

Implementation of an Alternate Day Block Schedule:
a Case Study

by

Dianne J. Cunningham

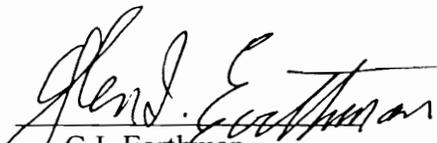
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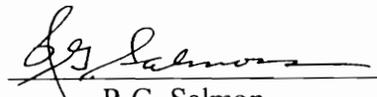
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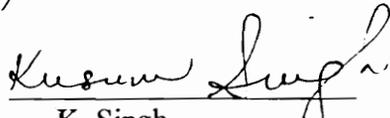
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Educational Administration

(ABSTRACT)

Scheduling is a valuable but untapped resource for school reform. Nationwide, educators and administrators have focused on the manner in which time is allotted to various subject areas during the school day.

One of the school improvement efforts that has influenced secondary scheduling is the block schedule. In Virginia secondary schools, the Alternate Day Block Schedule has become an innovative effort for school improvement. In this scheduling arrangement, students attend six to eight blocks of classes over a two-day period. One-half of the classes meet in double instructional blocks one day, while the remaining classes meet the next day.

With so much public scrutiny of teacher effectiveness and student achievement, schools are required to incorporate change. The purpose of this study was to investigate and analyze staff development training prior to the implementation of an Alternate Day Block Schedule and to describe how teaching practices changed due to the schedule implementation.

The study involved interviewing the teaching staff, administrators, and parents of a case study site which had used the Alternate Day Block Schedule for the past three years.

The case study and document reviews were conducted using interviews to gather in-depth information from administrators, teachers, and parents. Information obtained from the interviews were then further studied to find responses that were either similar or extremely different. The majority of the interview responses reflected a consensus of opinion regarding the overall success of the alternate day block schedule. There were, however, two areas of the research that provided differences of opinions regarding the effectiveness of the block schedule: staff development and teaching practices.

Responses by teachers and parents to interview questions revealed that schools considering moving to a block schedule model would benefit from in-depth study of the staff development provided and the evaluation of teaching practices gained from the training.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Scheduling is a valuable but untapped resource for school reform. Reform and restructuring have become commonplace buzzwords in the educational community. Fragmented instructional time is an issue at all levels: elementary, middle, and high school. A well-crafted school schedule can be a major influence on instructional climate, instructional delivery and practices, and effective use of space, time, and resources (Canady and Rettig, 1995). Nationwide, educators and administrators have focused on the manner in which time is allotted to various subject areas during the school day.

The alterations of master schedules have become an issue which could lead to increased student learning (Kruse and Kruse, 1995). In the May issue NASSP Bulletin, Clarence M. Edwards, Jr. wrote, "The structure of the educational system inhibits school improvement efforts." A major component of educational structure is the use of time or the school schedule. Scheduling is a problem-solving process and means of restructuring resources (Canady & Rettig, 1992). Deming was right when he said that it is often the structure of an organization rather than the inadequacies of the people who work within it that causes problems (Bonsting, 1992).

Perhaps the most critical and unresolved time allocation issue that schools face is the indisputable fact that some students need more time to learn than others. In secondary schools, reliance on the Carnegie unit has made all students dependent on time. After receiving their first semester grades, some students conclude they will not pass the subject

regardless of their performance during the second semester. Believing they have nothing to gain by doing the work, some of these students become disruptive and skip classes. Educators have done little to assist students who need more time to learn; they merely award them failing grades and have them repeat courses during summer school for the next academic year (Canady & Rettig, 1995).

One of the school improvement efforts that has influenced secondary scheduling is the block schedule. During the past ten years, high schools across the country have begun to implement block schedules to address time and learning (Canady & Rettig, 1995). Block scheduling is the manipulation of time periods to better meet the educational and emotional needs of both students and teachers (NASSP Curriculum Report, 1996), thereby creating a very simple way to reduce school management problems associated with transitional periods of students between classes while simultaneously increasing instructional time.

Although there is a variety of models defined as block schedules, the two most prominent models in Virginia are the 4X4 Semester Block Schedule and the A/B - Alternate Day Block Schedule (Rettig, 1995).

The 4X4 or semester block schedule is an instructional schedule that organizes students in four 90-minute classes per day, five days a week. This schedule is also known as the intensive model, the concentrated model, or 4X4 model (Schoenstein, 1995).

The A/B block schedule is defined by Rebecca Jones (1995) as the alternating day schedule. Students attend six to eight blocks of classes over a two-day period. The

alternate day block schedule may be adapted to meet the needs of schools that offer six, seven, or eight courses. In schools where students take six or eight courses, one-half of the classes meet in double instructional blocks one day, while the remaining classes meet in double blocks the next day (See Table 1). In seven-period schools, six courses meet in double blocks every other day: one course, called a singleton, meets daily in the traditional single-period format (See Table 1.1). Thus, if a school wishes to offer six courses, on Day One odd-period courses 1, 3, and 5 might meet in double periods, and even courses 2, 4, and 6 would follow the same format on Day Two. This pattern repeats throughout the 180-day school year, resulting in an equal number of Day Ones and Day Twos regardless of the numbering of holidays or school days within the week (Canady & Rettig, 1995). This plan minimizes the political issues associated with other block scheduling models. The major expense for a school or school division implementing an A/B block schedule is the extensive inservice instruction needed to assist teachers to develop teaching strategies and practices necessary for teaching in longer instructional blocks.

Of the 290 Virginia high schools surveyed during the 1994-'95 school year, 70 high schools were operating on an A/B block, 58 high schools were operating on a 4X4 block and 5 high schools were employing other forms of block scheduling not specifically defined in the report. The numbers represented 45.9%, up from 33.3% in school year 1993-94, of the total high schools in Virginia. One hundred fifty-seven schools, 54.1%, continued to use a traditional schedule (Rettig, 1995).

Based on the survey results of Rettig (1995), during the 1995-96 school year

there were thirteen (13) Virginia schools on either a six (6) period A/B block schedule, and 51 schools on a seven (7) period A/B block schedule or an eight (8) period A/B block schedule (Rettig, 1995).

Since 1994, the number of high schools operating on a seven period-A/B block schedule have increased 4.4% while high schools with a six period or eight period-A/B block have decreased 1.1% and 1.4% respectively. During the same time span, the number of high schools implementing the 4X4 block schedule has increased by 30 schools or 10.3% (Rettig, 1995).

The number of schools implementing an A/B block schedule represents the majority of high schools on a block schedule model indicating a need to investigate the rationale for making such a change at the school level. By investigating the transition of a high school from a traditional schedule to an A/B block schedule, schools wishing to implement a block schedule will have more information regarding teaching strategies, implementation problems, unanticipated outcomes, and effects on school climate and student success.

Statement of the Problem

The following research questions were investigated in this study:

- What was the process in determining to implement an A/B block schedule initiated?
- What were the staff development activities provided prior to the implementation of an A/B block schedule?

- How have teaching practices changed due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule?

Purpose

With so much public scrutiny of teacher effectiveness and student achievement, schools are required to incorporate change. The purpose of this study was to (a) analyze the decision-making process of implementing an A/B block schedule; (b) investigate staff development programs provided prior to the implementation of an A/B block schedule; and (c) identify how teaching practices may have changed due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule.

Justification

Three Virginia high schools were considered as possible case study sites. Each of the sites had similar demographics. School A represented a high school, grades 9-12, which implemented an A/B block schedule during the 1993-94 school year. At the time of the study, School A had 139 staff members and a student population of 2,261. The ethnicity represented 1,773 Caucasian students, 323 African-American students, 165 Asian/Pacific Islander or other students. Additional student characteristics reflected 9.7% of the students as academically gifted, 6.7% of the students received free or reduced lunches, and 7.1% of the students received special education services. The average daily attendance rate of students was 94.27% (School Profiles, 1996).

School B represented a high school, grades 9-12, which implemented an A/B block schedule during the 1995-96 school year. There were 139 staff members and a student

population of 2,036. The student population was 1,380 Caucasian; 514 African-American; 142 Asian/Pacific Islander or other. Additional characteristics included 11.3% of students academically gifted, six students received free or reduced lunches, and 9.9% of the students received special education services. The average daily attendance of students was 94.67% (School Profiles, 1996).

School C also represented a high school, grades 9-12, which implemented an A/B block schedule during the 1994-95 school year. There were 129 teachers and 2,046 students. The ethnicity of the student population reflected 1,376 Caucasian, 471 African-American, 199 Asian/Islander Pacific or other. Additional student characteristics included 3.2% of the students identified as academically gifted; 27.16% of the students received free or reduced lunches; and 9.6% of the students received special education services. The average daily student attendance of students was 93.49% (School Profiles, 1996).

After reviewing data from the three possible case study sites, two of the high schools were eliminated. School B began its first year of operation in September, 1995 with the implementation of an A/B block schedule. Teachers were aware of the desire of the administration to implement an A/B block schedule prior to their initial interviews. This fact eliminated any initial justification for the change in schedule.

School C experienced a severe fire which destroyed a major portion of the facility. Students and staff were relocated to auxiliary locations to resume classes. Classes were dismissed daily at 1:00 p.m.. The destruction caused by the fire could introduce outside factors that would reflect the overall school climate.

School A was selected because it was considered a "pioneer" in the A/B block schedule for the area. The diverse experience level of the staff made it possible to interview teachers representing varying times of involvement in the implementation process.

Significance

Well-crafted schedules can result in more effective use of time, space, and resources; improve instructional climate; help solve problems related to the delivery of instruction; and assist in establishing desired programs and instructional practices (Canady & Rettig, 1995).

The Alternate Day Block Schedule is one example of changes in the daily schedules of the traditional comprehensive high school. The significance of this study is found in the examination of the teaching practices within a block schedule. This study will provide information regarding the changes in teaching practices necessary for the successful implementation of an Alternate Day Block Schedule.

Definitions

An A/B or Alternating Day Schedule is an instructional schedule which refers to any six-, seven-, or eight-class schedule which has been established to accommodate one-half of the classes on alternating days of the week. Some alternating schedules are arranged for one half of the classes to meet on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and then the other classes meet on Tuesday and Thursday, alternating the classes which meet on

Friday every two weeks (Cowlbeck, 1996).

The 4X4 or Semester Block Schedule is an instructional schedule that organizes students in four 90-minute classes per day, five days a week. This schedule is also known as the intensive model, the concentrated model or 4X4 block model (Schoenstein, 1995).

For the purpose of this study, a Secondary School is defined as any public school in the Commonwealth of Virginia which includes grades nine through twelve (Cowlbeck, 1996).

Six or Eight Period Schools are schools where students take six or eight courses, one-half of the classes meeting in double instruction blocks one day, while the other three or four classes meet in the double block the next day. In Seven Period Schools, six courses meet in double blocks every other day with one course, called a singleton, meeting daily in the traditional scheduling format (Canady and Rettig, 1995).

Inservice instruction or Staff Development is defined as a program of organized activities of both a group and individual nature planned and carried out to promote the personal and professional growth of staff members (Oliva, 1993).

Limitations

The data collected during this study are specific to the Virginia schools using an A/B block schedule for the past three years. The research focused on staff development and teaching practices specific to the implementation of an A/B block schedule. While some of the results may be similar, the data should not be used to make comparisons with other block scheduling models.

During teacher interviews, some of the respondents felt the need to give "politically correct" answers to questions regarding teaching practices. Information was included in the interviews that would include specific terms regarding teaching practices suggested for use in a block schedule.

Organization of the Study

Contained in chapter 2 is a summary of the literature that (a) describes scheduling problems with traditional high schools today, (b) the introduction of flexible scheduling in schools, (c) advantages and concerns of an Alternate Day Block Schedule, (d) significance of staff development, and (e) teaching practices in an Alternate Day Block Schedule.

Explained in chapter 3 are the procedures which were used to conduct the study. A dual approach to gathering and analyzing data was used. A qualitative method, the case study, was used to gather and analyze in-depth information concerning the implementation of the Alternate Day Schedule. Interviews and historical documents were used to collect data at the case study site.

Presented in chapter 4 are the findings of the study. The findings include data collected in the form of historical documents and from interviews with key people at the case study site.

Summarized in chapter 5 is the information previously presented in Chapter 4. Also contained in this chapter are discussions, conclusions, and topics for future research.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Introduction

Among the criticisms of the U.S. high schools are the low achievement scores on tests of basic skills, the impersonal environment of large high schools, predominance of passive learners who often lack the motivation to work hard, outdated teaching methods, curriculum fragmentation devoid of real-world application, and failure to provide learning experiences to prepare students for the world of work (Stinson, 1994).

Unlike the workplace, students who attend most secondary schools move from room to room, five to seven times a day and are instructed by five to seven teachers. These teachers commonly use five to seven textbooks and employ various teaching styles and instructional methods. Students report to a different "boss" every fifty minutes and must adjust to several different sets of rules and expectations. The content in each course is often disconnected from other disciplines. The fifty minute time blocks limit opportunities to engage students in activities that develop higher level thinking and problem solving skills (Raebeck, 1988).

In the early 1990s, only nine of Virginia's one hundred thirty school divisions achieved a graduation rate of ninety percent or better (Edwards, 1993). Obviously, Virginia's secondary schools as they are currently structured are not working for a large number of students. Asking students and educators to work harder and make the system work better has produced only marginal results has resulted in considerable frustration.

Many believe that it is time for a fundamental change in our schools.

Schools must be organized so that all students can develop to the fullest extent of their abilities and talents. This is not to say the schools of the past have been deficient or ineffective for their time. Evidence to the contrary carries too much to substantiate such a charge. However, the educational requirements of this new age place increased demands on the schools to offer quality customized education for every student. A widespread change in our society is taking place. The schools must help students find their way in a world which demands group interaction while simultaneously placing a heavy premium on specialized individual accomplishment.

Education must keep pace with how Americans work and how long they labor. Mental work has replaced physical labor and activity in many occupations. The early retirement age, legislated minimums in the work week, and prolonged years of schooling have reduced the amount of time an American citizen may choose to work. Still, amid all of this change, the schools are organized and operate nearly the same way they have been since the first days of the Quincy Grammar School in Boston in 1848 (Manlove, 1966).

During the early 1980s and 1990s, school personnel were bombarded with reports on the inefficient and ineffective use of school time. One of the most important concerns expressed from these reports related to how American schools made use of time. In response to this concern and others expressed in national reports, many state legislators agreed that schools should increase both the length of the school day and the school year.

The argument that educators should become more efficient in their use of currently

allocated time was supported by research of the early 1980s. Rossmiller (1983) reported researchers observing that only about 60 percent of the school day was actually available for instruction. Gilmar and Knoll (1983) presented research that supported that less than 30 percent of the school day was devoted to instruction. In another research study, Karweit (1985) reported data supporting the conclusion that students were engaged in productive academics for only 38 percent of the school day.

In 1991, Congress established the National Education Commission on Time and Learning for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive study of the relationship between learning and scheduled time in American schools. The Commission reported that the degree to which today's American school was controlled by the dynamics of clock and calendar was surprising, even to people who understood school operations.

Recommendations from the Commission relating to school scheduling included

- Academic day should be nearly doubled.
- Schools should be reinvented around learning, not time.
- State and local school boards should work with schools to redesign education supporting time as a factor to support learning.
- Schools should provide additional academic time by reclaiming the school day for academic instruction.
- Teachers should be provided professional time and opportunities needed to do their jobs well (Sommerfield, 1994)

Problems With High School Schedules

In schools across the country there is no typical high school schedule. Prior to the

current block scheduling movement, however, schedules did share commonalities. In general, schools operated with either six, seven, or eight daily periods. Typically six-period schools operated classes between 50 and 60 minutes in length; seven-period schedules ran classes of 45 to 52 minutes; and eight-period schedules had classes of 42 minutes or less (Canady & Rettig, 1995).

With the unsuccessful implementation of flexible modular scheduling in the 1960s and 1970s, the traditional schedule failed to support the changes that were needed in our high schools. In many instances it was often stated that single period schedules created problems in our schools (Canady & Rettig, 1995).

Problems associated with single-period models of high school scheduling as stated by Canady and Rettig (1995) included the following:

- Single-period schedules contribute to the impersonal nature of high schools.
- Single-period schedules exacerbate discipline problems in high schools.
- Single-period schedules and increased graduation requirements have cut the time pie very thinly.
- Single-period high school schedules limit instructional possibilities for teachers.
- Single-period schedules do not permit flexible time for teaching and learning.
- Single-period schedules do not result in user-friendly workplaces for teachers.

Flexible Scheduling

The full potential of today's curricula cannot be realized within a traditional school

organizational framework. There is a need for the school to be organized to encourage students to be involved and active in the learning process, to allow teachers to meet with students for the individual and small group discussions, and to vary the pace and content of instruction for each student.

The unifying motive for all efforts of educators must be to find workable ways to get from theory to practice in devising instruction appropriate for each individual. The traditional method of organizing the secondary schools will not do the job that needs to be done. The kind of education that society demands for our students is personal, unique, and supple (Manlove, 1966). The strongest press for the system-wide change comes from parents and politicians seeking schools that are more responsive to students (Cawelti, 1995).

This is the moment for the schools to consider a better way of teaching, one that is in concert with the best of the learning practices. Flexible scheduling was suggested as an original way of helping achieve that goal. A flexible schedule was geared to the bright, the dull, the interested, and the disinterested. A flexible schedule was an approach to teaching and learning which stressed the teacher's professional judgment and the student's responsibility for his or her own learning.

Flexible implies variability, fluidity; schedule implies uniformity, regularity, stability. The combination of flexible and schedule seems a gross contradiction. According to Manlove (1966), a flexible schedule is an organization for instruction which

1. calls for classes of varying size within and between courses.

2. provides for instruction of varying groups which meet at varying frequencies and for varying lengths.
3. makes team-teaching possible in any content area or for any group of students in the school.
4. requires countless professional decisions by teachers about students, content, and teaching methods.

For nearly two decades, reports, books, and articles have called for changes in America's schools. Many educators have described time, structure, and schedule as the major obstacles in the way of meaningful reform. Yet, the Carnegie unit has dictated and driven high school organizations for more than one hundred years. The Carnegie unit is a device for measuring high school work in terms of credits based on time spent in the classroom. It assumes that a satisfactory year's work in any major subject cannot be accomplished in less than 120, sixty-minute hours, or their equivalent (Raubinger, 1969).

One of the main reasons high schools and colleges still use Carnegie units is that a satisfactory substitute has not been clearly defined and agreed upon. It is administratively convenient and easy to operate. There is a real lack of compelling force demanding change. Today, there is a great deal of comment and criticism of the Carnegie unit, mainly by the secondary school educators. While there have been many complaints, only a few substitutes have been successful in making a move towards a change (O'Neil, 1995).

The quest for the ideal secondary school schedule reaches as far back as the 1890s. The greatest profusion of literature on modifying the secondary school schedule occurred in the 1960s. During this time frame, as many as fifteen percent of junior and senior high

schools experimented with some form of "flexible modular scheduling" (O'Neill, 1995). Modular scheduling grew out of the idea that it did not make sense that all class periods and class sizes be the same. In an effort to individualize instruction, modular scheduling supported a number of different class formats and lengths. The most widely publicized example of a restructured secondary school schedule was a pilot program at the Masconomet Regional High School based on the Copernican Plan (Carroll, 1989). Carroll's plan evolved from his work in the District of Columbia Public Schools and was nurtured more than twenty years ago in the summer school setting of the Los Alamos Public Schools (Traverson, 1991).

The Copernican Plan changed the way schools used time and challenged the Carnegie unit. Under the Carnegie unit teachers typically teach at least forty-five minute periods, instructing 125 or more students each day. The Copernican Plan (Carroll, 1994), Carroll's original model, called for one four-hour block, but it was subsequently modified to divide the school year into trimesters with each term having two, 120 minute periods and a shorter interest block (Furman, 1995). The schedule change was a means to create a classroom environment that fostered vastly improved relationships between teachers and students, providing much more manageable workloads for both teachers and students (Raubinger, 1969).

Implementing a modular schedule proved to be a nightmare for administrators, teachers, and students. Students were spending large amounts of time during the day doing independent study, and the lack of supervision led to disciplinary problems (O'Neill,

1995). Students often got lost in the shuffle and teachers lacked training sufficient to teach through use of various instructional strategies.

Today's improvements have been concerned with more things, more teachers, more books, more supplies, more buildings, and more money. These additions have been accompanied by the imposition of more services on the school. Quality demands on the schools, with more students to educate, are emerging as the challenge for professional educators to meet (O'Neill, 1995).

During the past ten years, high schools across the country have begun to implement alternative schedules, block schedules, which address curriculum fragmentation (Canady, 1995). A popular form of block scheduling in Virginia is the A/B Alternate Day Block Schedule (Rettig, 1995).

A/B Alternate Day Block Schedule

Block of time schedules are becoming increasingly common in both high schools and middle schools across the country. In a nationwide survey, Cawelti (1994) found that 39 percent of high schools in 1994 had fully implemented block schedules.

Creative alternatives to traditional six and seven period scheduling formats were emerging, Copernican schedules with trimester macro classes (Carroll, 1989), four-block semester schedules (Edwards, 1993), and eight-block alternating day schedules (Hackman, 1995), to name a few.

As stated in Chapter 1, alternate day schedules allow students to take six to eight courses with one-half of the courses meeting on Day A and the remainder of the courses

on Day B. Dr. R.L. Canady (1995) identified perceived advantages of an Alternate Day Block Schedule:

1. Longer classes encourage teaching with a variety of instructional models.
2. Fewer "start-ups" and "endings" may result in more useable instructional time.
3. Fewer class changes improve school climate and discipline.
4. Because teachers see fewer students daily and for longer periods of time, they may be able to give more individualized assistance.
5. Compared to daily single period models, students have fewer classes, quizzes, tests, and homework assignments on any one day.
6. Because one or more days lapse between classes when discipline problems occur, both teacher and student have some time to "cool" before facing the next class.
7. Work missed because of a student absence is easier to gather and monitor.

All teachers benefit from increased useable instructional time. An A/B Alternate Day Block Schedule results in an annual increase of 1170 minutes per year, the equivalent of twenty-three, 50 minute class periods. Traditional schedules lose a great deal of instructional time to procedures, routines, and interruptions (Cusick, 1974).

With the A/B Alternate Day Block Schedule comes problems that have yet to be addressed (Canady, 1995).

- Teachers still work with 100-175 students during the semester/term/year.
- As many as six different preparations may still be assigned to teachers.
- Grades and records must be kept for 100-175 students all year long.

- Students continue to be responsible for 6-8 different subjects all year long.
- Students failing a course must continue to attend and have no opportunity to retake it until possibly summer school.
- Students have limited opportunities for acceleration.
- Number of course choices for students remains unchanged.

Alternate Day schedules provide opportunities for students, teachers, and administrators. A block schedule allows a student to spend time on educational activities of individual interest and concern. From this foundation of interest, solid understanding can be built.

Educators recognize students are different in size, interest, experience, and almost every other imaginable way. Yet when teachers get to the classroom all students are asked to do the same assignment and turn it in on the same day. Teachers then evaluate all assignments by the same standards. As teachers go to any block schedule format, they must recognize the differences in learners and want to provide for them individually in various ways. As teachers become aware of the possibilities of Alternate Day Block Scheduling, care should be given to underscore the potential advantages to teachers as well as students (Manlove, 1966).

Today's experiments with Alternate Day schedules depends on teachers being able to use different class formats effectively. The schedule can only facilitate learning. It's what happens in the classrooms that really count.

Staff Development

In recent years this nation has witnessed an interest in its educational system that is without parallel. Although there has been marked disagreement about educational aims, there is general agreement on the need for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our educational system.

The effective school is a purposeful organization whose members seek through common effort to achieve established goals. School systems are composed of people, and people will determine whether the system succeeds or stagnates, serves its clients effectively or squanders its limited resources (Curran, 1983). Through staff development programs, schools are able to achieve established goals and work towards improvement.

Staff development programs should be designed to bring about improvements, innovations, and change. Factors that appear to make the difference in respect to quantity and quality of staff development opportunities are (1) motivational level of the teachers, (2) leadership from administrators and supervisors, and (3) financial resources (Oliva, 1993).

In Supervision for Today's Schools, Peter Oliva (1993) cited studies made by Patricia Kells, Patricia J. Jamison, Leonard C. Burrello and Time Orbough which aided in identifying the following six observations relating to effective staff development programs.

1. Staff development programs should be designed so that programs are integrated into and supported by the organization within which they function.
2. Staff development programs should be designed to result in collaborative

programs.

3. Staff development programs should be grounded in the needs of the participants.
4. Staff development programs should be accessible.
5. Staff development programs should be responsive to changing needs
6. Staff development programs should be evaluated over time and be compatible with the underlying philosophy and approach of the district.

In the span of years since the end of World War II, our schools have flirted with team teaching, nongraded schools, programmed instruction, instructional television, open-spaced education, computer-assisted instruction, and a host of other innovations. Some of these have remained; others have disappeared. Change, however, continues to be the order of the day. The principal, as instructional leader, is in the forefront of the change process in education.

What school systems and school sites need is planned change, not haphazard change and not impulsive change. However, a school cannot afford to maintain the status quo, no matter where the system is located. The school and school system “on the cutting edge” will not only plan and effect change but also anticipate change (Oliva, 1993).

Teaching in the Block

Are teachers really prepared to move from a teacher-directed, lecture based classroom to a student-centered, collaborative environment? Can we change our focus from content to process, knowing that some of the content will have to go?

One of the most critical components of successful implementation of a block

schedule is the training of teachers to enable them to gain the strategies and skills necessary to teach in a large block of time (Canady & Rettig, 1995). Staff development is a critical key component of any block schedule implementation plan.

The premise behind the creation of longer instructional blocks is that extended time segments give teachers more instructional flexibility (Sizer, 1990; Carroll, 1990). A schedule is really a means of bringing together in an orderly fashion the various components of the learning process. Real learning requires an active rather than passive role on the part of the student. Students become active participants in the learning process only when he has an opportunity to initiate inquiry in his own way and on his own time (Johnson, 1965).

The best way to ensure acceptance of an Alternate Day schedule is to involve the staff in every decision made related to the new design. A traditional, self-contained schedule puts teachers in the position of being the absolute authority in knowledge about content and methodology. A block schedule tends to break down monolithic teaching; teachers become more dependent on each other (Manlove, 1969).

Any major change in a high school requires education of the faculty. Opportunities must also be available for teachers to grow professionally and sharpen teaching skills. Staff development initiatives should include team teaching, interdisciplinary teaching, cooperative learning, student integration, leadership skills, and learning styles (Shortt, 1995).

According to basic learning theory, people learn more and retain more if they are

active participants in the process rather than passive receivers of lectures or demonstrations. Increased instructional time facilitates more relaxed, engaged, focused learning. The longer learning segments require alternative teaching methods such as cooperative learning experiences and other ways of actively engaging students in the process (Furman, 1995).

With the decision to consolidate larger amounts of time for instruction, it becomes readily apparent that traditional teaching styles of the teacher in front of the class talking would be the death of any innovative schedule modification. The biggest obstacle causing the failure of many educational innovations is that those who must implement the innovation do not understand the need for change (Furman, 1995).

Canady and Rettig (1995) observed that teachers most successful in a block schedule plan lessons in three basic parts, explanation, application, and synthesis. Teaching strategies must stress variety and activity in extended class periods. Specific teaching strategies must be modeled for teachers during the staff development phase of block implementation. Teaching strategies that should become a part of each teacher's strategies include Cooperative Learning, Paideia Seminar teaching; a Socratic teaching method which focuses on a piece of text assigned to be read prior to the group discussion, Concept Development, Concept Attainment, Inquiry, Synectics, Simulations, Technology, Learning Centers, and Lectures (Canady & Rettig, 1995).

Reality demands a radical change if we are going to have quality education. If we are serious about students taking responsibility for their own learning, becoming

independent learners and problem solvers and live in the Information Age, then the American high school must be "dejuvenilized" (Furman, 1995).

Time is but one resource to change a school. Time interacts with other features of the school: climate, empowerment, governance, staff development, and technology. The infrastructure supports the work of the school to improve learning, provide appropriate curriculum, and use best practices for teaching (Shortt, 1995). In our traditional school setting, time has driven the schedule and forced classes to adhere to time and restraints, encouraging teacher-directed lessons and discouraging highly interactive student learning.

In the school that uses a block schedule of any model, time is a resource that permits greater amounts of time for student learning and interactive activities. As with any instructional change, there must be common principles shared by all participants prior to the implementation of the change; such is true with block scheduling. In a report drafted for the division's school board by the Office of Accountability, the following outlined the general shared instructional principles identified at the school site in this study as sound educational practice and theory ideal for use with block scheduling (Appendix I).

1. Curriculum planning is essential to assure that all key components are addressed in each subject area.
 - A. The 180-day curriculum will be reorganized into 90 days.
 - B. In adjusting curriculum, teachers will focus on specific content objectives and omit less essential materials from the curriculum.
 - C. A pacing chart should be developed by each teacher to ensure delivery of all essential curriculum objectives.
 - D. Teachers can attend the voluntary collegial sessions which will be formally scheduled once a month to discuss pacing and instructional issues.
 - E. Lesson planning should occur in larger blocks of time to assure that

- all essential material is covered.
2. Lessons will be designed that actively engage students in the instructional process.
 - a. Ninety-minute classes will be divided into segments that make use of the average adolescent attention span. Three different activities are suggested with one requiring some movement in the room.
 - b. Lessons will incorporate successful teaching strategies which rely on active student participation. Teachers will compile a resource folder of teaching strategies which suit teaching styles and challenge the learning styles of their students.
 - c. Teachers are encouraged to submit requests for more information on specific strategies.
 - d. Teachers can request modeling of specific teaching strategies in individual classes or visit other colleagues during planning times.
 - e. Students will become more involved and accountable for their own learning.
 3. Instructional strategies will be varied to accommodate the unique learning styles of all students.
 - a. Teachers who attended summer in-service training meetings on learning styles will have the opportunity to put this theory into practice.
 - b. Teachers will use varied instructional strategies within each class period to address the learning styles of students.
 - c. Teachers will be provided background information on all special needs students assigned to their classes.
 4. Instruction will develop understanding of concepts while building mastery of basic skills and facts.
 - a. Content areas will identify critical concepts to be addressed in the 90-day term during department meetings.
 - b. Pacing guides developed during the August 30 in-service meeting can be shared and refined to meet the needs of the individual teachers.
 - c. Instruction can then be planned which will develop a broad understanding of issues and concepts.
 5. Students will learn in a more personalized classroom environment that is perceived as supportive and instructionally inviting.
 - a. Teachers will get to know strengths and needs of their assigned students.
 - b. Teachers may refer students to peer tutoring or offer additional assistance to students to help them succeed.
 - c. Study blocks may be used as a place for students to receive extra

- help, etc. Classrooms should become a place to express class individuality.
6. Implementation of the block will be considered an ongoing process with annual evaluation and ongoing refinement.
 - a. An ongoing evaluation of the block will be conducted at the school site.
 - b. Annually, the School Planning Council will discuss ways to modify the block which will positively impact instruction delivery.
 - c. Effective and frequent communication with staff, students, and parents, will be emphasized during the implementation and refinement of the block.
 - d. The school will develop a process which utilizes the School Planning Council to address the concerns of staff, students, and parents for soliciting input on refinements of the block.

History Behind the Move for Site A

In December of 1991, each school within the division was to establish a faculty council and a school planning council. The purpose of the implementation was to restructure the school system, provide for parent and community participation, include teachers in the decision making process, and improve student achievement.

The faculty council consisted of the building principal and eight teachers who were nominated and voted on by the faculty. The school planning council consisted of the eight teachers on the faculty council, the building principal, and five community or parent members. The community or parent representatives were selected through an application and screening process. Selections were determined by the administration and faculty council. The principal served as chairperson of each council. The faculty and school planning council were the means by which staff development and community involvement were to be achieved. Teachers were allowed a collective voice through faculty council.

Under the plan, the faculty council involved teachers in the decisions concerning student achievement, job satisfaction, and school climate. The school planning council was to involve parents and community members in decision making at the school site. Their primary function was to make decisions concerning the school's strategic plan (Faucette, 1992).

The strategic plan was a plan of action for schools. Through the school renewal process of school accreditation, five areas are addressed at the school level. These areas were curriculum and instruction, staff development, school climate, communication, and planning. The five areas were addressed through individual action teams comprised of faculty and staff. Each faculty member was involved on at least one action team. Goals, objectives, and action plans were established by the action teams for each of the five areas of curriculum and instruction, staff development, school climate, communication, and planning. The role of the school planning council was to oversee and review the school's strategic plan.

During the spring of 1993, the concept of alternate scheduling was brought to the school planning council through the school renewal process. The principal as chairperson initiated the discussion on alternate scheduling as a possible means to address student achievement and attendance.

Through the direction of the school planning council an ad-hoc committee was established to examine all aspects of block scheduling as a way to improve instruction. The committee's charge was to compile information about scheduling alternatives and

present recommendations to the school planning council.

Over thirty interested teachers and parents were divided into five groups to begin work. The groups focused on literature research, research and survey of schools currently using alternative scheduling, schedule development, survey of stakeholders (staff, parents, students), and communication.

Two people were designated as block co-chairpersons by the school planning council. The block co-chairs attended each individual group meeting over the summer of 1993 to coordinate the entire process. When school resumed in the fall of 1993, information from each of the five groups was presented to the school planning council followed by a presentation to the entire faculty.

A forum format allowed the faculty opportunities to review all information, results, and recommendations by the ad-hoc committee. In the end, a vote was taken by the staff of 146 teachers which reflected a majority support of over 80 percent (117 votes) in favor to pursue the concept of alternate day block scheduling.

With the task of the original ad-hoc committee completed, the actual implementation of the block schedule became the responsibility of a new committee, the Implementation Team established by the School Planning Council. The Implementation Team consisted of interested staff members, parents, and student representatives. The committee focused on four main areas:

- scheduling/logistics
- research/survey

- media/communication
- special programs

Through the Implementation Team, the schedule developed in the late spring of 1994 centered around an A/B day. The main objectives for implementing an alternate day block schedule were to:

- increase academic achievement by allowing time for interaction and reinforcement
- lower absentee and failure rates

Each day was divided into four 90- minute blocks of time. The length of the school day was extended five minutes to accommodate bus transportation difficulties (Appendix I).

To prepare the staff for the move of teaching successfully in a 90-minute block of time, the staff development action team of the school planning council planned to provide a variety of opportunities. Panel discussions, small group discussions, literature research reviews, classes, and workshops were strong elements of the staff development program.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction

In the "Directory of High School Scheduling Models in Virginia" compiled by Michael D. Rettig (1995), all 290 high schools were surveyed by telephone during the months of June and July regarding their schedule plans for the 1995-96 school year. Of the 290 schools, 133 high schools were currently implementing a block schedule model while 157 schools still operated on a single period schedule. During the 1995-96 school year, of the 133 high schools implementing a block schedule, 70 of the Virginia high schools operated on an A/B or alternate day block schedule (Rettig, 1995).

The A/B block can be implemented in a high school without a radical schedule change and at a lower cost than other block schedule models (Canady, 1995). The A/B block usually represents the first phase of a block schedule model. Due to the minimal change in a student's daily schedule, the transition is a much smoother process than a more radical block schedule model such as the 4X4 model (Canady & Rettig, 1995).

This study investigated the implementation of an A/B block schedule in a Virginia high school, the staff development provided, and the effects of the implementation on teaching practices.

Research Design

The research method designed was based on the research questions stated in Chapter 1, Statement of Problems. Research questions were addressed through triangulation, the corroboration of data using multiple methods of collecting data. Triangulation provided for the collection of data from the following stakeholder groups: central office personnel, school administrators, teachers, and parents. Teachers were selected and interviewed providing a base of varying experience levels on an A/B block. The block teaching experience level of the teachers ranged from one to three years of experience counting this school year. Because the researcher was unable to receive permission from the local school division's school board to interview students at the school site, student information was obtained from a 1995-96 survey instrument developed and administered by school administrators at the school site. The survey obtained information from students, parents, and teachers. All students and teachers received a copy of the survey. The parents were randomly selected by the administration and school planning council members to receive a survey.

Evidence concerning perception of and participation in an A/B block schedule was collected from interviews of the four stakeholder groups. Responses were compiled within and across the stakeholder groups to ensure the accuracy of findings and conclusions. Triangulation was addressed by utilizing two different methods of collecting evidence: interviews and document review. The different methods of collecting evidence provided corroboration of data. The use of these two methods of data collection together

with multiple sources improved validity.

This was a descriptive study of the implementation of an alternate day block schedule in a large urban high school. A qualitative research approach was used for this study. Qualitative research provided for the extraction of data and information from a natural setting. The most often studied natural settings are social units such as schools, groups, and individuals. The information that was derived from this study provided a descriptive picture of an alternate day block schedule as implemented at the subject high school. This case study focused on investigating the implementation of an alternate day block schedule rather than the student outcomes.

A case study is a method for gathering data in qualitative research involving collecting evidence by studying a specific subject or topic. Methods used to collect evidence for this study included interviews of central office personnel, principal, assistant principals, teachers, parents, and review of documents (Patton, 1990).

The data obtained from interviews and document review were condensed and entered initially onto individual data matrices. From these data matrices, the researcher was able to extract findings and conclusions about the implementation of an alternate day block schedule at the school site being studied.

Population

School A represented a high school, grades 9-12, which implemented an A/B block schedule in 1993-94. The stakeholders included one central office representative

(N=1), five school administrators (N=5), teachers with one to three years of experience within the A/B block schedule (N=14), and school planning council members/parents (N=2). One participant refused to be interviewed after receiving the interview questions. There was no advance notice given to the researcher prior to the scheduled meeting date.

The high school under study, one of ten in the school district, is located in an urban section of a large southeastern city. It was built in 1966 and was thirty years old at the time of the study. The construction was traditional for the time, patterned as a box with one side open; all classrooms were located on the ground floor.

The school was built to house a comprehensive high school program, offering the traditional subjects of English, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, vocational and physical education. Although originally designed for 1,725 students, after the last renovation in 1995, 27 classrooms were added to the school which, at the time of the study, housed two thousand one hundred sixty two students.

The school serves a middle to upper class community. The school has long had the reputation as an affluent, high achieving school. At the time of the study seven percent of the students were considered indigent and qualified for free or reduced lunches. The school ethnic make-up consisted of seventy eight percent Caucasian, fourteen percent African-American, and seven percent as Asian or other.

The average daily attendance was one of the highest in the division averaging 94.27 percent for the 1995-96 school year. Student composite test scores, TAPS, were raised by two percentile points giving them the highest scores among the division's ten

schools.

There were one hundred thirty nine teachers and five administrators on staff at the time of the study. One hundred twenty six teachers were Caucasian and sixteen were African American. Ninety six teachers were females; forty eight were males. The average length of teaching experience was eighteen years (School Profiles, 1996).

INSTRUMENTATION

Data Organization

A database was used to organize and manage information. Three sources were used to gather data for the study, interview of stakeholders, document review and survey results gained at the school site through a school administered survey. Stakeholder interviews were the first and foremost method of collecting data to answer research questions related to the implementation of an A/B block schedule specifically addressing staff development activities and teaching practices.

Interviews of all stakeholders were audiotaped by the researcher. The tapes were transcribed by the researcher and reviewed for clarity and grammatical correctness. A numbered list was kept of all interviews completed (Tables C1-C22). Each stakeholder interviewed was identified by a random number assigned during group selection process. As interviews were completed, the researcher checked that number against the list to ensure accuracy of the completed interviews.

After the interviews were transcribed, they were reviewed for clarity and grammatical correctness. The researcher then extracted data from the interviews pertinent

to the questions that were asked of each stakeholder concerning their perception of staff development and teaching practices in the A/B block schedule. The extracted data were entered into a participant-by-involvement matrix. The data were organized by entering the quoted statements from each stakeholder into the cell describing stakeholder perception or participation. Four participant-by-involvement matrices were constructed, one for each stakeholder group interviewed.

Documents pertaining to the implementation of an A/B block schedule at School A were reviewed, and the data collected were entered into a matrix of documents. A review of the documents provided additional data to help answer the research questions addressing the implementation of an A/B block schedule.

Raw data from the interviews were further condensed and refined. A stacked matrix was constructed to allow the researcher to extract data relative to each stakeholder's involvement in the implementation of the A/B block schedule.

Interview

Qualitative interviews begin with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit. Interview data for program evaluation purposes allow the evaluator to capture the perspectives of program participants, staff, and others associated with the program.

For this study the standardized open-ended interview was used with the participants. A set of questions was carefully worded and arranged with the intention of taking each participant through the same sequence and asking each participant the same

question with essentially the same words.

The basic purpose of the standardized open-ended interview was to minimize interviewer effects by asking the same questions of each respondent. The data analysis enabled the interviewer to locate each participant's answer to the same question rather quickly and to organize questions and answers that were similar.

Qualitative interviewing allowed the interviewer to understand how program staff and participants viewed A/B block scheduling, to learn their terminology and judgments, and to capture the complexities of their individual perceptions and experience. The fundamental purpose for selecting qualitative interviewing was to provide a framework which allowed participants to express their own understanding of the A/B block schedule (Patton, 1990).

During the fall of 1996, letters were sent to each of the 132 faculty members at School A (Appendix J). Teachers were asked to return the response form attached to the letter of explanation. Thirty-seven teachers responded to the letter agreeing to be interviewed. All thirty seven names were placed in a bowl. Participants for interviews were selected from the initial thirty-seven responses by drawing names from the bowl. Ten of the teachers responding were currently in their third year of a block schedule and four of the teachers were in their second year of block scheduling.

The interviews began in December, 1996, and were completed in January, 1997. All interviews were conducted at the worksites of each participant. Participants were asked the time most convenient for them to be interviewed and interviews were completed

during the scheduled times. Most of the teacher interviews were completed during planning bells or after school. All of the administrators were scheduled at predetermined times on scheduled days.

Eleven teacher interviews were conducted in the principal's conference room and two in an assistant principal's office. Due to an emergency, one teacher was unable to keep the scheduled interview appointment. The responses were written and mailed to the interviewer. Three administrators were also interviewed in the principal's conference room; two in their individual offices. The central office participant was interviewed in his office. The parents, who were teachers at division middle schools were interviewed in their individual classrooms.

Each of the twenty-two interviews followed the outline of a prepared script and lasted no more than forty minutes. Participants were introduced to the study and permission to audiotape the interview was secured. Participants were free to ask the interviewer for clarifications; the interviewer used only the script and did not probe for responses. A question regarding what did not work in a block schedule was added after being suggested by Teacher 2 (Appendices D-G).

Data Analysis

This section of the study contains the methods used in analyzing the collected data.

1. Participant-by-Involvement Matrix: A participant-by-involvement matrix (Appendix J) was constructed for each stakeholder group. Information was derived from

the three research questions: (1) What was the process in determining to implement an A/B block schedule? (2) What staff development activities were provided prior to the implementation of an A/B block schedule? and (3) How have teaching practices changed due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule? Each stakeholder's comments responding to the research questions were entered into the matrix.

Following all of the interviews, the combined data were collected and compiled for a standard matrix design. Each of the stakeholder groups was identified in the matrix. The matrix served as a major tool to consolidate, display, and corroborate any and all pertinent data collected. The matrix allowed the researcher to see any patterns, themes or sub-themes that could emerge from the collected data.

Additional matrix displays (Appendix I, Table 8) were used to assist in compiling information collected from documents used for the study. Findings and conclusions were drawn from themes which emerged through the transcription of data collected in each of the matrices.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

The purposes of this study were to analyze the decision making process of implementing an A/B block schedule, investigate staff development programs provided prior to the implementation of an A/B block schedule, and identify how teaching practices may have changed due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule. The data to answer these questions came from interviews with central office staff, school administrators, teachers, and parents (Appendix H). Data were also collected from documents collected at the school site, central office, and parents (Appendix I).

Three research questions addressed the areas of initiation and beginning stages of implementation, types of staff development activities, teaching practices, evaluation, outcomes, teacher planning, decision to continue or discontinue a block, and problems of a block schedule. For each of the nine areas addressed during the interview, a table of findings was constructed. Concepts and themes emerging from the findings were further organized, grouped, and entered into a table of conclusions for each area studied.

Initiation of Implementation

Research Question 1: What was the process in determining to implement an A/B block schedule? (Who was involved? How was the decision made? Why was the schedule change made?)

Table 5

Table of Findings: Research Question 1

Question 1	Findings
1.A: How was the decision made to implement an A/B block schedule?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The decision to implement an A/B block schedule was a site-based decision derived from the school renewal process (TC2, C4, C8) 2. School-based committees were formed to research and present findings to the faculty (TC2, C8, C11, C14, C18). 3. Teachers and staff were provided opportunities to visit other schools on an A/B block schedule (TC2, C8, C14, C17). 4. The final decision for the implementation was made through a majority faculty vote (TC8, C10, C16, C19).
1.B: Who was involved?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Every faculty member was a member of at least one subcommittee researching a block schedule model (TC11, C14, C15, C16, C17, C18, C19). 2. Every participant had an opportunity for input into the final decision for block scheduling implementation (TC8, C11, C15, C16, C17, C18, C19). 3. There was no involvement from the central office (TC1).

Question 1	Findings
1.C: Why was the schedule change made?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The two original needs for the change focused on time-on-task and students as more active learners (TC2, C3, C6). 2. Teachers were looking for ways to improve student success (TC4).

Finding 1.A.1: The decision to implement an A/B block schedule was a site-based decision coming from the school renewal process.

In the spring of 1993, one year prior to the site implementation of an A/B block schedule, an ad-hoc committee was formed under the guidelines of the school renewal process to examine all aspects of block scheduling. .

Each group worked over the summer of 1993 to prepare a presentation to the faculty when school opened in September. Four Virginia schools currently implementing a block schedule were asked to participate in a fact-finding survey (Appendix I). School administrators were asked to distribute surveys to teachers, students, and parents, all who were determined at each individual school site by the principals. The questions attempted to gain initial information about existing block scheduling programs at the four selected schools. Participants were asked to respond by a specified date to allow committees ample time to collect and prepare the data for faculty presentations at school site A in September of 1993.

Finding 1.A.2: School-based committees were formed to research and present findings to the faculty.

When school resumed in the fall of 1993, the information on block scheduling was presented to the faculty in an open forum. Two parent/student presentations were made as well as community open forums. A pamphlet was prepared by a subcommittee and mailed to all middle school and secondary students' homes in the community (Appendix I).

Thirteen parents and teachers interviewed stated that there were ample opportunities for involvement. Everyone was invited to participate. Two teachers interviewed were not present for the beginning stages.

Both parents interviewed commended the administration for allowing ample opportunities for everyone to gain information and voice concerns. "The community was very well prepared for those who were in any way interested. Everything was up front and public," explained Parent One.

The Assistant Superintendent reinforced the concept of a site-based decision emphasizing that the change was "not a central office directive." There was no cooperation between the central office and the school.

Finding 1.A.3: Teachers and staff were provided opportunities to visit other schools on an A/B block schedule.

Each of the participants stressed that everyone was given an opportunity to visit other schools currently teaching on an A/B block schedule. While many teachers and

administrators took advantage of the opportunity, some did not participate. It was made very clear that a majority faculty vote of 80 percent of the faculty was needed to proceed with the block scheduling implementation.

Finding 1.A.4: The final decision for the implementation was made through a majority faculty vote.

Teachers and parents interviewed, with the exception of one teacher, stressed that the final decision was a majority faculty vote. The vote had to represent at least 80 percent acceptance (113) by the faculty before the principal would move forward with the A/B block schedule implementation. Parents were not a part of the voting process but both of the parents interviewed agreed that had there been strong, vocal opposition to the block schedule, the process would not have taken place.

Finding 1.B.1: Every faculty member was a member of at least one subcommittee investigating a block schedule model.

Once the initial subcommittee reported to the general faculty, additional committees were formed to research a variety of aspects and concerns of implementing an A/B block schedule. The administration emphasized input from everyone. Teacher Fourteen stated that "some teachers heard too much about it." Any teacher who thought the block was not for them was given the opportunity to transfer to another school. Some teachers left for other schools.

Finding 1.B.2: Every participant had an opportunity for input into the final decision of block scheduling implementation.

The administration stressed the importance of input from all stakeholders. The presentation came in a forum-type presentation allowing time for both sides of the issue to be presented. Parent One's involvement with the PTA board gave her the opportunity to "know everything from the ground up." At least two parent meetings were scheduled to allow for open discussion. Parent Two expressed that the meetings were not as well attended as she would have liked for them to be, but they were well publicized. It was evident throughout the interviews that both teachers and parents felt free to express concerns, support, or opposition of the A/B block schedule without fear of retaliation.

Finding 1.B.3: There was no involvement from the central office.

Assistant Superintendent One stated there were "no incentives in terms of dollars" to support a program change. The superintendent at that time supported schools taking risks without central office support. At no time did central office personnel become involved with any aspects of the discovery and implementation stages of the A/B block schedule. According to Assistant Superintendent One, "The mistake was not being involved initially because central office is now involved after the fact." During this school year, the division school board took an active interest in researching the effectiveness of block scheduling. A decision would be made at a later date to determine if block scheduling should continue or if the block schedule should be in all high schools in the division.

Finding 1.C.1: The two original needs for change focused on time-on-task and students as more active learners.

Administrators One and Four supported the principal's viewpoint of increasing time-on-task. The other two administrators emphasized an overcrowded school which was creating chaos for teachers and students. It was also felt that the change originated from the principal through the process of school renewal. Teachers did not vocalize either of the two needs for change, increased time-on-task or more active learning, as concerns, only that the time was right for a change.

Finding 1.C.2: Teachers were looking to improve student success.

Based on all participant responses, there was no improvement in student success that could be contributed solely to the initial A/B block schedule implementation. There were too many variables that could influence student success. Administrators One and Two did identify student achievement as a goal of the block schedule.

Only Teacher Fourteen expressed any need for a change at the school. It was not a concern of any of the remaining thirteen teachers interviewed. The concerns identified through the administration came through the school planning council and school renewal. Parents interviewed did consider the block schedule as a means to improve student achievement. Student achievement was already consistently high and there were too many variables that could influence achievement.

Conclusion

Twelve of the fifteen teachers and parents interviewed expressed that there were

ample opportunities for teachers and parents to voice opinions, be heard, and become involved in the early stages of the research and investigation for methods of alternative scheduling.

None of the participants, except the principal and one assistant principal, stated the reasons for the schedule change provided in the document prepared by school administrators for the local school board: improve student achievement through more active learning and to also increase student attendance. Thirteen of the fifteen teachers interviewed expressed initial concerns of anxiety and skepticism prior to the information forums. The information forums allowed teachers, parents, and students opportunities to become informed about alternative scheduling, in particular block scheduling, to express support or nonsupport, and to ask questions regarding the schedule. Two forums were held during the spring and summer prior to implementation in the fall.

In summary, participants felt uneasy and uncertain about block scheduling but were provided sufficient information and input to put aside the fears and stress. The information provided by the administration allowed teachers to make knowledgeable decisions regarding the implementation of the alternate day block schedule.

Staff Development Process

Research Question 2: What were the staff development activities provided prior to the implementation of the A/B block schedule? (How were the staff development activities funded? Who developed the plans for the staff development activities? What type of ongoing staff development activities are there for the continued use of A/B block schedule?)

Table 6

Table of Findings: Research Question 2

Question 2	Findings
2.A: What staff development activities were provided prior to the implementation of the A/B block schedule?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faculty members were provided opportunities to visit other high schools across the state to observe an A/B block schedule in full implementation (TC2, C3). 2. Teachers currently teaching in an A/B block schedule at other schools conducted workshops for the teachers at School Site A (TC2, C4, C5). 3. Mandatory and voluntary staff development programs were conducted on scheduled teacher in service days and throughout the summer focusing on teaching practices for specific subject areas (TC3, C4, C10, C12, C13, C16, C18).
2.B: How were the staff development activities funded?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The funding for staff development was obtained from site-based staff development school monies (TC1).
2.C: Who developed the plans for the staff development activities?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher committees were formed to plan the staff development activities (TC2, C3, C15, C17).
2.D: What type of ongoing staff development activities are there for continued use of the A/B block schedule?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff development is currently planned jointly with two other high schools within the division currently on an A/B block schedule (TC2, C8, C5). 2. There is very little training for new teachers on an A/B block schedule (TC2, C3, C6). 3. The individual departments do the majority of the training with new teachers on an A/B block schedule (TC3, C4, C5). 4. There is no specific assistance, outside of the normal assistance, provided for teachers who may be experiencing problems with the block schedule (TC2, C3, C4, C5).

Finding 2.A.1: Faculty members were provided opportunities to visit other high schools across the state to observe an A/B block schedule in full implementation.

Once the staff determined the block schedule model for implementation, the

planning process began for the staff development phase. The action teams as a component of the school strategic plan previously focused on staff development activities. The administration felt that staff development was the most important component of the entire process. The principal explained the basic staff development plan, “Through the staff development committee, we contacted some schools that were in block scheduling to find out the things they did.”

Dr. R. L. Canady and Dr. M. D. Rettig were contacted to serve as resources and presenters of staff development activities. Due to scheduling conflicts of Dr. Canady, Dr. Rettig was asked to serve as a presenter. Dr. Michael Rettig of James Madison University delivered two staff development presentations addressing cooperative learning and teaching in the block. Other topics of staff development included reading in the content areas, the Paideia method of Socratic questioning, lesson plan designs for a block, and developing collegiality among faculty and staff (Appendix I).

Staff members were encouraged to visit other schools in the state currently teaching in a block. Scheduled visits were arranged through the administration allowing as many teachers as interested to spend time in other schools in order to observe and talk with fellow educators to gain a first hand perspective of A/B block scheduling. Information gained from school visits was shared during faculty meetings and open forums.

Finding 2.A.2: Teachers currently teaching in an A/B block schedule at other schools in the state conducted workshops for the school site.

Scheduled staff development workshops and in-service activities (Appendix I) focused on the active participation of all students by using the Paideia method of Socratic questioning. Administrator Two also noted the inclusion of a team from Pulaski High School that came to the school site to work with the staff. It was important to the administration and planning committees that teachers participate in various in-depth discussions with other teachers currently teaching in an A/B block schedule.

Administrators wanted to provide as many opportunities as possible to adequately prepare teachers to teach in an A/B block schedule.

Finding 2.A.3: Mandatory and voluntary staff development programs were conducted on scheduled teacher in-service days and throughout the summer focusing on teaching practices for specific subject areas.

Every teacher interviewed noted the offerings of both mandatory and voluntary in-service programs. Teacher Eight stated that the mandatory meetings basically explained what block scheduling was about and that he "understood perfectly what block scheduling was all about after the second meeting." The overall feelings by the participants of the initial staff development programs were that the introductory preparation was there for anyone needing assistance.

Teacher Fourteen did state that the "staff development was the weakest part of the entire process." This was supported by parents one and two. There were several in-service programs where teachers felt inundated and bored with written materials. Every person interviewed stated that the staff development activities were available for anyone

wishing to take advantage of the opportunities.

Finding 2.B.1: The funding for staff development activities was obtained from site-based staff development school funds.

Any money spent on the staff development of teachers in preparation of teaching in an A/B block schedule came from the school site. Central office funds were not directly used to support the in-service activities. Centrally, each school was given a set amount of dollars per teacher to use as staff development. The money could be spent as the principal felt best supported the school's strategic plan. Discretionary funds could also be used to support staff development activities. As part of site-based management, schools were given a set amount of money to be spent to support the school's strategic plan.

Finding 2.C.1: Teacher committees were formed to plan the staff development activities.

The general faculty was not involved in the planning process of the staff development component of block implementation. The administration and a staff development committee under the direction of the school planning council worked jointly to plan a variety of programs for the staff. Teachers interviewed expressed the initial staff development program as adequate training at the time. Teacher Five stated there was "lots of time for teachers to get the preparation needed." The voluntary programs offered in the summer overwhelmingly were expressed as the most beneficial programs. Teachers could attend programs that addressed specific, individual needs.

Finding 2.C.2: Staff development is currently planned jointly with two other high schools within the division on an A/B block schedule.

Since the implementation of A/B block scheduling in the fall of 1994, the three school sites in the division currently on a block schedule plan joint in-service activities. By combining programs, the cost to each individual school is lessened. The majority of the program consists of teachers of same subjects meeting together to share ideas. Staff development is no longer a key component of the program.

Finding 2.D.1: There is no in-depth training for new teachers on the A/B block schedule.

None of the teachers interviewed were aware of any special staff development programs for teachers new to the block. The principal did identify a program “New Kids on the Block” that was offered during teacher orientation week. The in-service activities were approximately two hours in length for one day. New teachers are assigned a “buddy” within each department according to Teacher Fifteen.

When prospective teachers are interviewed by the administration, they are informed of the A/B block schedule. One of the interview questions pertained to the prospective teacher’s ability to teach in an A/B block schedule. New teachers seeking employment would naturally respond positively to the block schedule in anticipation of securing a job.

Finding 2.D.2: The individual departments do the majority of the training for new teachers on the A/B block schedule.

After the initial in-service for new teachers, it was expected that department members would provide the necessary training and resources for the new teacher. The principal supported the fact that staff development for new teachers was very weak and that departments assumed the responsibility of assisting new teachers. All five administrators supported the importance of department members providing assistance to new teachers.

There is no continuing staff development programs offered for teachers. Both Parent One and Parent Two expressed the lack of continuing staff development as a weakness of the block schedule program. Parent One stated her recommendation would be to "in-service teachers more on how to handle the ninety minutes of time. Lecturing does not go well with block scheduling. The creative teachers are using time well. Good teachers are doing that; ones that aren't will not."

Parent Two supported the lack of staff development by stating "I think there are some people that do not fit into the block well. Teachers were given the opportunity to go somewhere else, most did but some did not." Both parents also expressed their concerns with teachers that lecture for ninety minutes. Their children complained quite often about the teachers that only lectured in class. While the administrators also viewed this as a concern, they currently do very little to alter the teaching practices of unsuccessful teachers.

Conclusion

The decision to implement an alternate day block schedule was strictly a site-based decision. There were no funds provided for the program from the central office.

Nine teachers and both parents interviewed expressed satisfaction with the type of staff development opportunities offered at the school prior to implementation of the schedule. The summer activities were voluntary while the activities offered during the school year were mandatory.

Five of the teachers felt the staff development activities were weak and not necessary. Teacher two stated “general faculty members were not involved in the planning process.” “I understood perfectly what block scheduling was all about after the second meeting.”

In summary, the initial staff development programs were available for any teacher wishing to participate. As in most cases, teachers open to change and professional growth benefit most because of their willingness and openness to learn. With a veteran staff, many teachers felt they did not need change; it’s worked fine for years, why change now? The main drawback of the staff development program was offering voluntary participation as opposed to mandatory participation. Had support been available from central office to fund the staff development programs, all teachers would have been exposed to teaching strategies effective for teaching in a block schedule. Since money was not available to pay teachers summer workshop pay, the administration should have worked out compensatory time for teachers.

Teaching Practices

Research Question 3: How have teacher practices changed due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule? (What is different, instructionally, in a block class period as opposed to a seven-bell day? What is the teacher evaluation process?)

Table 7

Table of Findings: Research Question 3

Question 3	Findings
<p>3.A: How have teaching practices changed due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching practices have changed in that more teachers use a wider variety of student-centered activities and active learner approaches (TC11, C13, C14, C18). 2. Good teachers become better teachers on a block schedule while teachers choosing not to change experience difficulties (TC7, C8, C9, C10, C11, C12, C13, C16, C17, C18, C19).
<p>3.B: What is different, instructionally, in a blocked class period as opposed to a seven-bell day?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The scheduling process is more difficult in a blocked class period (TC2, C3, C6, C9, C10). 2. Block scheduling allows a diversity of activities for students (TC2, C3, C5, C7, C8, C11, C12, C15, C18, C19). 3. Students and teachers only see each other every other day creating some distance when needed (TC4, C6, C8, C12). 4. There is more instructional time and a smoother flow to lessons in an A/B block schedule thus providing more in-depth learning from students (TC6, C7, C9, C11, C13, C14, C16, C17, C18, C19).
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Teachers know their students better on a block than in a seven bell day (TC7, C8, C10, C12, C15). 6. In an A/B block schedule there is more time for planning with fewer interruptions. Sufficient planning time is a vital component of a teacher's schedule (TC5, C7, C12, C13, C14, C17, C18, C19, C20).

Question 3	Findings
3.C: What is the evaluation process?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The evaluation process is still very much the same as in a seven-bell day except that administrators look for more varied activities during a lesson (TC2, C3, C5, C6, C8, C9, C11, C12, C14, C16, C19). 2. Administrators do not support the practice of lecturing for ninety minutes as an appropriate teaching practice for a block schedule (TC5, C9). 3. Evaluation instruments should be modified to accommodate teaching practices for block scheduling (TC18).

Findings 3.A.1: Teaching practices have changed in that more teachers use a wider variety of student-centered activities and active learner approaches.

The goal of the initial staff development program was to demonstrate the necessity of varied instructional activities within the classroom. Instructional activities should also take a student centered approach. While the initial staff development did provide fresh approaches to classroom delivery, only teachers open to change and the concept of block scheduling took advantage of the in-service activities.

Administrators, teachers, and parents stressed the importance of varied activities in a blocked class period. Nine out of fourteen teachers interviewed stated their lessons were presently more student centered. Comments included "I utilize most often the practice of activity right away," "can't lecture for ninety minutes," "I vary my teaching more," and "I'm a director and they are the learners."

While it was evident through the interviews that teaching practices must include

varied activities, it was also clear that there were opposing opinions on the significance of this practice. Teacher One stated, "There was some help; most teacher in-services are a waste of time." Teacher Five felt "seasoned teachers knew how to manage time."

Teacher Fourteen did not feel teaching practices had changed. "Those who are creative are having a ball. Those who are afraid of change are just afraid of change." Teachers supportive of the block scheduling stated the positives of teaching practices while teachers doubtful of the block schedule changed their teaching practices very little.

Finding 3.A.2: It is perceived that good teachers become better teachers on a block schedule while teachers choosing not to change experience difficulty.

From the beginning stages of planning, administrators knew that an A/B block schedule would not fit everyone's teaching style. Because of this, teachers not comfortable with teaching in a block schedule were given the opportunity to transfer to another school within the division. Both parents interviewed supported the transfer of teachers not wishing to teach in a block schedule. Parent One stated, "Faculty were given the opportunity to transfer to another school. Unfortunately some have stayed." Parent Two stated, "I think there are some people that don't fit into the block well. Most were given the opportunity to go somewhere else; most did but some did not."

Due to the fact that many staff development in-services were voluntary, teachers not taking advantage of the training opportunities failed to gain knowledge on teaching within the block.

Finding 3.B.1: The scheduling process is more difficult in an A/B block schedule.

Accommodating the A/B block schedule within the restrictions of a school division's set time frame can be very challenging for administrators. Additional staff members were not requested for the initial implementation of the A/B block schedule at Site A which would have made the implementation process easier. "Scheduling is definitely different," stated the principal. "We just divide the day in half ; we try to give teachers three classes on one day and two classes on the other day" (Appendix K). This creates heavily scheduled class days with only a lunch break for teachers every other day. Many teachers found this to be very difficult as well as very demanding.

Finding 3.B.2: Block scheduling allows a diversity of activities for students.

Administrator Two pointed out that under an A/B block schedule, more students take seven and eight classes. Some students forego lunch to take an extra class during the study block time. Enrollment in AP classes increased from 299 in the 1993-94 school year to 597 in the 1995-96 school year due to the blocked schedule. By not meeting every day, students did not feel as much pressure when taking heavy class loads.

The study block built into the block schedule did allow students extra time to meet with teachers, meet with club sponsors, take advantage of library resources, and spend longer periods of time with guidance counselors. One of the main drawbacks of the study block allowed students with parent permission to leave school at noon. The early exit of students put a flaw in the program that could be available to students taking advantage of the additional school time.

Finding 3.B.3: Students and teachers only see each other every other day creating some distance when needed.

On an A/B block schedule, classes meet every other day. There are "A" day classes and "B" day classes. Meeting every other day allowed an extra day for students to receive additional help from teachers. Teacher Four stated, "One thing I like is you don't see the kids everyday." While this may sound negative, it was not meant to be.

An additional day between class meeting allowed a "cooling off" period should there be discipline problems with a student. It also allowed additional time for administrators to remove students from a class if necessary. During the interviews, some teachers felt by meeting every other day, students and teachers looked forward to seeing each other as opposed to getting bored with each other.

Finding 3.B.4: There is more instructional time and a smoother flow to lessons in an A/B block schedule thus providing more in-depth learning from students.

Administrators supported the concept that less time is spent by students in the hallway because there are fewer class changes. Parent One felt the school was quieter. Parent Two stated, "One big difference is the number of times kids change classes so you don't have that congestion constantly throughout the day." The blocked time in the classroom provided more time for instruction.

Teacher Two stated, "The block allows for a diversity of activities." Teacher Four said, "The transition kills you in the short periods." Teacher Seven responded, "We don't waste so much time reviewing; there's more instructional time between beginning and

ending activities and a smoother flow to the lesson."

Additionally Teachers Eight, Ten, Eleven, and Fourteen supported the finding.

"The amount of time you can stay on one lesson is longer and students do now know the subject matter better with the block," "Lessons create thought," "Presentation of lessons covers more material and there's more active learning," and "Carry-over is sensational and flexibility is an enormous plus." One faculty member who had originally agreed to be interviewed changed her mind after receiving the interview questions. Her only response was that block scheduling was great for honors students but terrible for basic students.

Finding 3.B.5: Teachers know their students better in an A/B block schedule than in a seven bell day.

The additional classroom time provided by a block schedule allowed teachers to spend more time than in a seven-bell day. Teachers have stated that as a teacher you could do more activities in a blocked class period. Through doing more activities and carrying a lesson from beginning to end, teachers had the time to address the lesson to each student thus assessing each student's progress. "You get to know the students better," explained Teacher Six who was supported by Teacher Fifteen, "I know my students better."

During the interviews, teachers expressed the significance of knowing their students better. There was more time to know interests of students outside of the classroom which at times could help teachers understand specific student behavior in classes.

Finding 3.B.6: In an A/B block schedule there is more time for planning with fewer interruptions.

Sufficient planning time is a vital component of a teacher's schedule. In an A/B block schedule, teachers have a ninety-minute planning period every other day. Even during weeks where the planning periods for a teacher may occur only twice, teachers felt the time was better spent because of fewer interruptions. At the school site, some teachers have a serious concern over the loss of a daily planning period. Teacher Fourteen stated, "...sorta do and sorta don't get more time." Planning has "slightly improved but until teachers no longer have nonteaching duties, it's a waste of time." We have "plenty of time one day; next day, none," explained Teacher Sixteen.

While planning time was a serious issue for all teachers, the majority of the teachers supported the blocked planning time. Comments supported the longer planning times: "Planning time is much greater," Teacher Four; "Improved longer blocks of time," Teacher Six; "Much better because I have bigger blocks of time and I can get things done," Teacher Thirteen.

Planning time for teachers is only as productive as the teacher in terms of use of time for instructional preparation. Teachers who misused fifty minutes of planning time by doing other things would have a tendency to do the same with any amount of planning time.

Finding 3.C.1: The evaluation process is still very much the same as in a seven bell day except that now administrators do look for more varied activities in the classroom.

Every participant that could respond to the question agreed that the evaluation process was the same as before the implementation of the A/B block schedule.

Administrators are assigned departments for evaluation. Teachers are observed at least once a year and receive a written observation report. Administrators meet with teachers to review the evaluation.

All administrators stated they look for varied activities when observing a teacher's class. "We're looking for varied activities in the classroom, enthusiasm, and keeping kids on task," stated the principal. Teachers interviewed expected administrators to look for a variety in teaching methods and to address teachers not doing so. Teacher Fifteen felt the "evaluation system needed an overhaul."

Finding 3.C.2: Administrators do not support the practice of lecturing for ninety minutes as an appropriate teaching practice for a block schedule.

It is obvious to anyone familiar with a block schedule that lecturing every day is an ineffective teaching strategy. Both teachers and administrators agreed. The principal did not advocate lecturing for ninety minutes. Administrator Three expressed that teachers "need to entertain the kids for ninety minutes. You cannot lecture for ninety minutes -- must vary the lesson and entertain as well as teach."

Teachers interviewed agreed lecturing is not the most effective teaching strategy for a ninety-minute class period. Teacher Four was more to the point. "The killer of a block is a lecture teacher. There is not one teacher successful in the block schedule that doesn't know you have to have many activities." Parents supported the argument against

lecturing by sharing the classes most disliked by their children were those involving lectures.

Finding 3.C.3: Evaluation instruments should be used by administrators to address teaching practices for a block schedule.

The evaluation instrument currently used is a division-wide instrument (Appendix I). The evaluation instrument addressed delivery of curriculum. Through the evaluation instrument weaknesses in teaching strategies could be addressed by administrators.

One concept that was consistent with teachers and parents interviewed was that block scheduling was not for every teacher. Teachers uncomfortable teaching in a block should be encouraged to transfer to a school that offered a more comfortable schedule. Teacher Fifteen wanted to see administrators look more closely at the teaching strategies being used in classes. Most teachers were not changing teaching strategies. "The evaluation system needs an overhaul," Teacher Fifteen continued. The overall feeling expressed was that administrators needed to address the problems experienced by some teachers in a block schedule. Those teachers should change strategies or change worksites.

Conclusion

Eight of the fourteen teachers interviewed felt that their classes were now more student centered. The additional classtime in a ninety minute block allowed for a variety of classroom activities.

Six of the teachers interviewed did not express that teaching strategies had

changed due to a blocked class period. Three of the six teachers did state that the teachers had to become more student oriented and could not lecture for 90 minutes. Overall, the six teacher responses reflected a less than enthusiastic feeling that teaching practices had changed significantly due to the block schedule.

The two parents interviewed also expressed concerns that additional staff development should be provided for teachers to enable them to better prepare for teaching in a blocked class period. Results of the in-house school sponsored survey reflected that 41 percent of the students surveyed felt that the teachers were not providing a variety of instructional activities. Forty-seven percent of the students still stated they had five to seven teachers that lectured too much. There is a discrepancy between teachers perception of varied activities and student perception of varied activities.

When in the classrooms, administrators should be looking for specific teaching strategies. Teachers are not just there to “entertain kids” as stated by Assistant Principal Four. Teachers experiencing difficulty with adjusting to a block schedule should be provided resources quickly to assist them in making the transition to a block schedule. If efforts are not successful, the teacher should be counseled to transfer to another high school. Unfortunately, some of the teachers have been at the school for such a long period of time that they would refuse to transfer or to cooperate with the change. The administrators must face the choices of successful instruction in the block schedules or less headaches and stress by saying and doing nothing to teachers not providing successful instruction in the block schedule.

There have been no attempts to incorporate teaming or interdisciplinary units since

the block schedule was implemented. The extra planning and class time could provide a variety of innovative teaching opportunities if only the teachers would become less specialized and take advantage of the full range of benefits a blocked schedule has to offer. Encouragement must come from the principal to support such concepts and methods.

Even though block scheduling was preferred by the majority of teachers interviewed, none of the teachers cited marked improvements in student achievement or student attendance. One of the pluses of the block schedule expressed by teachers interviewed was reduced student movement between classes thus contributing to fewer disciplinary problems and disruptions occurring in the hallways.

School A would be successful no matter the schedule change or program implemented due to the fact that the school has been and will continue to be a high achieving school. Block scheduling seemed to facilitate smoother flow of students which addressed the overcrowdedness present in the school. There has been no data that supported the block schedule improved student achievement and student attendance.

Unanticipated Outcomes

One of the initial goals of the A/B block schedule was to address the issue of students as passive learners. Eight teachers interviewed stated that the students were more actively involved in class. "Active learning is forced on you because you have to do activities," responded Teacher Four.

As stated earlier, teachers felt that more in-depth learning occurred in the block

schedule. There is more time to present in-depth instruction and carry instruction from beginning to end. Teacher Five stated, "Teachers know students better."

Everyone interviewed identified the study block as the largest problem of the A/B block schedule. The study block combined lunch and a study time together. Prior to implementation, it was anticipated that students would use the study blocks for research, tutoring, computer time, guidance counselor appointments, club meetings, and team meetings. However, very few students have used the time in a positive manner.

Students having study block the last block of the school day are allowed to leave school at noon if they have parent permission. The early release of students has caused much concern with the administration who support students remaining in school for the full school day.

Teachers have provided possible solutions to the study block issue: offer daily mini courses, forty minutes in length, to students. The classes would be special interest classes that met every day. This solution has yet to be researched and implemented.

Every teacher interviewed supported the finding that the A/B block would continue unless they were told differently. Surveys continue to be sent to teachers, students, and parents to evaluate the effectiveness of the A/B block schedule. There is a high support from parents, students, and teachers for the continuation of the A/B block schedule by all stakeholders. Unfortunately, with a new school board in place the decision may no longer be made at the school site. Currently, the school board is investigating the effectiveness of the block schedule in high schools. A decision will be made during the current school year to determine if the program will be allowed to continue.

CHAPTER V

Summary, Analysis, and Recommendations

This chapter presents a summary of the study and an analysis of the findings of the collected data. The conclusions and the recommendations are then presented.

Summary

The purposes of this study were to analyze how the decision to implement a block schedule was initiated, investigate staff development activities prior to the implementation of an A/B block schedule, and identify how teaching practices may have changed due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule. Twenty-two stakeholders consisting of fourteen teachers, two parents, five school administrators, and one central office administrator, were randomly selected and asked to respond to eleven questions pertaining to the implementation of an A/B block schedule. The participant responses were compared to determine differences and similarities of responses.

Analysis

When asked about the initial stages of implementation and teacher involvement, ten of the fourteen teachers expressed uncertainty and anxiety about the move to an A/B block schedule. One teacher was not employed during the beginning stages of the implementation. While a large number of teachers were originally apprehensive, all but one participant expressed that they presently enjoyed the blocked class periods. Responses included phrases such as “I love it, I absolutely love it,” and “I would never

want to go back.”

Everyone that was present during the early implementation stages agreed that there were ample opportunities for all stakeholders to be involved in the process. The administrative staff excelled in communicating meeting dates and sessions to the various audiences in the community. Open forums provided the appropriate format for individuals to speak on the issues of block scheduling.

One of the most important aspects of the implementation process of the block schedule was staff development. While the administrators focused on offering a variety of staff development activities, the teachers interviewed emphasized that the majority of the activities were voluntary. Teachers interested in attending the voluntary summer workshops did so. Throughout the summer the schedule of activities focused on specific teaching practices for specific subject areas. The responses of the teachers interviewed did not indicate an importance for the initial staff development. Teachers wanting information on teaching in a block participated in the summer staff development programs. The perception of teachers interviewed was that good teachers knew what to do without much assistance. Only one teacher felt that the initial staff development was the weakest part of the process. The majority of teachers did express the continuation of staff development for teaching in a block schedule was ineffective. The two parents interviewed also felt that the continuation of staff development was the weakest component of the implementation. The staff development for teaching in a block currently consists of subject area teachers, from each of the three sites with a block schedule, meeting for a couple of hours in August. No one interviewed except the principal was

aware of any staff development activities for new teachers. Teachers assumed there was a basic in-service for new teachers as done every school year but nothing was done to address teaching in the block. Administrators and teachers supported the practice of departments and department chairs providing any needed assistance for new teachers.

The question pertaining to incorporating new teaching practices with a blocked class period brought about two opposing views. One-half of the teachers interviewed indicated their teaching practices had not changed significantly, except the lecturing had somewhat decreased. This was supported by data collected at the school site through the annual surveys conducted with parents, students, and teachers. The last school survey conducted revealed data indicated forty-one percent of the 1,635 students surveyed felt that the teachers were not providing a variety in instructional activities (Appendix I). The remaining teachers interviewed pointed out specific teaching practice changes such as increased student involvement, student-centered approaches, and more in-depth learning. Parents in the survey as well as the two parents interviewed indicated their children enjoyed classes in the A/B block, but that there were still too many teachers that lectured. The student survey indicated that 47 percent of the students had 5 to 7 teachers that lectured too much in class (Appendix I).

There was overall agreement by all participants that the block schedule provided students and teachers with increased instructional time that provided more opportunities for in-depth learning and active learning. Teachers felt that block scheduling allowed them to know their students better. From the school survey, students supported this indicating 57 to 60 percent of students felt teachers knew them better and they in turn knew their

teachers better (Appendix I).

Participants were asked for any unanticipated outcomes due to the implementation of the A/B block schedule. Overall, the participants felt the school day was less chaotic due to fewer students changing classes at one time. Teachers did indicate an increase in active learning by students. In general, it was thought that student behavior was improved; however, only 40 percent of the students felt that the general behavior had improved (Appendix I). The two parents interviewed expressed less noise in the school, especially during the morning classes.

An unexpected response came from the interview question pertaining to teacher evaluation. The evaluation system used by administrators was a division-wide form. Teachers expressed concerns that administrators failed to address the issue of teachers lecturing for the majority of a blocked class period. While administrators did state they looked for varying activities during instruction, nothing was done to assist teachers that continued to lecture in class. Administrators had looked for varying classroom activities prior to the implementation of the block schedule. Parents also expressed concerns that there were too many teachers that remained at the school site that should have transferred to another school when given the opportunity.

The overall desire of all participants was to keep the A/B block schedule. The school initiated survey indicated that 73 percent of the students preferred block scheduling over a seven-bell day (Appendix I). The final decision to keep a blocked schedule at the school site will be determined at a later date by the division school board.

Reflections

Block scheduling of any model can be a beneficial and exciting modification to any existing instructional schedule. The key component to the success of a block schedule is the effective utilization of teaching practices. A change of teaching practices comes through staff development activities.

Much planning and preparation was initially put into the early information stages of the block implementation by the ad-hoc committees at the school site. The excitement was there for many of the teachers; however, the excitement has since lessened.

While the staff development activities were beneficial prior to the implementation, the emphasis on teaching strategies is no longer of major importance. Many teachers interviewed expressed the lack of continued staff development as a weakness of the program. New teachers are provided a small amount of training time during the first week of teacher orientation. The remainder of training and preparation for new teachers has been delegated to department chairpersons and teacher buddies.

At the present time, subject area teachers from the three schools on a block schedule meet for either a half day or a whole day during the orientation week to exchange information pertaining to teaching in a block schedule.

During the interviews only one teacher mentioned any specific teaching practice for a block schedule, Socratic seminar. Most of the teachers only emphasized the importance of varying activities within the block class time. Good teachers vary activities during class no matter the time frame of the schedule. It was often expressed throughout the interviews that good teachers were successful in the block and poor teachers became

even less effective in a block schedule.

If block scheduling is to become a “mainstay” of the instructional schedule, the evaluation process must be used to address the changes. Administrators must be trained to look for specific teaching practices. Teachers must become facilitators and resources in the classroom. Teachers must incorporate teaching strategies such as cooperative learning methods, Paideia method of Socratic questioning, teaming, and interdisciplinary planning for effective teaching in a block schedule. This is a difficult concept for veteran teacher unreceptive to change.

Lecturing is one of the least effective methods of teaching in a block schedule. The student survey conducted by the school administration indicated that approximately 60 percent of the teachers still lectured in the classroom. The parents interviewed also expressed lecturing as a problem that could help explain why students may be sleeping in the classroom. Administrators must be able to work with teachers to provide additional assistance and resources for successful teaching in a block. There must be involvement from the administration, both at the school and at the central office. The central office should serve as a resource for the teachers, students, and administrators.

For any change to be successful in a school setting, all teachers must receive training and “buy” into the concept. Voluntary staff development can be compared to school open houses; the parents of the children experiencing problems do not attend. Voluntary activities tend to de-emphasize the importance of the activity.

Hopefully, changes can be made to provide the necessary staff development for the teachers if block scheduling is to be a “norm” for secondary schools. Change does not

come easily but it can be more effective if we as educators are open to professional growth and changing instructional demands.

In this case study it appeared that the school jumped on the bandwagon of the move towards alternative scheduling. There may have been preparation up-front but the drive for improvement no longer exists. The staff has moved on to other things and the basics of successful teaching in a blocked schedule have been left to the individual teachers who supported the program. Those teachers wanting to be successful in a blocked schedule were very successful while those teachers who did not support the implementation have not and will not change their teaching practices.

Recommendations

The decision to implement a blocked schedule is one that requires much planning and input from all participants. The process should be a well scheduled plan that allows ample opportunities for participants to adjust to and support the change. Staff development focused on teaching practices is the key component of any successful block scheduling model. Without teachers changing instructional methods a block schedule can not be successful. The following recommendations were meant to provide for improvements of the A/B block schedule at the school site under study.

Recommendation 1: Revise the current study block program.

Recommendation 2: Develop an on-going staff development program that continues to focus on teaching practices and methodology that support an alternate

day block schedule after the initial implementation.

Recommendation 3: Address ineffective teaching practices demonstrated by teachers in the block schedule.

Recommendations For Further Study

Recommendation 1: Study the roles and responsibilities of central office in a school's decision to implement a major change such as a block schedule and the effects of varying levels of support.

Recommendation 2: Study the role of the building principal in effective staff development programs.

Recommendation 3: Compare staff development models for block scheduling to determine why one model is more effective than another. It is important to study the effects of voluntary programs versus mandatory programs.

Recommendations 4: Isolate the variables which contribute to no academic improvements in the A/B block schedule.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Table Example 1:

A/B ALTERNATIVE DAY BLOCK SCHEDULE (SIX COURSES)						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Monday
Days	Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	Day 2
	A	B	A	B	A	B
P	1	2	1	2	1	2
E	1	2	1	2	1	2
R	3	4	3	4	3	4
I	3	4	3	4	3	4
O	5	6	5	6	5	6
D	5	6	5	6	5	6

Note: From Block Scheduling: A Catalyst for Change in High Schools by R.L. Canady and M.D. Rettig, (1995), p.34. Copyright 1995 by Eye on Education, Inc. Adapted with permission.

A/B ALTERNATIVE DAY BLOCK SCHEDULE (EIGHT COURSES)						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Monday
Days	Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	Day 2
	A	B	A	B	A	B
P	1	2	1	2	1	2
	1	2	2	2	2	2
E	3	4	3	4	3	4
	3	4	3	4	4	4
R	5	6	5	6	5	6
I	5	6	5	6	5	6
O	7	8	7	8	7	8
D	7	8	7	8	7	8

Note: From Block Scheduling: A Catalyst for Change in High Schools by R.L. Canady and M.D. Rettig, (1995), p.34. Copyright 1995 by Eye on Education, Inc. Adapted with permission.

Table Example 1.1

**A/B ALTERNATIVE DAY BLOCK SCHEDULE
(SEVEN COURSES)**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Monday
Days	Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	Day 2
	A	B	A	B	A	B
P	1	2	1	2	1	2
E	1	2	1	2	1	2
R	3	4	3	4	3	4
	3	4	3	4	3	4
I	5	5	5	5	5	5
O	7	6	7	6	7	6
D	7	6	7	6	7	6

Note: From Block Scheduling: A Catalyst for Change in High Schools by R.L. Canady and M.D. Rettig, (1995), p.34. Copyright 1995 by Eye on Education, Inc. Adapted with permission.

APPENDIX B

Table 3

Triangulation Matrix:

Research Questions	Data Sources				Data Sources						
	Interviews				Documents						
	School Board/Asst. Superintendents	School Administrators	Teachers	Parents	Minutes	Memos	Correspondence	Flyers	Newsletters	Notes	Miscellaneous
<p>How was the decision made to implement an A/B block schedule?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who was involved? ● How was the decision made? ● Why was the schedule change made? 	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
		●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
		●	●		●	●	●		●	●	●
	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
<p>What staff development activities/training was provided prior to the implementation of the A/B block schedule?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How were the staff development activities funded? ● Who developed the plans for the staff development activities? ● What type of ongoing staff development activities are there for continued use of A/B block schedule? 	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
		●			●	●				●	●
		●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●
		●	●		●	●	●			●	●
<p>How have teaching practices changed due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule?</p>		●	●	●	●	●				●	●

Table 3

Triangulation Matrix:

- **What is instructionally different in a blocked class period as opposed to a seven-bell day?**
- **What is the evaluation process?**
- **What, if any, unanticipated outcomes occurred?**

	●	●	●	●	●	●			●
●	●	●		●	●	●			
●	●	●		●	●				●

APPENDIX C

Table 4

Chain of Evidence Matrix: Interview Questions

Research Questions	Interview Questions			
Question	Assistant Superintendents	School Administrators	Teachers	Parents/ School Planning Council
<p>How was the decision made to implement an A/B block schedule?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who was involved? ● How was the decision made? ● Why was the schedule change made? 	<p>Who initiated the schedule change? (Prompt: Board Policy, rationale, research, funding)</p>	<p>What can you tell me about how and why the need for a schedule change was initiated? (Prompts: initiative, rationale)</p>	<p>What can you remember about the beginning status of block schedule implementation? (Prompts: initial reaction, rationale, staff development) What were your feelings on the issue? What are your feelings now?)</p>	<p>What can you remember about the beginning status of block schedule implementation? (Prompts: initial reaction; how were you informed? What were your feelings on the issue? What are your feelings now?)</p>
	<p>What type of support was provided for the implementation of block scheduling? (Prompts: central funding, parental support, resource personnel)</p>	<p>What prompted the need for a schedule change? (Prompts: student attendance, etc., central office thrust)</p>	<p>How were teachers involved in the decision-making process? (Prompts: Who was involved, opportunities for input, how was the decision made?)</p>	<p>How were parents involved in the decision-making process? (Prompts: Who was involved? Opportunities for input, who made the final decision?)</p>
	<p>How was the decision made? (Prompts: program evaluation, board policies & regulations, parent suggestions /support)</p>	<p>How was the decision made? (Prompts: program evaluation, staff consensus vs administrative decision)</p>	<p>How was the decision made? (Prompts: staff consensus vs administrative decision, faculty input)</p>	<p>How was the decision made? (Prompt: parental input)</p>

Table 4

Chain of Evidence Matrix: Interview Questions

Research Questions	Interview Questions			
Question	Assistant Superintendents	School Administrators	Teachers	Parents/ School Planning Council
<p>What staff development activities/training was provided prior to the implementation of the A/B block schedule?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How were the staff development activities funded? ● Who developed the plans for the staff development activities? ● What type of ongoing staff development activities are there for continued use of A/B block schedule? 	<p>How is the staff development funded to support the implementation of a block schedule? (Prompts: central funding, resource personnel, research evaluation)</p>	<p>Explain the planning process for the original staff development activities of an implementation of the A/B block schedule. (Prompts: people involved, phases of training, evaluation of training)</p> <p>What type of staff development is provided for teachers new to the A/B block schedule? (Prompts: people involved, funding)</p>	<p>Describe the type of staff development provided to teachers. (Prompts: length of time, mandatory vs voluntary, involvement in planning)</p> <p>What type of staff development is provided for teachers new to the A/B block schedule? (Prompts: length of time, support personnel, resources)</p> <p>How has the staff development you received improved your teaching practices? (Prompts: level of staff development or ongoing activities)</p>	<p>Describe your role in the planning phases, and the staff development program to support the implementation of an A/B block schedule. (Prompts: research, funding, participation in activities)</p>
<p>How have teaching practices changed due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the different, instructionally, in a blocked class period as opposed to a seven bell day? 		<p>What is different in the classroom under an A/B block schedule as opposed to a seven bell day? prompts: scheduling, staffing, funding)</p>		

Table 4

Chain of Evidence Matrix: Interview Questions

Research Questions	Interview Questions			
Question	Assistant Superintendents	School Administrators	Teachers	Parents/ School Planning Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the evaluation process? 		<p>How are teaching practices evaluated? (Prompts: narratives, time in classrooms, points to look for)</p>	<p>How are teaching practices evaluated? (Who evaluates planning for evaluation, length of time, frequencies of classroom visits)</p>	<p>When you visit in classrooms, what do you observe that is different in the A/B block schedule as opposed to the seven-bell day? (Prompts: climate, teaching practices, student involvement)</p>

Table 4

Chain of Evidence Matrix: Interview Questions

Research Questions	Interview Questions			
<p>Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What, if any, unanticipated outcomes occurred? 	<p>Assistant Superintendents</p>	<p>School Administrators</p>	<p>Teachers</p>	<p>Parents/ School Planning Council</p>
		<p>What outcomes have come about due to implementation of an A/B block schedule? (Prompts: increased attendance, student involvement, active learners, increases enrollment in AP courses)</p>	<p>What outcomes have come about due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule? (Prompts: increased attendance, student participation, active learning, student attitudes)</p>	<p>What outcomes have come about due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule? (Prompts: increased attendance, student participation, active learning, student attitudes)</p>
	<p>Is there anything else you may wish to tell me about the A/B block schedule that I neglected to ask?</p>	<p>Is there anything else you may wish to tell me about the A/B block schedule that I neglected to ask?</p>	<p>Is there anything else you may wish to tell me about the A/B block schedule that I neglected to ask?</p>	<p>Is there anything else you may wish to tell me about the A/B block schedule that I neglected to ask?</p>

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR A/B BLOCK SCHEDULE CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL

The purpose of my doctoral study and this interview is to get information that will help other schools considering the implementation of an A/B block schedule. As a school official, your insights into A/B block scheduling will make important contributions to my study.

The answers from all of the people I interview will be combined for my study. Nothing you say will ever be identified with you personally. You have received a consent form to sign which indicates your consent to this interview. This interview will be recorded. Please feel free at any time during the interview to ask questions.

- 1. Who initiated the schedule change from a seven-bell day to an A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: Board policy, rationale, funding)**
- 2. What types of central office support was provided for the implementation of an A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: Central funding, parental support, resource personnel)**
- 3. What procedures must a school follow to implement a change in scheduling?
(Prompts: Waivers, administrative guidelines, administrative support, board approval)**
- 4. How is the decision made to continue or discontinue an A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: Program evaluation, board policy, administrative regulations, parental support)**
- 5. How is staff development funded to support the implementation of an A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: Central funding, resource personnel, research, program evaluations)**
- 6. What assistance is provided to teachers experiencing difficulties in an A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: Central office resources, plan of action, time frame for assistance, non-threatening assistance)**
- 7. Is there anything else you may wish to tell me about the A/B block schedule that I**

may have neglected to ask?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR AN A/B BLOCK SCHEDULE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

The purpose of this doctoral study and this interview is to get information that will help other schools considering the implementation of an A/B block schedule. As a school leader, your insights into an A/B block schedule will make important contributions to my study.

The answers from all the people I interview will be combined for my study. Nothing you say will ever be identified with you personally. You have received a consent form to sign which indicates your consent to this interview. This interview will be recorded. Please feel free at any time during the interview to ask questions.

- 1. What can you tell me about how and why the need for a schedule change was initiated?
(Prompts: School board initiatives, superintendent initiatives/influence, rationale)**
- 2. What prompted the need for a schedule change?
(Prompts: Student achievement, student attendance, central office influence, "latest wave" theme)**
- 3. Explain the process for the original staff development activities of the implementation of the A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: People involved, stages of training, funding for training, evaluation of training)**
- 4. What types of staff development is provided for teachers new to the A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: People involved, voluntary vs mandatory, funding)**
- 5. What's different in the classroom under an A/B block schedule as opposed to a seven-bell day?
(Prompts: Scheduling, staffing, funding, school climate)**
- 6. How are teaching practices evaluated?
(Prompts: Narratives, amount of time in classrooms, points to observe, opportunities for teacher feedback)**

- 7. What outcomes have come about due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule?**
(Prompts: Improved attendance, increased student involvement, active learning, increased enrollment in advanced placement courses)
- 8. What assistance is provided to teachers experiencing difficulties teaching in an A/B block schedule?**
(Prompts: Teacher observers, "Buddy" systems, mentors, plan of action)
- 9. How has teacher planning been affected by the implementation of an A/B block schedule?**
(Prompts: Length of planning time, improved planning, teaming, effective use of time)
- 10. How is the decision made to continue or discontinue the use of the A/B block schedule?**
(Prompts: Program evaluation, board policy, teacher input, parent input)
- 11. Is there anything else you may wish to tell me about the A/B block schedule that I may have neglected to ask?**

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR A/B BLOCK SCHEDULE TEACHER

The purpose of my study and this interview is to get information that will help other schools considering the implementation of an A/B block schedule. As a teacher, your insights into A/B block scheduling will make important contributions to my study.

The answers from all of the people I interview will be combined for my study. Nothing you say will ever be identified with you personally. You have received a consent form to sign which indicates your consent to this interview. This interview will be recorded. Please feel free at any time during the interview to ask questions.

- 1. What can you remember about the beginning stages of the A/B block schedule implementation?
(Prompts: Initial reaction, rationale, What are your feelings on the issue?, What are your feelings now?)**
- 2. How were teachers included in the decision-making process?
(Prompts: Who was involved?, Opportunities for input?, How was the decision made?)**
- 3. Describe the type of staff development provided to teachers prior to the implementation of an A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: Length of time for training, mandatory vs voluntary, involvement in planning)**
- 4. What type of staff development is provided for teachers new to the A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: Length of time for training, support personnel, resources)**
- 5. How has the staff development you received improved your teaching practices?
(Prompts: Level of staff development, on-going staff development activities)**
- 6. What is different in the classroom under an A/B block schedule as opposed to a seven-bell day?
(Prompts: Transition activities, types of classroom activities, amount of carry-over to the next class meeting)**

- 7. How are teaching practices evaluated?**
(Prompts: Who evaluates?, planning for evaluation, length of time, frequencies of classroom visits)

- 8. What outcomes have come about due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule?**
(Prompts: Improved attendance, increased student classroom participation, active learning, increased involvement in student activities)

- 9. How is the decision made to continue or discontinue the use of the A/B block schedule?**
(Prompts: Teacher input, board policy, program evaluation, parent input)

- 10. Is there anything else you may wish to tell me about the A/B block schedule that I may have neglected to ask?**

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR AN A/B BLOCK SCHEDULE PARENTS

The purpose of my doctoral study and this interview is to get information that will help other schools considering the implementation of an A/B block schedule. As a parent involved in your school, your insights into A/B block scheduling will make important contributions to my study.

The answers from all of the people I interview will be combined for my study. Nothing you say will ever be identified with you personally. You have received a consent form to sign which indicates your consent to this interview. This interview will be recorded. Please feel free at any time during the interview to ask questions.

- 1. What can you remember about the beginning implementation stages of the A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: Initial reaction, How were you informed?, What were your feelings on the issue?, What are your feelings now?)**
- 2. How were you and other parents involved in the decision-making process?
(Prompts: Who was involved?, Opportunities for input, Who made the final decision?)**
- 3. Describe your role in the planning stages of the staff development program to support the implementation of an A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: Research, funding, participation/involvement in staff development activities)**
- 4. When you visit the school and classrooms, what do you observe that is different with an A/B block schedule as opposed to a seven-bell day?
(Prompts: School climate, teaching practices, student classroom participation, student-teacher interaction)**
- 5. What outcomes have come about due to the implementation of an A/B block schedule?
(Prompts: School climate, student attendance, test scores, public/community support)**
- 6. How is the decision made to continue or discontinue use of the A/B block**

schedule?

(Prompts: Parent input, research, funding)

7. Is there anything else you may wish to tell me about an A/B block schedule that I may have neglected to ask?

APPENDIX H

Part I
Table C-1
Central Office Participate

Participants	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Staff Development for New Teachers
<p style="text-align: center;">Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction</p>	<p>“...no incentives in terms of dollars. Site-based management allowed schools with staff development dollars and other funds to support the program. In terms of technical support, none from central office. No cooperation between office and school site; no effort to coordinate from central office. The mistake was not being initially because central office is now involved.”</p> <p>“...request a waiver from the local school board, if approved at local level, request a waiver from the State Board of Education. Locally, the school must clearly define the reason for change. It must be something that will affect student achievement and attendance; there must be a planning process that includes teachers and the community; must have clear objectives and evaluative designs.”</p>	<p>“... not a central office directive. Process began with teachers researching the change. The superintendent supported risk-taking thus the initiation came from the schools. High schools initially took the risk to implement change.”</p> <p>“...funded through site-based programs, staff development funds. No central office dollars.”</p>	<p>“...no assistance provided for teachers experiencing difficulties</p>

Part II

Staff Development for New Teachers	Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and Seven-Bell Day	Evaluation Process
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response

Part I Table C-2
School Administration Participation

Participant	Initiation of Schedule Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Principal	<p>"...This was totally a site-based decision...it came through school renewal and recertification process. Concerned that students were passive learners as well as issue of time-on-task."</p> <p>"...main thing again was finding a better way to use the time during the day and to make the kids active learners."</p>	No response	<p>"...divided into committees to look at this whole process. We knew staff development was going to be probably the most important component of the whole situation."</p> <p>"Through the staff development committee we contacted some schools that were in block scheduling to find out the thing they did. We met with Mike Rettig and Lynn Canady. Tried to develop things along the lines of cooperative learning pride in method and reading in the content. We paired up with a high school-- Polawski High School, and established a bond with administration and teachers."</p>	<p>"...that's probably something we're not doing a very good job with. We do something, "New Kids on the Block" where staffs from three schools are brought together with experienced teachers. New teachers buddy-up with experienced teachers within their department. One of the things that we have going for us is that we're hiring new people, we're telling them up front what they are getting into."</p> <p>"...Pretty much the same as everyone else. Teachers that are struggling are going to be struggling and we try to work with them individually using department chairs and supervisory personnel when we need them. The ones that are struggling are just struggling period."</p>
Participant	Planning Time		Decision to continue or discontinue	
Principal	<p>"...they tell us it's been positive. I think they get a lot done in 90 minutes."</p> <p>"Have more time and use time more wisely."</p>		<p>"We're in it for the long run. This is the way we're going to do business unless somebody tells us otherwise."</p> <p>"...unless the superintendent or school board tells us we can't do it this is the way we are going to do things."</p>	

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling	Assistance for Teachers Experiencing Difficulties
No Response	"...scheduling is definitely different. We just divide the day in half—we try to give teachers 3 classes on one day, 2 classes on the other day. We have not asked for more staffing."	"...pretty much the same way- same thing we've always done. We're looking for varied activities in the classroom, enthusiasm, and keeping kids on task. We don't advocate lecturing for 90 minutes."	"...two goals have improved- attendance and student achievement. Kids are taking more classes. It's helped our electives program. We think kids are more active learners."	"...Pretty much the same as everyone else. Teachers that are struggling are going to be struggling and we try to work with them individually using department chairs and supervisory personnel when we need them. The ones that are struggling are just struggling period."

Part I Table C-3
School Administration Participation

Participant	Initiation of Schedule Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Assistant Principal 1	"Wanted to basically increase time-on-task." "Student achievement."	No Response	"...stages funded by central office, visitations to other schools." "The steering committee did background research, There were individual training sessions."	"...not a great deal, some on-going types of staff development, rely on help from departments." "same kind of assistance as always, start with the department chairs."

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling	Assistance for Teachers Experiencing Difficulties
No response	"students like it because they don't meet everyday."	"Evaluation process has not changed a great deal."	<p>"...some impression that there's a slight improvement in attendance and grades but not sure significant enough to contribute to block scheduling."</p> <p>..more time-on task"</p> <p>"referrals down slightly due to fewer class changes."</p>	..same kind of assistance as always start with department chairs."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to continue or discontinue		Problems
Assistant Principal I	"..causes them to plan better, some get together to plan."	<p>"Process based on surveys - results have been positive."</p> <p>"Final judgment is the school board."</p>		"Don't know anything that doesn't work."

Part I Table C-4
School Administration Participation

Participant	Initiation of Schedule Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
<p>Assistant Principal 2</p>	<p>"...teachers were looking to improve student success." "schoool was so crowded it caused chaos." "...student achievement-scores were stagnant." "Always did things the same way."</p>	<p>No Response</p>	<p>"Team from Polawski High School came and worked with the staff." "Different in-service programs in spring and summer for teachers."</p>	<p>"...paired with department members who have more experience." "...prospective teachers knew up front about block scheduling."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling	Assistance for Teachers Experiencing Difficulties
No response	"...student movement has improved." "Lots of kids take 7 classes."	"...55 minutes teachers sign up in advance." "...time to see every student in class."	"Kids are more involved in the classes." "More kids in AP classes." "Schedule is now more flexible for students."	"...teachers are paired with experienced teachers." "...there's more time for peer observations." "...department members share."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to continue or discontinue		Problems
Assistant Principal 2	"More spaces for teachers to work and more time to work."	"...survey at the end of the year."		"...study block."

Part I Table C-5
School Administration Participation

Participant	Initiation of Schedule Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Assistant Principal 3	<p>"...something within house originating with principal." "Evolved from an interest." "...was no need for a schedule change but a change we felt would be better for students."</p>	<p>No Response</p>	<p>"...had speakers, activities within the school. Other teachers came and shared their point of view."</p>	<p>"...meet with teachers individually and try to go over block scheduling." "Within the department, new teachers are paired with seasoned teachers."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling	Assistance for Teachers Experiencing Difficulties
No response	"...length of period." "Teachers feel they can cover more in a 90 minute period."	"...same as usual." "Need to entertain the kids for 90 minutes. You can't lecture for 90 minutes-must vary the lesson. Need to entertain as well as teach." "...change pace every 15 or 20 minutes."	"...class changes are better-there are fewer change overs."	"...meet with them; let them visit other schools."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to continue or discontinue		Problems
Assistant Principal 3	"We have not had comments one way or the other."	"We talk about it every year." Teachers want to continue but it's up to the school board."		"...study blocks-students don't take advantage of study blocks."

Part I Table C-6
School Administration Participaton

Participant	Initiation of Schedule Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Assistant Principal 4	<p>"Came about while going through school renewal." "...wanted to look at time-on-task." "The idea of time-on-task."</p>	<p>No Response</p>	<p>"Not involved." "They set up summer staff development activities." "...voluntary sessions."</p>	<p>"Nothing is set for brand new teachers." "I wold have them observe other teachers."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling	Assistance for Teachers Experiencing Difficulties
No response	"There isn't anything different in staffing." "The atmosphere is more settled in the morning." "Lunches are real hectic."	"Looking for the same thing I would be looking for in a regular classroom." "I'm more tuned into teachers varying activities."	"We have more active learners." "There hasn't been a big jump in academic standings." "...Kids can take more AP classes." "Students are more willing to take a risk."	"I would have them observe another teacher."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue		Problems
Assistant Principal 4	"Planning has been positively affected." "Teachers do something and finish the whole task." "They get more accomplished."	"...not voted on every year, it's just assumed program will continue unless we have a major problem."		"Study block-students were not really ready for it the first year of implementation."

Part I Table C-7
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #1	<p>"...I had been through this before." "...it has its advantages." "...seems continuity suffers."</p>	<p>"...a great deal of lip service is paid to teachers input but nobody has less input into education than a teacher, particularly at this school." "...I was told to shut up, I was blocked out." "It was made very clear from day one that this was the principal's claim to fame."</p>	<p>"Did have a fair amount of in-service training."</p>	<p>"Don't know."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"There was some help. Most teacher in-services are a waste of time."</p>	<p>"...any type of student activities the students will take whatever time they think they have." "...I changed to two activities per block."</p>	<p>"Assistant principals observe you once a year."</p>	<p>"I haven't seen any significant improvement in attendance or class participation." "I haven't seen any significant difference one way or the other."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Teacher #1</p>	<p>"American teachers have less planning time than teachers in any other country."</p>	<p>"It's just a given that it will continue." "When the survey did not reach a certain percentage, the expectations were down-graded."</p>	

Part I Table C-8
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #2	<p>"The initial reaction was a little bit of skepticism." "...the time management part appealed to me more."</p>	<p>"...came from school renewal." "...committee formed to research and present to faculty." "...anyone given the opportunity to visit other schools." "...majority of faculty had to buy into it...." "...had in-services in the summer, were not mandatory but probably well attended."</p>	<p>"...general faculty members not involved in planning process."</p>	<p>"...joint in-services."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
"...can't lecture for 90 minutes."	"...lots of hands-on stuff."	"Administrators looking at lesson plans to see how we plan for 90 minutes." "...want diversity of activities."	"...it's hard to know about improved attendance..." "...I anticipated less discipline problems but I don't think that's happened."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
Teacher #2	"...planning time is much greater." "...not much teaming."	"Assume we'll have it." "Principal says unless we have a faculty revolt we'll fight for it."	"Study blocks aren't effective."

Part I Table C-9
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #4	"Not here for beginning." "nothing better for science."	No Response	No Response	"couple of days before the start of school." "The preparation was good, it displaced some of the fears."

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"I use some of the things." "Co-opt is real good." "Block scheduling is dynamic."</p>	<p>"...transition kills you in the short periods." "one thing I like is you don't see the kids every day..." "Kids do better with homework and outside activities."</p>	<p>"Assistant principal comes in 3 times per year. He's looking for activity oriented." "The killer of a block is a lecture teacher." "There's not one teacher successful., block scheduling doesn't know you have to many activities."</p>	<p>"Active learning is forced on you because you have to do activities." "Kids here respond very well to activities."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Teacher #4</p>	<p>"Initially it was hard because you couldn't say I don't feel like planning, I'll just lecture." "now, I'm more prepared for class and have more planning time."</p>	<p>"...wasn't here to vote on the issue." "Teachers here would be very upset if block scheduling were done away with but here is a good amount of teachers that want to get rid of it." "People think the order will come down to get rid of block scheduling."</p>	<p>"The teachers make it. If teacher goes in with attitude I'm going to have fun then the kids will have fun and learning takes place."</p>

Part I Table C-10
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #5	<p>"Lots was here say until first meeting." "I love it, I absolutely love it." "...teach complete concepts."</p>	<p>"We voted- faculty vote, large majority voted for it."</p>	<p>"In-service days were mandatory." "Many workshops in summer...." "Lots of time for teacher to get the preparation needed."</p>	<p>"In-service for new teachers." "Departments are close knit, share materials, and give plenty of input for what works well."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"I enjoy learning new approaches." "Seasoned teachers knew how to manage time."</p>	<p>"...creative in teaching methods." "You've got to be in tune to time frame."</p>	<p>"Assistant principals evaluate teachers." "Look for different aspects in each class."</p>	<p>"Based on survey, block scheduling is preferred by students." "Teachers know students learn better."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Teacher #5</p>	<p>"Block of time to get work done is more effective due to fewer interruptions." "More productive than 50 minutes."</p>	<p>No Response</p>	<p>"Study blocks can be excellent or terrible."</p>

Part I Table C-11
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #6	<p>"...initially, people I talked to weren't very happy about it and I think because people don't like change." "I was not very interested in doing it." "After we listened to what other people had to say it kept sounding better and better. That's when I decided I wanted to do it. I voted for it." "I love it, I would never want to go back."</p>	<p>"We were very involved. We had many different meetings." "...very well presented-not forced down our throats." "It was very well planned."</p>	<p>"...was not mandatory." "...had evening sessions." "...summer sessions geared toward subject areas." "I use the information now. The Paidei seminar was a wonderful preparation."</p>	<p>"Don't know."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"I vary my teaching more, I have time to vary." "Rarely do I do seat work."</p>	<p>"If you miss a class, you miss quite a bit." "...can do more activities." "You get to know students better." "I think that a teacher who's not very effective is not going to be effective in either time frame."</p>	<p>"...looking for certain things- varying activities."</p>	<p>"...more active learning." "...increased attendance" "I have student's attention."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Teacher #6</p>	<p>"Improved, long block of time."</p>	<p>"We assume everyone's behind it."</p>	<p>"The long lunches for the students."</p>

Part I Table C-12
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #7	<p>"I had mixed feelings because it was a major change but I don't view it negatively." "I really like block scheduling and could never go back to the 50 minute rat race."</p>	<p>"...not here for the decision-making process."</p>	<p>"It was not mandatory, but it was strongly urged." "There were several workshops over the summer."</p>	<p>"...not aware of any program for new people."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"I utilize most often the practice of activity right away."</p>	<p>"...we don't waste so much time reviewing,..." "...more instructional time between beginning and ending activities." "No problem in carry-over for students." "...more instructional time and a smoother flow to the lesson."</p>	<p>"...assistant principals evaluate." "...look for good lesson plan and skillful classroom management."</p>	<p>"...don't think AP class enrollment has changed." "...fewer problems getting homework...." "don't feel as pressured."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Teacher #7</p>	<p>"Planning hasn't changed averages out to be the same as before."</p>	<p>"We assume we'll continue unless told otherwise."</p>	<p>"...can't think of a thing that doesn't work."</p>

Part I Table C-13
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #8	<p>"...first heard about the change I was rather dubious." "...affect organization and cause too much confusion." "The first day of implementation I saw the benefits."</p>	<p>"...decision was already made before I came."</p>	<p>"Several meetings were mandatory - basically explained what block scheduling was." "...I understood perfectly what block scheduling was all about after the second meeting." "Voluntary meetings were more practice sessions." "...stressed that you need a variety of classroom activities."</p>	<p>"There is staff development days before school dedicated to new teaches and the block."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
"...given me ideas for thought."	"...the amount of time you can stay on one lesson is longer." "students do now know subject matter better with block."	No Response	"...more active learning..." "students are more willing to become involved." "...always more time." "Information covered more thoroughly...."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
Teacher #8	"I see slight improvement." "...gives more opportunity to get involved with collaboration."	"There is input."	"...cover less material in a year than before."

Part I Table C-14
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #9	<p>"Initially, I was strongly in favor of it." "...happy to go to block." "...a few people were apprehensive- felt pressure."</p>	<p>"...formed committees - everybody in the school was on one or two sub-committees." "...every comment was included."</p>	<p>"For me, it was enough." "...didn't need that much training...." "School was very willing to help everyone."</p>	<p>"I don't think so."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
"Enabled me to shut-up..." "I put more now in the hands of students."	"...more thoughtful..."	"...want to see how class fits into overall scheme...."	"...in corridors half the time, half the time trouble." "Attendance is a little better...."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to continue or Discontinue	Problems
Teacher #9	"Efficiency standpoint...takes less time to plan a block."	"I don't know."	"Lecturing for 1 ½ hours."

Part I Table C-15
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #10	"...some excited, some apprehensive."	"Lots of opportunities for input." "...visited other schools had people come here."	"...teachers taught how to use a 90 minute period."	"none"

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
No Response	"Presentation of lesson, cover more material." "More active learning."	No Response	"Performance is better." "...more involved in activities." "...students that don't like it complain about teachers lecturing."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
Teacher #10	No Response	"We talk about it."	"Most complaints fall in foreign language."

Part I Table C-16
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #11	<p>"..it was stressed that all agree to do this." "I don't know if it's the best thing for all of kids, but it's the best thing for the teachers." "I love it now."</p>	<p>"...voted on it, had to be a majority." "...had adequate input."</p>	<p>"...some mandatory, some voluntary."</p>	<p>"I don't know."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"...more aware of students." "...less talk, more individualized instruction"</p>	<p>"More time for review and homework procedures."</p>	<p>"Assistant principal comes in to evaluate looking for effective teaching and variety."</p>	<p>"Attendance is better..." "Discipline problems about the same." "More kids get involved in class."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Teacher #11</p>	<p>"...much better because have bigger block of time." "Can get more things done."</p>	<p>"We all assume it's going to continue."</p>	<p>"Doesn't work for lower level classes."</p>

Part I Table C-17
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #12	"I was ready for a change. It seemed exciting."	"...invited to participate in visiting other schools." "...given literature and research; part of school renewal." "Some teachers said they heard too much about it."	"That was the weakest part." "...several in-services where we were inundated and bored with written materials." "Each teacher had to find a way that worked for them to become more innovative in their teaching. There wasn't a lot of support for that to happen."	"...had a meeting teachers on the block workshops then turned over to department."

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"...not a lot." "Those who are creative are having a ball. Those who are afraid of change are just afraid of change."</p>	<p>"...was concerned wouldn't cover all the material needed before AP testing- hasn't happened, have more time." "...carry-over is sensational...." "flexibility is enormous plus..."</p>	<p>"Evaluated by assistant principals, come in for whole block."</p>	<p>"Everything has improved except study block."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Teacher 12</p>	<p>"Sort a do and sort a don't get more time." "Slightly improved but until stop giving teachers non-teaching duties, it's a waste of time."</p>	<p>"Talk about it every year." "It was assumed after the first year we would continue because it was part of school renewal." "Bottom line-it's bureaucratic and makes savings."</p>	<p>"Study blocks is a real problem." "It's hard to be out sick and secure subs."</p>

Part I Table C-18
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #13	<p>"..initially very .enthusiastic, needed a team of teachers to research. Group was very diverse some on committee actually opposed...."</p> <p>"Anxiety as we progressed with the block."</p> <p>"...nervous before starting."</p>	<p>"School renewal team formulated a block committee of 40 teachers."</p> <p>"Opportunities for open forums to present to faculty."</p> <p>"Everyone that wanted to be involved had a chance or was informed."</p>	<p>"Entire summer of research; year of dialogue."</p> <p>"Heavy training in summer; good percentage of staff participated."</p>	<p>"No specific training except new teacher orientation."</p> <p>"Assigned a buddy in the department."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"Three specific techniques-look at student involvement, learning styles, teaching strategies." "student-centered approach." "I'm a director and they are learners." "Learning now is more in-depth; it's more permanent." "Planning is the key."</p>	<p>"I know my students better."</p>	<p>"Administrators are assigned." "...would like to see administrators look at strategies being used. Most teachings not changing strategies." "Evaluation system needs an overhaul."</p>	<p>"New attendance policy also affects attendance." "Don't have major problems...."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Teacher #13</p>	<p>"I don't miss it everyday." "Serious concern for some."</p>	<p>"School board is looking at it...." "I don't think we'll have a problem with it."</p>	<p>"Two different preps on one day...." "Study block is not working as originally conceived."</p>

Part I Table C-19
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher #14	<p>"Lots of uncertainty from faculty." "I was willing to try but lots were reluctant." "I enjoy it now."</p>	<p>"Everyone had input." "....voted...."</p>	<p>"...block is really nice because I teach skill-type subjects." "Lecture classes needed more help."</p>	<p>"I really don't know."</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
"Difficult to change-getting more involvement from the kids; more interaction."	"I don't see that I've really changed a lot before what I did."	"Assistant principals evaluate-look for procedures and class organization."	"Less schedule changes help with discipline." "...have more roaming around the building."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
Teacher #14	"Have plenty of time one day; next day none."	"Once it went in there was no vote after that to continue for next year." "Don't know if central office is going to make a change."	"Study blocks do not work."

Part I Table C-20
Teacher Participation

Participant	Initiation of Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Teacher 15	<p>"...initially skepticism - loss of 10 minutes every week." "...loss of proficiency in foreign language students not having the opportunity to speak every day." "...now accepting and supportive of clock. I do not think enough covered in AP class. The total less of time amounts to 2 weeks in each class."</p>	<p>"...committee of teachers to study survey, other schools, organize the proposal and present to teachers." "...teachers were involved in the whole process; teaches could choose the committee he/she wanted to work on."</p>	<p>"Several days of workshops were presented by a group of professional motivators brought in for this purpose." "There was a year of planning and discussing before making the final decision." "Summer workshops were voluntary. Several day workshops during the year were mandatory. Most teachers participated."</p>	No Response

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"...new ideas, confidence, understanding that the block is nothing to be afraid of." "After the initial year, the staff development pertaining to block scheduling has ceased except for a survey given twice to students and teachers to access the success and opinions of students and teachers." "Main innovation is my methodology is more group work in and out of class. I try to make up for the loss of a day by speaking the language by assigning a partner exercise for homework." "The 90 minute class is deadly if the teacher cannot adapt. his/her teaching methods to more student oriented activities."</p>	<p>"...more time to reinforce recently taught (learned) skills." "The classroom activities are more cohesive since there is time to finish. The class is varied with time for reading, speaking and listening exercises."</p>	<p>"Assistant principal in charge of department evaluates once a year."</p>	<p>"...teachers and students perceive "good day" and "bad day" based on class load." "...a 45 minute study block available to students." "Homework for students and teachers is more manageable." "Teachers and students have an extra day to prepare for the next class." "Class becomes boring if activities aren't varied." "Reinforcement is possible after a new concept has been presented." "...I don't give much written reinforcement in class- do mainly speaking and listening activities." "I have not found attendance, participation, etc. to be improved."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Teacher 15</p>	<p>No Response</p>	<p>"...student and teacher survey; to discontinue has not been an option." "...it would be difficult to change back."</p>	<p>No Response</p>

Part I Table C-21
Parent Participation

Participant	Initiation of Schedule Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
Parent #1	<p>"I knew about it because I have been on the PTA Board forever. I know from the ground up what they were working on; they were meeting with other schools." "I attended every single meeting...parents were given many opportunities to voice their opinions...."</p>	<p>"Administrators and the staff made the final decision." "...in-serviced the planning council well...." "Faculty were given the opportunity to leave—unfortunately some have stayed."</p>	<p>"Staff development programs were open to parents." "Parents were included in every part."</p>	No Response

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
<p>"My recommendation would be to in-service teachers more on how to handle 90 minutes of time. Lecturing does not go well with block scheduling." "The creative teachers are using the time well...." "Good teachers are doing that, ones that aren't will not."</p>	<p>"One big difference is the number of times kids change classes so you don't have that congestion constantly throughout the day."</p>	<p>No Response</p>	<p>"The block does not have a direct connection to achievement, attendance, etc." "possibly the climate is calmer due to fewer class changes." "Preparing kids for college."</p>
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
<p>Parent #1</p>	<p>No Response</p>	<p>"Still involved with surveys; done on a regular basis...." "Random selection of parents..."</p>	<p>No Response</p>

Part I Table C-22
Parent Participation

Participant	Initiation of Schedule Change	Involvement in the Decision-making Process	Types of Staff Development	Staff Development for New Teachers
<p>Parent #2</p>	<p>"...parent meetings were set up" "...presented to parents to give us all the different formats of block scheduling that we might be interested in." "It was an open discussion. There were at least 2 of these parent meetings." "...not as well attended as I would have liked for them to be but they were well publicized." "...community was very well prepared for those who were in any way interested...." "Everything was up-front and public."</p>	<p>"Final decision was made at the school." "Had there been strong opposition it would have influenced the decision-making."</p>	<p>"Parents not involved in planning." "In general, teachers were very well prepared and supported." "I have not seen that they've continued with the teacher training." "Needs to be an important continuation of staff development and reinforcement of the study skills."</p>	<p>No Response</p>

Part II

Teaching Practices	Differences Between A/B Block Schedule and a Seven Bell Day	Evaluation Process	Outcomes of A/B Block Scheduling
"I think there are some people that don't fit into the block well. Most were given the opportunity to go somewhere else. Most did but some did not."	"The school is quieter...." "Several first block teachers have found a lot less tardies and absences."	No Response	"Children better prepared for college." "...students not completing assignments on class days."
Participant	Planning Time	Decision to Continue or Discontinue	Problems
Parent #2	No Response	"There was a survey-random selection sent to parents..." :It should be the school that decides to continue."	No Response

APPENDIX I

Table 8			
Documents Used as Sources of Data			
Document	Stakeholder	Areas of Research Affected	Description of Document
School Renewal Process	Teachers, Administrators, Parents	Initial Stages	Handouts used as transparencies for initial school and faculty planning council meetings to address block scheduling
Block Scheduling Ad-Hoc Committee Memo	School Planning Council, Faculty Planning Council, Parents	Initial Information Stages	Timeline explaining the stages of implementation of the A/B block schedule
Parent Pamphlet on Block Scheduling	Parents	Initial Information Stages	Pamphlet providing basic information about block scheduling
Sample Student Schedules for Parent Forums	Students & Parents	Implementation and Information Stages	Handout of sample student schedules plus working copies for students and parents
In-Service Opportunities Agenda	Teachers	Staff Development	Outline of in-service opportunities for teachers
Staff Development Survey	Teachers	Staff Development	Survey for staff development opportunities workshop
Building the Block In-Service Agenda	Teachers	Staff Development	In-service agenda for teachers
Year Pacing Guide Workshop	Students & Teachers	Implementation	Worksheet to plan student course selections for the school year
Student Schedule Worksheets	Students	Implementation	Schedule worksheets for students plus handout on questions most often asked by students about block scheduling
In-Service Agenda	Teachers	Teaching Practices	Agenda for in-service addressing teaching practices
Program Surveys	Staff, Support Staff, Parents, and Teachers of Other Schools in the State on a Block Schedule	Teaching Practices	Surveys to address all phases and stakeholders in an A/B block schedule
Teacher Evaluation Form	Teachers & Administrators	Teaching Practices	Form used by administrators for teacher evaluation

Table 8

Documents Used as Sources of Data

Block scheduling Survey Results, 1995-1996	Teachers, Parents, & Students	Total Program	Results of program surveys given to students, parents, and teachers
Report on Block Scheduling Program Presented to the School Board, January 1997	Board Members, Teachers, Administrators, Students, & Parents	Total Program	Results of a central office research project on the A/B block schedule in three division high schools

APPENDIX J

404 52nd Street
Virginia Beach, Virginia Beach, VA 23451
December 12, 1996

Mrs. Reen Childers
Larkspur Middle School

Dear Mrs. Childers:

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech conducting research for my dissertation. One part of my dissertation requires that I interview parents of high school students participating in an alternate day block schedule. Dr. Tonelson suggested I contact you as a possible resource. I have written to both the research and testing department and Dr. Tonelson and have received their permission to contact you. I am requesting your permission to interview you.

Should you decide to help me with my research, I would ask you to complete the second page of this letter and return that page to me. The entire interview should take no more than 30 minutes. I would also ask your permission to audiotape your responses. Of course, I would be the only person to hear the tapes which would be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. I am enclosing a copy of the informed consent form to give you more information about the interview.

I am planning to conduct the interviews before the holidays or in early January during either your planning bell or after school, whichever is more convenient to you. Once I know who gives me permission to interview them, I will make a schedule by contacting you to determine which date would be best. If you need more information, please do not hesitate to call me at work (473-5064) or at home (422-3230). I thank you in advance for any consideration you might give me and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Dianne J. Cunningham

I am willing to participate in your research.

It is more convenient for me to be interviewed during my planning bell. My planning bell is from _____ until _____.

It is more convenient for me to be interviewed after school. Our school day ends at _____ p.m.

It is more convenient for me to be interviewed at another time. That time is _____.

Signature

Number of Years Involved in an A/B Block Schedule: _____

APPENDIX K

VITA

Dianne Joyner Cunningham is a graduate of the Martin County Public Schools system in Oak City, North Carolina, and received her undergraduate degree from East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. She hold's a master's degree George Washington University in Washington, D. C., and a certificate of advanced graduate studies from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State university in Blacksburg, Virginia.

Her education career began in Hobgood, North Carolina, where she taught home economics and science for one year. In 1977 she moved to Virginia Beach, Virginia, where she taught home economics at Plaza Junior High School from 1977 until 1983. In 1983 she transferred to Virginia Beach Vocational Technical Education Center to teach child care occupations (1983-1987). In 1987 she was appointed assistant principal at Bayside Junior High School in Virginia Beach. After two years she transferred to the Virginia Beach Vocational Technical Education Center where she served as an assistant principal until 1992. In 1992, she transferred to Bayside Middle School and served as the on-site administrator at the Sixth Grade Annex of Bayside Middle School. In 1993 she was appointed interim principal at Bayside Middle-Sixth Grade Campus followed by four years as principal beginning in 1994. She now serves as principal of Independence Middle School in Virginia Beach.

Dianne Cunningham currently resides in Virginia Beach with her husband, Tom.


Dianne J. Cunningham