Staff explained that students in Texas need 26 credits to graduate. A seven-period day gives only 28 credit opportunities, which leaves students very little room to recover from a difficult year.

Member perspectives. Teacher members said Models 1 and 4 appeared the most equitable. They also described how meetings and required responsibilities already take up part of their conference time.

Student members spoke in favor of 90-minute blocks. They said the longer periods help with advanced coursework, practice exams, fine arts, and large performance classes. They raised concerns about shorter periods and class transitions under a traditional schedule.

Other members raised questions about:

- how project-based learning would work in shorter periods
- how dual credit and OnRamps courses would be scheduled (staff said these follow the partner institution's schedule)
- whether families might leave the district over a schedule change (staff noted that other districts are also reconsidering block schedules because of cost)

Next Steps

Voting members scored each of the four models on the task force rubric before leaving. The maximum score is 48 points per model. The facilitator will total the scores and email the results to members.

Members were invited to email the facilitator with ideas for a fifth option, such as a hybrid model. One idea raised during the meeting was a smaller staffing reduction that could still reach the minimum savings target. The facilitator and the consultant will run numbers on feasible proposals ahead of the next meeting.

At the next meeting on Tuesday, October 20, 2026, the task force will narrow the options to the proposal or proposals that will go to the public hearing on Tuesday, October 27, 2026.