Recommendations for the Future of Block Scheduling


Below are Allen Queen’s list of recommendations that he believes are important to maximize the positive impact of block scheduling.

1. Teachers must develop and follow monthly, weekly, and daily pacing guides.
2. Teachers must master a minimum of five instructional strategies to engage students directly in the learning process and should aim to master seven or eight.
3. Teachers should pace each lesson by changing grouping patterns, varying presentations, and using different instructional activities every 10 to 15 minutes. In most cases a teacher should use a minimum of three instructional strategies during any class period.
4. Teachers should incorporate alternative and authentic assessment practices when evaluating students.
5. Teachers must use the entire class period for instruction. Every day.
6. Teachers should strive to be creative and flexible in assigning activities and should incorporate outside assignments into regular classroom activities.
7. Teachers should monitor individual students consistently to be sure of total student participation in small and large groups.
8. Successful block teachers should mentor, formally or informally, beginning teachers and veteran teachers having difficulty with instruction in block scheduling.
9. Principals or staff development personnel must provide initial and continuing staff development for all teachers throughout the year on the topics of curriculum and instructional alignment, instructional pacing and strategies, and time management.
10. Principals must develop a monitoring team to verify that all teachers are using pacing guides and various instructional strategies effectively.
11. Principals must take appropriate disciplinary action with teachers who are unwilling to follow the basic principles and procedures necessary in block scheduling.
12. Principals should work with less effective teachers in developing and implementing an instructional improvement plan.
13. Superintendents should contact colleges of education in their region and demand that block scheduling methods be included in teacher and principal training programs.
14. Superintendents should require that, before schools move to a block format, principals and teachers spend from one to two years in staff development.
15. Boards of education should ensure that all stakeholders -- including students, teachers, parents, administrators, and community organizations have the opportunity to be involved in investigating, planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating the block schedule.