

**Effects of Two Models of High School Block Scheduling on
The Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments**

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EFFECTS OF TWO MODELS OF HIGH SCHOOL BLOCK SCHEDULING ON
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(ABSTRACT)

Educators across the nation are rethinking the organization of the high school day in relation to time as they face the challenges of a new century. Block scheduling, the use of extended periods of time for learning, is one response to the reorganization of the high school where in Virginia during the 2000 –2001 school year, 74% of the high schools were on some form of block scheduling. Two models of block scheduling continue to receive attention in the review of educational literature. They are the alternating day or A-B model and the 4 x 4 model. Although there are numerous qualitative research studies regarding the effects of block scheduling on school climate and student achievement, there is limited quantitative evidence that supports the use of block scheduling to improve student academic achievement on criterion-referenced standardized test scores. This study compared the effects of the 7-period alternating day schedule, the 4 x 4 block schedule, and the traditional single-period schedule on high school student academic achievement as measured by the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) end-of-course assessments. An Analysis of Variance was used as the primary tool to test for mean differences between the test scores. The results indicated that the mean scaled scores for the 7-period alternating day were significantly higher ($p < .05$) than the mean scaled scores for the 4 x 4 block on the English: Reading, English: Writing, and geometry SOL end-of-course tests. In addition, the mean scaled scores for the 7-period alternating day and the traditional schedule were significantly higher ($p < .05$) than the 4 x 4 block on the English: Writing SOL end-of-course

tests. It appears that the 7-period alternating day schedule has merit in terms of English and geometry instruction. Division and school leaders will want to explore the effects of the 7-period alternating day schedule on English and geometry courses. As a new century unravels, the question of time and how it is used for student learning will continue to be a major focus. Educational leaders must continue to work together with teachers to design and to develop a high school schedule that will provide a maximum learning experience for all students.