

A View from the Principal's Office

August 27, 2021

75 weeks, 525 days - that is how long it had been prior to Tuesday since our whole school community had the opportunity to be together. I remain in awe of our learners, their parents, and our staff - all have done an amazing job of staying safe and supporting partnership with our learners.

75 weeks is a long time in anyone's life, but it is an incredible percentage of the life of a teenager. We are challenged this year to bring our learners back and all that means. I touched briefly on some changes that have been made to our schedule in my last message and I want to focus on one of those elements in this View. We recognized that we need a more robust and consistent way to support our partnership with our learners - block 5 will be that time. We also want to celebrate our community of learners and we will do this during block 5 as well. We continue to carve out time for our Band and Choir programs - block 5 provides this opportunity. Given the nature of the start of our school year we are taking advantage of this time of the day to enhance our relationships through advisory while also meeting with each class cohort to discuss expectations, hopes, and challenges. In the coming weeks we hope that our students will take full advantage of this time to pursue areas of interest and/or take a deep dive into a content area through a project of their choosing. Some of our students will faithfully use this time to get work done and seek support from their teachers. Some will seek social and emotional support. Many of our students will combine these with pursuing personalized interests. During our class meetings we are encouraging students to make their education theirs and this is a great time to do so. Some schools call this concept "Genius Hour."

As your student finishes their first week it should be expected that they are tired. The first week(s) of school are always exhausting - not only are our learners re-igniting parts of their brains, they are also having to get up earlier (often without modifying the time they go to sleep). As the weeks progress these young minds and bodies will acclimate - this happens every year.

However we cannot downplay the fact that our students have not had this schedule for a very long time.

We will work hard to partner with our learners to re-establish “ school” while being cognizant of the impact that the past 525 days have had on our students. We look forward to your partnership while we do so.

Take care and thanks for reading,
Nelson

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