

Dear Mr. Porcello,

As principal of Perry High School, we are aware that you are very familiar with scheduling. Our current school day, which includes ninety minutes for each class, plus a twenty minute ICE block and a thirty minute lunch, provides us with a lot of time to learn. In theory, the block schedule allows time for students to ask questions, get work done, and learn more material. However, we believe that shorter blocks of time would increase student productivity. With shorter class periods, more game-based instruction, and hands-on learning opportunities, students would be more likely to comprehend and remember material, giving them a better chance to grow academically in a healthy, less stressful way.

Although long blocks have some benefits, there are downsides as well. According to an article written by Regine Labossiere for *Los Angeles Times* called, "Longer Classes Give Students a Chance to Focus," block schedule allows students to take fewer classes for longer periods of time, giving them a chance to learn more material and focus on fewer subjects. Even though this may be true, the article also interviewed students who are in block classes and their feedback was critical. The students claimed that they cannot focus for long time spans, teachers often struggle to fill the entire class period, and most classes are not nearly as long in college. In college the typical classes are 55 minutes. This goes to show that having long class periods does not benefit the students in the present, nor the future. Students tend to get bored and their attention span declines while sitting in long classes. While longer class times allow students more opportunities to ask for clarification, they also increase the risk of students getting off task. In the state of Ohio, the minimum classroom seat time is 1,001 hours per year for students in grades 7-12 according to the Ohio Department of Education. In Perry the seat time is approximately 1,035 hours which means we are over the minimum amount by about 34 hours. If Perry were to shorten the class time to about an hour, we would still meet the minimum but have more efficient learning. With shorter classes and more free time outside of class, students will have more time to talk to teachers one-on-one and get more in-depth help to better understand course material if needed.

In addition to reducing class time, more needs to be done to ensure that teachers are delivering engaging lessons. When we were in 4th grade the school gave us iPods to help us learn and everyone would get excited when we got to use them. The iPod made the learning like a game which really motivated kids to gain an understanding of the lessons being taught. Regular lessons and worksheets can get boring after sitting in a desk for ninety minutes, which can result in students not wanting to continue the lesson. With game-based instruction in the classroom,

students will have a chance to better understand the material being taught, while staying engaged. Although many Perry teachers engage students with innovative assignments, more emphasis could be placed on incorporating game-based lessons into daily instruction. According to an article written by Mandē Holford for the *World Economic Forum*, games in the classroom are better for students. Holford contends that “Analog games are great tactile tools to get kids excited about learning, and digital games add a level of interaction by creating unique experiences...by pairing analog and digital games in classrooms we ensure that students are engaged in multi-sensory learning.” When game-based activities and shorter class periods are put together, the students will have a longer attention span and will not get bored.

In conclusion, we thank you for reading this letter and look forward to your response.

Works Cited

Holford, Mandē, et al. “Children Should Be Playing More Games in the Classroom. Here's

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