

PARENT AND STUDENT FAQ ON MOVE TO NEW 7 PERIOD HYBRID SCHEDULE 2024-2025

- If planning time goes up and Tier I instructional minutes go up, what has to give in the schedule?
 - The trade off on this schedule is the class sizes and the number of courses offered.
- Are graduation requirements changing? What will be different?
 - Yes. MNPS has a phase in plan for total number of credits required to graduate from a zone high school. We currently require 28 credits (six more credits above what the state requires). Over several years this requirement will phase down to the state requirement of 22. The state requirements for earning a diploma are fixed and the only adjustment is independent of the new schedule with the new requirement for Computer Science beginning with the class of 2028.
- Based on the above, phase-in credit requirements over time as follows (credits earned/credits offered)
 - Class of 24: 28/32
 - Class of 25: 26/31
 - Class of 26: 25/30
 - Class of 27: 24/29
 - Class of 28: 22/28
- Will all class sizes go up as a result of this?
 - No, not necessarily. This will largely be dependent on multiple factors to include enrollment, staffing, and type of course. We will be making some shifts in staffing to be sure that we can maintain reasonable course sizes in our State-tested content areas (ELA 1 and 2, Math 1, 2, and 3, Biology, US History). We try to focus on average class sizes as individual class sizes could vary depending on day to day scheduling. We do expect non-tested courses class sizes to increase some as a result of this. The State has limits on class sizes for most classes and these vary some according to type of class (CTE, Performance-based, etc.). Our district also reviews all high school master schedules for best practice and as part of this will look at projected class sizes. All class averages must meet State and District requirements.
- Will we have courses that we no longer offer as a result of this?
 - Yes, this is likely. Much of this will be determined by course registration this spring. What is most likely is that we will see a reduction in the number of sections of certain elective classes rather than the complete elimination of courses. This is a natural part of registration that happens every year. For example, we may only have 2 or 3 sections of African American Studies instead of 5 or 6. We may only have 1 or 2 sections of General Music instead of 4 or 5. Student will need fewer electives, so we will offer fewer electives. There are some classes where we have only been carrying one section with low enrollment for many years. These are courses that are at-risk for not making. We

have faced this issue from year to year with some courses without any shift or change in the master schedule.

- How will this affect IB classes—they are all currently 2 year classes. Will this change?
 - Yes, this will affect IB classes. Due to seat-time requirements of the IB we have had all classes at 2 year classes under the 8 period A/B schedule. See the IB addendum for more information on this.
- For IB classes that shift from 2 year to 1 year classes, how will this work in the transition (current juniors) for students who already started in all two-year classes?
 - Students in the Class of 2025 (current juniors) who started their IB classes as 2 year classes must complete all of their IB classes as 2 year classes. This is necessary to still be eligible for the IB Diploma. They are only halfway through their curricula. Their schedules will be very tight for next year.
- How will Hillsboro decide which IB classes remain 2 year vs 1 year classes?
 - These are comprehensive decisions made by using multiple data points. See the IB addendum for more information on this.
- What is the new requirement for Computer Science? Can you share information about this, and the certifications required to teach this? How will Hillsboro offer this?
 - This is a new graduation requirement established by the State. This is completely independent of our new schedule. Beginning with the Class of 2028, students must take and earn a credit in Computer Science. Depending on the course used and how it is scheduled, it is possible for this course to count as a student's third lab science requirement or fourth math requirement. We are including the link to a document from the State on this. There are still some details of implementation that we are learning on this new requirement. We anticipate introducing this course to students in the Fall of 2025 or Fall of 2026. [Computer Science - FAQs \(tn.gov\)](#)
- Will lunch look the same for students next year? How will this affect clubs, office hours, etc.?
 - This is a work in progress. On the block days we hope/anticipate having a lunch schedule that looks like what we have right now. We know that the lunch will have to be implemented differently on the full 7 period days. We are committed to having a lunch that feels the same and offers many or most of the same opportunities. We have several pathways to this we are investigating now. We will continue to research and troubleshoot this as we move forward. *See slide from Power Point on this*
- What does PLT and intervention look like next year? Will this be different?
 - Yes. For high schools this is being overhauled and rebranded as College Career Readiness (CCR) time with a new focus on those activities. There is a specific time in the block days for this. We are still learning more about the expectations and guidelines from the district on this. We will also be collaborating with other schools so that we can have experiences that best achieve the goals of this time. One major shift is that Freshmen Seminar will no longer be a stand-alone class in a 9th grade schedule, but will take place during the CCR time. *See slide from Power Point on this*
- Will students still be able to have early dismissal?
 - Yes. We still have the requirements in place for this. However, we expect that (over the next several years) we will likely have fewer students who are eligible for this. Students must have a surplus of credits to be eligible for this.

- This new schedule looks like we lose more time in transitions. Is this true?
 - More time is spent on transitions because we have more transitions. It is possible that we may reduce the transition time slightly (6 minutes to 5 minutes) as students are getting more frequent breaks between classes. Most students do not need that much time to simply walk from one class to another. The extra time is provided for restroom, hydration, brain break, and socialization. Total instructional minutes goes up during the week for classes from 200 minutes per week per class to 240 minutes per week per class. See the slide from the District Presentation on a break down of minutes by activity for each type of schedule.
- Will this affect World Languages that are offered?
 - We do not anticipate any impact on the World Languages offered as a result of the change to this schedule. We currently offer French and Spanish. This is driven by student registration and course selections by students.
- Will this change mean more classes offered/required online or virtual?
 - This shift to this schedule will have no impact on whether we have a course that is virtual or on-line. This tends to be a staffing issue. When there are no teachers available to hire for a class, we have had to shift to this. This is a national trend and is more related to teacher shortages. Since the pandemic, secondary and post-secondary institutions have become better at delivering this product and it will likely be here for good (since the teacher shortage is not predicted to get any better in the next several years). It is not our scheduling preference and is only used when we are unable to find a certified and qualified teacher to deliver in-person instruction.
- Does this change affect the operational hours of school? (7:05 to 2:05)
 - No. Discussion around shifting the start times of high school are completely unrelated to this schedule move. This will be a decision made by the Board of Education.
- How will this affect programs like AVID, ISR, Theater, AV Production, etc.?
 - The full impact is unknown at this time. The single largest factor impacting programs in our school is the selections that students make when registering for classes. Programs that have been large and thriving will continue to be large and thrive. Programs that have been under-enrolled and struggling will feel that more. We will monitor enrollment numbers so that we can anticipate any challenges that could come for next fall. We have already been working with the teacher sponsors for most programs to discuss shifts that we can start making to keep our programs thriving and viable. We are committed to making sure that any student who started in a program has the ability to complete that program. We may have to get creative on how we do this for a few individuals. If a program is facing severe challenges, we could pause the enrollment of future sections while we find ways to make sure that students who are already in the program can successfully matriculate.
- Could you revisit the purpose of this change? Was the 8 period A/B schedule not working?
 - Some of this is shared in the district presentation. For a quick recap, the shift to the A/B schedule 16 years ago was done primarily in a response to low graduation rates across the district and to support the implementation of academies. This worked well for many years. Today, these are no longer our biggest challenges. Declining test scores and student engagement are now our biggest challenges. The trade off on the A/B

schedule is fewer instructional minutes and contact points with students. It has also been a large case load for students and teachers. Finally, there has been an equity issue that students in magnet schools have had lower requirements for credits than zone school students. This shift to a new schedule is meant to address these new concerns.

- Does this impact our enrollment projections and students coming from out of zone?
 - No. Student projections and students coming to our school from Optional School Enrollment are completely independent of the schedule. This is determined by the Office of School Enrollment, predictions on enrollment and demographic trends in our city, and choices that parents make through our Optional Enrollment Program for MNPS.
- What are the opportunities for advanced math classes moving forward? Will College-level courses (Early Post Secondary Opportunities, EPSO's) be changed?
 - Hillsboro will continue to have a broad selection of College Level Advanced courses across most content areas. This would include IB, Advanced Placement (AP), Dual Enrollment (DE), and Dual Credit (DC) courses. We strive to expand these opportunities every year. Part of our evaluation as a school comes from the number of students who successfully complete EPSO's, so it is in our interest to not only offer these opportunities, but to also make sure that students are successful. We tend to have the same courses offered most years as the enrollment is predictable. Periodically a new course will be introduced as we see interest and availability, while we also sometimes will periodically have to phase out a course if we see a pattern of unsustainability or lack of success. These changes are only made with the use of data and after careful research and consideration. Our goal is to get more students who have not signed up for these EPSO's to challenge themselves by doing so. This increases the rate of college-going for students and their success rate in post-secondary education.
- How does our budget affect courses offered?
 - In MNPS we follow a policy of Student-Based Budgeting. This simply means that the dollars follow the student. Since our student projections for enrollment for next year are essentially the same as this year, we are not expecting any major shifts in our funding for next year. However, there are some federal funds (ESSER) that are sunseting this year. Our Mayor is working to secure some one-year stop-gap funding to assist with the loss of those funds, but it will be less than what we are receiving now. We already spend most of our funding on staff, and that will unlikely change. The shift to the new schedule will require that we shift some funding from positions for elective classes to core subject classes so that we can avoid class sizes that are excessively high. Because students will need fewer elective classes this makes sense. The factors that most impact courses that are offered are:
 - Graduation requirements (22 of the 28 credits are prescribed by the State)
 - Programmatic requirements (to earn and maintain certain certifications such as IB, AVID, etc. we must offer certain courses)
 - Student choices in registration (We cannot support courses with low enrollments—this forces up class sizes through the school)
 - Enrollment numbers (larger school enrollments support the ability to have more sections of levels of courses. For example, Biology vs Biology Honors.)

- Teacher Certifications and requirements—some specialized courses or levels of courses require specific endorsements, certifications, or degrees to offer.
 - All this to say that budget is not the primary variable that drives courses offered.
- If my child has an IEP (Individualized Education Plan), do any of the services change?
 - That is unlikely. Services don't change. It is possible that the time (minutes of services) could be adjusted slightly to reflect the change in number of minutes in a class. Services, goals, and accommodations should not change.
 - No changes will happen to any IEP without the IEP team meeting and making those changes in writing.

IB ADDENDUM

We had many specific questions about IB classes and how this is going to work in a new master schedule we wanted to have a special document to share more information specific to this. We will keep the focus of this on the IB Diploma Programme as that is where most of questions have lived. We want to begin with some basics about requirements of the IB Diploma Programme:

- Students must take a total of 7 courses.
 - Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature
 - Group 2: Language Acquisition (Second Language Course)
 - Group 3: Individuals and Societies (History of the Americas)
 - Group 4: Sciences (Environmental Science or Sports Science)
 - Group 5: Mathematics
 - Group 6: The Arts (Psychology, Art, Theatre, Business)
 - Theory of Knowledge
- Three of the courses in Group 1-6 must be at the Honors Level (HL)
 - HL courses must be 2 years to meet seat time requirements.
- Three of the courses in Group 1-6 must be at the Standard Level (SL)
 - SL courses can be one year or two-year (as scheduling allows in a school)
- Below are the courses and levels we have typically offered.
 - Language and Literature (HL only)
 - History of the Americas (HL only)
 - Spanish B (HL or SL)
 - Sports Exercise (SL only)
 - Psychology (HL or SL)
 - Business Management (HL or SL)
 - Math (HL or SL)
 - Theatre (HL or SL)
 - Art (HL or SL)
 - Environmental Science (SL only)
 - Spanish Ab Initio (SL only)
 - French Ab Initio (SL only)
 - All this to say that, while we were on an 8 period A/B schedule HL and SL both had to be 2-year classes to meet the minimum seat time requirements. Because of this, we offered many classes as HL or SL only because they were stacked together typically.
 - The classes that were SL only were this because the IB did not offer an HL option.
 - The classes that were HL only were the classes with our highest success rate on tests.
- Enrollment and Success Rates for Courses
 - Math and Science classes, in particular, have had lower success rates at Hillsboro, MNPS, and Nationally. This is one reason we introduced IB Sports Exercise and IB

Environmental Science. We have seen much higher success rates in these courses than we ever saw in IB Biology, IB Physics, and IB Chemistry.

- We have had a significant number of students over the past ten to twelve years who have missed earning the IB Diploma by only one or two points. Being able to score one point higher (scores are 1-7 points each) can be the difference between earning the diploma or not.
- The impact of Students with High School credits in Math from middle school
 - 9 years ago we tended to have many more students entering high school with credits in math. The numbers trended to approximately 60 students with Integrated Math 1 and 30 students entering with Integrated Math 2.
 - The students coming in with two high school math credits are the students who tended to go on to IB Math and take this at the HL level. They were simply more prepared.
 - We typically have less than 30 students now entering Hillsboro as 9th graders with Integrated Math 1 credit.
 - This means that more and more students have had to double up on Integrated Math 2 and 3 in the 10th grade year to be eligible for the IB Diploma Programme.
 - This discouraged many students from even attempting the DP. Our enrollment in the DP Programme has declined as a result.
 - This is also not a best practice and has shown to not be very successful in terms of grades, scores on State EOC exams, and preparation and success in IB math in later years.
 - We have averaged only a single digit number of students who have signed up for Math HL over the past ten years. The pass rates for Math HL have been less than 50%, and significantly below the world average. That is not sustainable.
 - We have decided to make our IB Math a one-year SL only in the senior year. This does the following:
 - It makes the Diploma Programme accessible to more students.
 - More students are signing up for the Diploma Programme
 - It creates more Advanced Academics options to more students. These are also typically more minority students as well.
 - More CP students are now choosing this as an advanced academics choice.
 - It allows for the opportunity for a Dual Enrollment Stats class in the Junior or Senior Year for IB and Non-IB Students
 - It allows for a better progression of math classes in preparation for IB Math (no more doubling math classes in the 10th grade year)
- The Glendale Challenge
 - Students who matriculated to Hillsboro from Glendale Spanish Immersion School tend to enter with credits in Spanish 1 and 2. They arrive as 9th graders ready to take Spanish 3. For them, they need to IB Spanish as a two-year course and at the HL level.
 - Those who did not go to Glendale typically cannot be successful at the HL level, and so need to be able to take as at the SL level.
 - For these reasons we have to provide IB Spanish a two-year course with the option of SL or HL
- The other classes that are being offered as choice (SL or HL) classes are all Group 6

- Group 6 courses tend to be the next highest scoring courses after the HL courses.
- Cohort Scheduling can be very tricky for students. By making all the Group 6 courses SL/HL option we are able to provide more choices for students. We would not be able to sustain this many choices in one group otherwise.