

# Fresh perspective

By: Allison Steffen @thefightingsis



Four freshman girls gather during their lunch period to chat and catch up with one another.

The harsh transition from middle school to high school is rough for many. The fear of being the youngest again and how heavy the workload would be is in the front of many incoming freshmen's minds, just like it was for Natalie McAllister and Braydon Kriegel, both freshmen.

When asked, McAllister admitted that she was frightened to come into the high school on the first day because she would once again be in the youngest grade and was worried about the workload, which is often portrayed as overbearing when addressed. McAllister was concerned about the mixed classes and not keeping up with the upperclassmen in sports. Whereas Braydon Kriegel was mostly concerned with how strict high school would be.

Both interviewed parties stated that there

were indeed differences between middle school and high school. They also said that high school is advertised as even more strict than middle school when in reality, you have more freedom in what you do. However, their environment isn't the only thing that changed. McAllister found that she changed, and Kriegel found that those around him did.

McAllister said, "I have changed significantly since the start of high school. I think I have become much more adaptable to things and learned a lot more about myself in so many different aspects. I think I have mentally become so much stronger and just really gotten to know my strengths and weaknesses when it comes to school." McAllister explained that it was a big surprise that high school helped her get to know herself and what she

needs. Whereas Kriegel believes that he didn't change much between the beginning of the year and now saying that the only real difference is that he hasn't seen half the people he would interact with regularly in a year.

High school is a time filled with personal and academic development. It may be scary, but McAllister advises those entering high school for the first time to "truly be yourself, don't change for anybody. Focus on your schoolwork, and don't be afraid to join clubs and sports because that's how you meet people." Kriegel would recommend getting to know your teachers and not worrying too much about the workload. All in all, freshman year changes you.

# Are blocks best?

By: Noelle Regennitter @23norege

At MHS, every school day is broken up into 4 blocks, each one hour and 20 minutes long; with an additional 40 minutes set aside for M-block (also known as Mentor). With this layout the school day lasts seven hours. On the other hand, period scheduling runs in an entirely different layout, but lasts the same amount of time. However, schools that operate according to block scheduling offer students the opportunity for more movement and engagement in the classroom. That being said, there are most definitely some ups and downs when it comes to block scheduling.

For starters, teachers typically prefer to have block scheduling because it makes it easier for them to organize what they'll cover in each of their classes. Block scheduling also enables them to offer in-class work time to their students; an opportunity that wouldn't be possible with period scheduling.

"More time with students gives them the ability to ask questions, which can help with better understanding. Additionally, students and teachers don't have to move as fast through the day as you would in a 42 minute class," said Mr. Hewitt.

However, block scheduling isn't all sunshine and rainbows, there are plenty of downsides.

For students with ADHD or other potentially unvoiced learning disabilities, sitting in the same classroom conflicts with their ability to focus on the curriculum being taught. These students are then obligated to sit in the same seat,

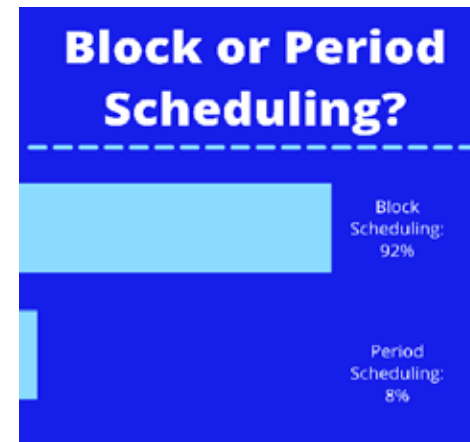
surrounded by the same four walls and classmates for almost an hour and a half. Considering that one in five people in the US are likely to have a learning defect like ADHD, this is a big issue.

This isn't the only downside. The majority of students don't take extended core classes (meaning their curriculum is stretched out over three quarters instead of two) which means that their core classes have the potential to be scheduled two entire quarters apart; one at the beginning of the school year and the other at the end. Even worse, students could have classes scheduled during 4th quarter and then not have another class during the summer and then not until 3rd quarter of the next

year. Having two crucial math classes roughly 148 days apart can put a student's overall understanding of the state required curriculum in jeopardy. Allison Steffen, sophomore, said, "I don't like having to wait a year or half a year before my next class in a subject. Like math, I sometimes have to

wait half a year or more, then I forget the material we learned and struggle to relearn it."

In the end block scheduling, like most things, comes with its fair share of ups and downs. Many students enjoy block scheduling because there is less homework and teachers have more time to help the said students learn the material, but it can also be detrimental to those who can't focus for long periods of time. Different things work for different people, so there will never be a solution to every problem. Hopefully, however, there will be an even better schedule in the future.



Out of a convenience poll of 53 people, 49 preferred block scheduling over period scheduling.