

# FIVE PERIOD DAY STRUCTURE COMMITTEE REPORT

## 1.0 Executive Summary

A committee has been established to investigate a five period day structure for Goulburn High School. The five period day structure is expected to benefit the school as follows:

1. Increased time for engaging activities and a reduction in the number of subjects studied per day allows for greater retention and more targeted reflection.
2. Reduced movement leads to less disruption and greater focus.
3. Five periods per day allows more opportunities to reduce split classes as the teaching load will give more flexibility. This will allow students to have greater consistency and continuity in lessons.
4. The last 2 periods of the day under a six period day model can be less productive and have more disruptions. Reducing the number of periods from 2 to 1 will help reduce these issues. It may also lead to a psychological shift as students know they have to only complete one more period.

It is noted that a five period day structure may cause some concerns, as listed below:

1. TAFE on Tuesday afternoons and how it will fit within the model.
2. The impact on sport, especially because of travel to other venues.
3. The impact on other practical subjects, particularly related to double periods.

The committee decided to survey nearby schools about their experiences with a five period day structure.

In summary, most of the staff surveyed supported a five period structure. **The key positive points were:**

- reduction in movement between classes and around the school during the day
- lesson preparation is reduced
- increased opportunity for depth in teaching and learning
- increased student engagement
- only one lesson after lunch.

**The key concerns were:**

- disruptions have greater impact on teaching
- practical time for TAS classes
- teacher adapting to longer lessons

The committee recommends that GHS change to a five periods per day structure from 2017. The committee will request the Principal to construct a five period day curriculum structure and staffing allocation and present this model to GHS staff in a staff meeting.

## 2.0 Committee Members

**Chairperson:** Yogesh Mani

**Executive Representative:** Catherine Baker, Eddie Teague

**Staff Representative:** Sharon Porter, Thady O'Connor

## 3.0 Terms of Reference

Terms of reference established by Principal addressing timeframes and reporting.

## 4.0 Method of data collection

4.1 Survey

4.2 Interview

4.3 Observations: Anecdotal feedback

4.4 Documentation: Department policies & Crown Employees Award

## 5.0 Survey Data

Attached

## 6.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that GHS implement a five period day structure from 2017. To address the concern of reduced practical time of senior TAS classes, the committee recommends two options:

1. **Split double** (p2&p3) and / or (p4&p5), or

2. **Approximately 20 minutes Special Program** immediately after lunch. This program will replace roll call in the morning. The Special Program timeslot can be utilised as follows:

(i) Monday assembly

(ii) Wellbeing / cross-curricular / year based activities

(iii) Extended time for sports

(iv) Opportunity for extended practical classes (one per fortnight)

The **Special Program** is the preferred option of the committee.

The committee will request the Principal to construct a five period day curriculum structure and staffing allocation and present to staff in a staff meeting.

## 7.0 Evaluation

7.1 **Timeframe:** the five period days structure will be evaluated at the end of Term 2, 2018. Data and feedback from staff will be collected at least at the following break points:

(i) Term 2, 2017

(ii) Term 4, 2017

(iii) Term 2, 2018

7.2 **Adjustments:** Any proposed changes to the five period day structure will be based on evidence from data collected as indicated in section 7.1 and will be presented to executive and staff in Term 3, 2018. Recommendations will then be submitted to the Principal for consideration.



# Five Period Day Structure Data

## Appendix:

---

## Summary

### 1. The following schools were invited to participate in the survey.

- Boorowa Central School
- Bowral High School
- Karabar High School
- Mossvale High School
- Mulwaree High School
- Queanbeyan High School
- Yass High School
- Young High School

### 2. What are the benefits of a 5 period day?

Less disruption of movement between classes. Sustained learning can occur with a range of classroom activities over an hour. Particularly effective with practical classes

Longer period

Equal lesson length. Shorter afternoon session. Cleaner timetable allocation of hours per course.

Longer lesson time, only 1 period post lunch.

Lesson length ( one hour) is reasonable and there is less distracting movement during the school day. Works well with our two-week cycle. One period only after lunch is a definite plus.

Great for Science prac periods and also allows sufficient time for visits to school farm (especially when you have to walk off the main school grounds) in most

cases. Gives enough time in lessons such as music, art and wood etc to run a decent amount of prac and have clean up time as well - and this can be done more frequently.

The students are focused for two subjects in the morning, for two in the middle of the day before lunch and one after lunch is enough to give both students and teachers a break!

Lessons are one hour long, which gives plenty of time to cover a concept and for students to complete an exercise.

There is less movement during the day, so students are more settled and less lesson time is lost in transitions. Lesson preparation is minimised.

A single period after lunch.

less time wasted moving classes Greater capacity for depth in teaching and learning, particularly for senior classes

Longer lessons for practical work; only one lesson after lunch.

Less movement around the school, longer time in class to get through courses.

More time to develop a quality lesson. Less time in moving about the school Half hour breaks supports PGD as well as ridding us of that last 10 minutes of lunch. Consequently, less playground issues.

Good sized period length - 60 minutes Only one period after lunch.

Generally only 4 lessons to be planned for each day. Only one period after lunch

The day is spaced out nicely. It allows for a short afternoon. It allows time for the students to settle into a lesson. As a support teacher 8 periods had too many transitions.

hour lessons allows quality lessons - more time for students to work on their own rather than teacher centred

Extended periods of time for practical subjects when compared to a 6 or 8 period day. However I have worked under a four period day and this is my preference.

Reduction in movement during the day. Less number of periods to prepare for.

More time on task for students. Two week cycle adds flexibility to the curriculum free periods are one hour.

Hour periods provide the opportunity to complete practical or theory lessons

Fabulous for practical classes and Stage 6 Course delivery. Also good for Stage 4 because you can integrate practical and theory work into one lesson rather than teaching them as separate components. Excellent for examinations and assessment tasks in junior school: easier organisation within existing timetable. A one hour exam can take place in your normal class lesson. You can get through more individual practical and oral presentations in the one lesson owing to the extra time.

### **3. Does a 5 period day affect the delivery of your courses? How?**

No

The structure allows us to meet BOSTES mandatory and minimum hours.

Not negatively, no.

Perfect for senior classes. Can be challenging with lower ability junior classes.

In conjunction with a two-week cycle it is effective. Shorter period times result in double periods being required.....particularly in subjects where practical work is involved. We don't have doubles. We shorten periods 1 and 2 to create a 20 minute assembly slot on Mondays each week. We also shorten periods 1 and 2 some Tuesdays to create Year Meeting time slots two or three times a term. We also have a RAGE/Welfare/Special Programs time slot after lunch each day (20 mins). Special whole-school meetings (Athletics carnival/Swimming Carnival organisation, etc) take place after lunch when required, in lieu of RAGE/et.al

Allows more flexibility to classes that may be affected by wet, cold or heatwave weather (Especially Ag). When we had 40 minute lessons there was not enough time to do prac work at Farm and there was problems if you had the double on a bad weather day.

Yes. We get to do more activities and practical tasks in this time. It allows 20 minute activities to be done by low ability groups, keeping it fresh and interesting. A shorter period doesn't allow for consolidation

It depends on how the timetable is structured. We try to get a good spread with our lessons. For example if you have a Maths lesson on Friday we would try to have another lesson on Monday and if not Tuesday. We aim not to have a large gap.

A one hour period allows enough time for practical work, no need for double periods in Science. Many videos are one hour so fit well into a lesson. It allows for a one hour test.

No effect

It can be difficult for the practical subjects as we there are not as many doubles  
Improves Science lessons as longer time for experiments.

No, in fact it means that you can do at least three activities if needed and cover more of course content.

I believe that it has enhanced our delivery across most Faculties. TAS is an issue to be negotiated (staff here are excellent). I wouldn't advise any doubles!

Extended periods across lunch or recess for hospitality and TAS courses that need extended periods.

No. I usually have several activities in the hour to keep the students engaged.  
initial re-scheduling of scope & sequence

Allows for 60 minute periods which enables greater depth of understanding to be developed when introducing new concepts, especially in Stage 6 courses.

Better

Having 5 periods means disruptions have greater impact on teaching time as well as availability of staff for relief etc

Yes. It has a positive effect. A variety of activities can take place within one lesson reinforcing content from a practical and theoretical approach.

Examinations and assessment tasks are easier to organise with less variation to routine.

#### **4. If your school has double periods, how are double periods operated/scheduled in your school? What are the pros & cons?**

No

No double periods timetabled except for Hospitality. These are timetable with lunch between the 2 lessons. Hospitality prac continues through lunch when required.

Up to the teacher to request. Often over a recess or lunch break

Split doubles can occur. Doubles are requested by practical subjects in the Senior school especially eg hospitality.

Loads of time for practical subjects such as Hospitality. Can be too long for academic subjects as it means a lot of material to absorb in one session.

We don't have double periods

Only required for Hospitality in Year 11 and 12. In Year 11 we put it over lunch so that any classes on the same line as Hospo can get a break but also allows Hospo to have an extended time for 2+ hours to complete prac. This is once a fortnight. In Year 12 it is a similar setup but we can split the other classes off the Hospo line so they don't get a double - they can have extra study period. Hosp kids get the study period at a different time.

No double periods except in art and hospitality in senior study

We have a double on one line in year 11 for the hospitality classes which affects the other courses on this line. We do it over a lunch or recess period. In year 12 we split off the other courses against hospitality.

Double periods only occur for Hospitality and they are timetabled across recess. This allows for a lengthy cooking session.

They can be either split or one after the other majority of doubles are in senior courses or electives.

We try to have doubles during sport but not at other times great for practical subjects but very difficult for junior classes

No doubles. A longer Wednesday P.5 (1.5 hours) due to Sport. Good extra time for senior pracs.

No we do not have double periods, may be good for senior classes.

No doubles. This disadvantages more than it advantages (2hrs with 8E6???)

N/a

NA for me

no doubles

No double periods. However senior practical classes are timetabled into recess and lunch breaks to enable a 90 minute session for courses such as Hospitality and Industrial Technology.

I currently have a double period over lunch (Period 4 and 5) with senior Music class. It is fantastic when working on HSC repertoire. Many students remain in the music room working throughout lunch. We are able to arrange and rehearse with all students receiving individual support and guidance.

**5. Does the length of a single period allow for quality & engaging lessons? If so, please explain.**

Yes, as above.

Yes - I used to teach at a school with 80 minute periods and they were too long

A one hour lesson certainly allows for this.

Not sure what you are seeking here. All lessons are quality and engaging independent of time available, you just adjust.

Yes...one hour lessons are wonderful for senior classes. You can ask students to write a 40 minute long essay response (i.e. under HSC time limits) and achieve it within a single lesson. In-class assessment tasks can be written around a 55 minute time period, if required. For juniors- there is plenty of scope for more than one meaningful activity to be undertaken/completed in a lesson and effective Quality Teaching activities.

Yes and you can mix them up Eg prac, worksheet, video clip in Science, use of ALARM with seniors etc.

Yes, great for low to mid ability students to keep them engaged. Great for able kids who can work for a longer period, they can engage deeply in activities

Yes you have the opportunity to spend time on concepts. You can also have time to cover a range of ideas in one lesson if needed.

In a one hour lesson there is the opportunity to utilise a number of teaching strategies within one lesson so maintain student engagement eg a short practical, a video snippet and a worksheet. Alternatively it allows for a decent research lesson and helps overcome the issue of time taken to access computers, log on, shut down etc.

yes, it provides sufficient time to deliver a quality lesson.

Yes- the hour period allows for depth and also more variety in the lesson

Yes. 1 hour allows different activities to be completed - helps to increase engagement.

Yes because you can get a lot of work done in that time and also it allows a solid chunk of time for practical subjects



I teach a class and I find that it often isn't enough time. I divide my classtime activities into 3 sections and work within this timeframe. In this way there is always feedback for the tasks set and it supports increased attention.

Yes. Good period of time to break activities into chunks of 20 minutes.

As a science teacher a single lesson is a great length. It allows practical activities to be completed with often enough time to also analyses the task completed rather than having to wait for the next lesson to do so

Yes. You don't feel rushed and have time to engage students. But it also gives you the opportunity to break it into halves or thirds, depending on you students and lessons.

yes see 2.

Yes - answered in Q3

Yes one hour is enough for all practical periods in science. Lets you break up the lesson into meaningful chunks of time.

In theory yes unfortunately time is not long enough for quality engaging practical lessons

Yes. Junior classes also benefit. It is fabulous for collaborative learning, project based learning and practical lessons. It is also wonderful in English when studying film. Students can watch an entire commercial film or documentary in two lessons and then begin analysing the content. There is more time for students to participate actively in class and to reflect on their understanding at the conclusion of each lesson. Lessons are less rushed. Student engagement is high as long as lessons are well planned.

## **6. Have you seen any increase or decrease in reported negative incidents?**

No

CHS has had a 5 period day since I arrived so I cannot compare, although it certainly has a settling effect on the school.

Na

n/a

Not really.

We have had a five period day for many years. What was noticeable within a short time was the decrease in issues arising as students moved from lesson to lesson. After lunch we have a 20 minute long RAGE/Welfare/Special activities time slot, but from that time on there is only one lesson, so after-lunch conflicts in corridors have largely disappeared. There is only one break between start of the day and recess and between recess and lunch- a real plus! Less movement = less student conflict, less opportunities for truancy and/or students being late to class, and fewer episodes of destruction of student property or stealing from bags, etc

No - you learn to structure lessons with different activities in the Junior years to keep kids engaged.

There would be less, as the students know they have to do work in the hour! decrease in negative incidents.

Unable to comment

Unsure

No not really

We have a decrease of negatives, however, this is only partly due to the period length. Staff are willing to work differently to ensure that the period activities are relevant. The school culture is very good and electronic roll marking has supported a decrease in partial truancy.

Negative behaviour is reduced due to the students being on task longer.

N/a

No difference for me

too long in 5 period day to reasonably say

Yes

Increase

No. CHS has had a 5 period day since I arrived 12 years ago. Students cope beautifully even lower junior classes who need LSO support.

## 7. Has a 5 period day structure had any effect on staff morale?

No

No, staff are supportive.

Na

n/a

From past experience, psychologically it can seem that you are doing more each day. If you get an extra, it seems to take up more time that you lose for lesson prep etc...

For many staff at this school this is the structure that has been in place since Day 1. I think the school is much more settled and therefore staff morale and harmony is higher than it might have been under a different structure.

No - at our school the time calculations indicate that most staff are actually 20 minutes under load!! This is even including programs such as RAGE.

Not that I'm aware. Although it wouldn't be great in maths.....

It is so long since we changed that I can't remember what staff morale was like before, but I do recall that I personally found it much easier to plan my own teaching day, it felt like there was less preparation and lessons were more satisfying after the change. Previously we had a 7 period day.

seems to help maintain motivation towards the end of the day.

Unable to comment

Most staff support this structure. Fewer lessons to prepare in one day.

No not at all

Staff are very accepting of the period lengths. There have been no major problems.

Staff seem to like the turn over and have rejected moving to 6 periods twice now.

Not sure

Happy with the arrangement.

5 period days are hard ...

Not aware

No. I found I had to adjust my lesson content when I first arrived at CHS and evaluate my teaching strategies to maintain student engagement for a 1 hour lesson. I feel this has improved my teaching. I love that I don't have to wait until a timetabled double period occurs to do practical work with my class. We can have a practical lesson everyday of the week if the need arises. This provides flexibility and is extremely valuable when preparing students for HSC Practical Examinations.

## 8. Any other comments.

A 20 minute RAGE prior to the final lesson after lunch assists in settling students for the final lesson.

Having taught at schools which have a 6 period day, with unequal lesson times and two classes after lunch, I much prefer the 5 lesson schedule. There is plenty of time to settle a class, engage in meaningful learning, and conclude the lesson in a relaxed and productive way. It reduced the pressure to move through content in choppy time slots and made lesson planning easier.

I have worked in both systems and actually prefer a six period day. It just seems to make a logical break-up of the day into three x 2 period blocks. A lot would depend on the start-finish times and whether you have DEAR/RAGE or equivalent, separate roll call or integrated into period 1. Also, what about sport? Is it integrated for all students, or some? Do all students do sport at the same time?

Having worked under 8 period and 6 period models- this is the best structure, in my opinion. It does necessitate a two-week cycle.

5 periods work. The students can engage deeply with work and maintain concentration

Do it!

we have RAGE at 2:20pm after a short recess (20mins). This tends to break up the day. Lunch is at 11-11:40am. RAGE is also nontraditional activities like Mathletics, Literacy planet, Stronger Smarter activities and other things.

This has been a positive structure at our school.

If you do have a high needs class that hour can seem very long but you get use to it and it depends on how you deliver your teaching and what you have planned.

I have been involved in period length changes in 3 schools and this has been the simplest and best received by the whole school community. An issue to be aware of is that of students who travel distances and have breakfast at 7am and then Break 1 at 11am.

You also need to consider the benefits of a 4 period day.

Think about where you put recess and lunch and the time allocated to both.