

May 17, 2017

Dear Parent / Guardian,

Since 2011, Earl Marriott Secondary has been operating on an extended day schedule as a temporary measure to deal with enrolment pressures. We have always hoped that when enrolment allowed, we would be able to consider a return to a four-block schedule which is the norm in secondary schools. This letter is to let you know that yesterday we met with the staff to hear their feedback on the timetable and to decide on a plan forward. While no decision has been made, it is clear from the staff meetings we had yesterday, that there is strong support to consider moving back to a four-block routine for September 2017.

To move to a four-block routine is not without its challenges. The timeline for consultation is incredibly short, there are complexities that the staff raised that we need to explore, and we want to make sure that we have considered all options before proceeding. It is a big decision and one we wish to make carefully. The decision impacts staff, students, and parents.

We recognize that students and parents have grown accustomed to the extended day and some families haven't even had experience with the regular four-block day at EMS. There will be a need to adjust daily routines and there is no doubt that this will impact families and their routines. With that in mind, we wanted to engage with parents on this potential decision, the rationale and the impact on the community.

We would like to invite you to a parent community forum to discuss the benefits and challenges of considering a change such as this. The community forum will be at Earl Marriott Secondary on Tuesday, May 23rd at 7:00pm in the library.

The school will be following up on this letter with more details about what a four-block schedule would look like, what the benefits and challenges are, and why we would consider a return to the four-block routine. The timeline for a decision is tight and we need to make a call certainly within the next two weeks.

We look forward to engaging in a conversation regarding returning to the standard four-block bell schedule and to hearing your views and concerns. Again, please look for more information from the school on the benefits, challenges and what a likely schedule would look like should we adjust to a four-block schedule for September 2017.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jordan Tinney
Superintendent of Schools/CEO

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