

Traditional Schedule

Students in the Traditional cohort were enrolled in a 7-period day using a traditional mathematics curriculum throughout Grades 9-11. Each year students were enrolled in seven courses at a time, with each course meeting 43 minutes per day for the entire 180-day school year.

During the 1997-98 school year, when students in the Traditional cohort were in twelfth grade, Suburban High School adopted a block schedule school-wide. This study refers to the schedule adopted in 1997-98 as the “Pilot” block schedule, to distinguish it from a slightly different form of block schedule that was used in subsequent years. In 1997-98 students took 4 courses at a time, each course meeting 80 minutes per day over an 80-day semester. A 20-day spring session was reserved for special in-depth projects. This schedule change did not affect students in the Traditional cohort prior to the end of Grade 11, when they completed the Algebra Achievement test. However, the new schedule did affect their course-taking in twelfth grade. For this reason, when comparing student course-taking under a traditional schedule and curriculum to course-taking under a block schedule and the IMP curriculum, this study used transcript data from the previous two cohorts of Suburban High School students: those who graduated in the spring of 1997, and those who graduated in the spring of 1996.