

Dear Secondary School Parents,

Next school year the secondary school will see many changes, including the building of 2 new science rooms, 3 additional classrooms, a cafetorium with a stage, and gymnasium. We anticipate the addition of many new students to the secondary school and are very excited about it!

With the added space to the secondary school, we are able to have a new, more flexible schedule for next school year. The primary purpose for this schedule is to provide a learning environment for our school where students are able to go to “academic labs” and meet with their teachers for help.

On the attached schedule, you will see that Monday, Thursday, and Friday will be normal seven period days with each lasting about 50 minutes in length. On Tuesday and Wednesday you will see what is called an “alternative block schedule”. Below is a detailed explanation of this schedule.

Tuesday’s schedule:

- Students first go to “Growth Period” from 8:00-8:43 am. This is voluntary except for those students who are on academic probation. Attendance will not be taken until 8:47 am on Tuesday s. During Growth Period, each student has the opportunity to participate in the following activities:
 - o Academic Labs (English, Math, Science, and History) - During these labs, students can meet with a teacher who teaches in this area for extra help and making up work and tests.
 - o Help develop the yearbook.
 - o Get ACT prep help.
 - o Participate in Bible studies with our spiritual director.
 - o Go to the gym to participate in sports.
 - o Go to the cafetorium to eat breakfast and spend time with friends.
 - o Participate in scheduled club meetings.
- After Growth Period, students will go to three 100-minute classes that day (5th-7th periods) and end the day with a middle and high school “school assembly period”.

Wednesday’s schedule:

- Class will begin at 8:00 am. Students will go to periods 1-4. Each period will be 99 minutes in length.

Questions You Might Have:

- (1) Why is Growth Period voluntary?
 - a. We encourage all students to participate in this period; however, we will offer it on a voluntary basis in 2008-2009. Attendance will be taken at 8:47 am. By making this period optional, we should be able to focus our efforts on helping those who need and want help academically. Other activities will be offered for students to allow them to unwind and take a break from the very busy schedule most of our students maintain each day.

- (2) Will there be days where the Growth Period schedule will NOT take place and students will be required to be at school at 8:00 am?
- a. Yes. There will be weeks where we will have a regular 7 period schedule each day of the week. Such as:
 - i. August 11-15th, 2008- The first week of school
 - ii. December 15-19th, 2008- 1st semester exams
 - iii. April 6-9th, 2009- SAT week
 - iv. May 18-21st, 2009- 2nd semester exams
- (3) Does the Growth Period take place of individual teacher help sessions that occur in my child's classroom?
- a. No. This is a different format for academic help sessions and should allow for additional resources for a student who struggles in a specific academic area.
- (4) Will students be supervised during Growth Period?
- a. Yes. All students on campus during this time will be required to be in one of the offered activities. Even if the chosen activity is to enjoy down time in the cafetorium or work independently in the computer lab, all students will be under the supervision of a teacher. Students will not be permitted to hang out in the parking lot, in cars, athletic fields, or other unsupervised areas.
- (5) What if my child misses Tuesday or Wednesday?
- a. If a student is absent during class time on Tuesday or Wednesday, it will be counted as 2 absences toward the 10 absences allowed per semester because the student is missing what is equivalent to 2 class periods.

This is an exciting time of change and growth as PCA works toward becoming the primary college prep school in the Prattville area. Students will be able to be dropped off beginning at 7:00 am every morning including Tuesday and Wednesday. If you have further questions, please contact me at jexum@4pca.com or 285-0077 or come by in person and visit.

In His Service,

Jack Exum
PCA Secondary School Principal