

Teaching Algebra in a Block Schedule

Individual Teacher Interviews

John Goodlad said in his book, *A Place Called School*, that "time is virtually the most precious learning resource (teachers) have at their disposal." The first question that most teachers ask before teaching any lesson is "How much time do I have with my kids?" Today I would like to ask you some questions related to your beliefs about time, in particular, your beliefs about the 100 minutes that you have for teaching algebra in your current alternate-day block schedule.

Please respond briefly or at length, as you prefer. Feel welcome to go back to any question if other ideas occur to you later.

How many years have you taught?

How many years have you taught algebra?

How many years have you taught in an alternate day block schedule?

Research Questions:

1.A. How would you describe your level of preparation (preparedness) for teaching algebra in a block schedule? Did you have any specific training or preparation? If so, please describe.

1.B. How does the block schedule "fit" your personal teaching style?

2.A. Suppose I were a visitor in your algebra classroom for one full block. What would I see happening? Describe what a typical algebra class in your block schedule is like.

2.B. Do you utilize certain methods or strategies more often than others? Explain.

2.C. Do you find certain strategies to be more successful than others? Explain.

3.A. How do you feel about teaching algebra in a block schedule?

3.B. Does the block schedule have any impact on your teaching of algebra? In what ways?

3.C. What about the block schedule facilitates your best teaching?

3.D. What about the block schedule compromises or impedes your best teaching?

4.A. Does the block schedule have any impact on student learning in algebra? How (in what ways?)

4.B. Has the block schedule changed the social or physical setting of your algebra classroom?

4.C. If you could alter things to improve student learning of algebra, what would you do?

5.A. What advice would you offer to another algebra teacher whose school was planning to implement a block schedule?

5.B. Are there any opportunities or limitations that you would mention?