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Block scheduling : effects on the visual arts at the secondary level

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Abstract

As block scheduling sweeps the educational forefront in many American secondary schools, questions have been raised regarding the effect of "block" on the overall curriculum and the school's sense of community. Arts in general, and the visual arts in particular, have always been easy areas to cut in budgets due to downsizing and many art educators get fearful when they hear of a new educational trend coming to their school. How will block affect the stability and quality of visual art programs in schools once it has been implemented?

To explore this question, a survey was conducted of art educators at thirty schools that have implemented block scheduling. Several components of block were covered in the survey regarding the effects of block on the visual arts, such as: class size changes, overall enrollment, amount of work completed, discipline problems, who initiated the decision to go to block, is it easier or harder to teach within a block, and how much in-service time was provided prior to changing to block. It was found that there were more positive effects upon the visual art programs than negative effects. Although the biggest problem related to increasing class sizes and groupings of mixed-ability levels, most high school art educators stated they found it easier to teach under block and that they preferred using this scheduling method over the traditional methods. For visual art teachers anxiously awaiting the block trend that may come to their schools, the findings of this study may bring a sense of relief

Block Scheduling: Effects on the Visual Arts at the Secondary Level

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ABSTRACT

As block scheduling sweeps the educational forefront in many American secondary schools, questions have been raised regarding the effect of "block" on the overall curriculum and the school's sense of community. Arts in general, and the visual arts in particular, have always been easy areas to cut in budgets due to downsizing and many art educators get fearful when they hear of a new educational trend coming to their school. How will block affect the stability and quality of visual art programs in schools once it has been implemented? To explore this question, a survey was conducted of art educators at thirty schools that have implemented block scheduling. Several components of block were covered in the survey regarding the effects of block on the visual arts, such as: class size changes, overall enrollment, amount of work completed, discipline problems, who initiated the decision to go to block, is it easier or harder to teach within a block, and how much in-service time was provided prior to changing to block. It was found that there were more positive effects upon the visual art programs than negative effects. Although the biggest problem related to increasing class sizes and groupings of mixed-ability levels, most high school art educators stated they found it easier to teach under block and that they preferred using this scheduling method over the traditional methods. For visual art teachers anxiously awaiting the block trend that may come to their schools, the findings of this study may bring a sense of relief.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Many middle and high schools across the United States and Canada are using, beginning to use, or considering the use of block scheduling (block) as an arrangement of the time in a school day. After researching the benefits and limitations of block, it was evident that there was a scarcity of information directly addressing the effects of block scheduling on the visual arts.

Usually visual arts courses, in a high school curriculum, are elective classes. Many of the authors writing on block have addressed the basics of schedule construction and how block affects just about every subject but art. After searching ERIC documents, seeking books, speaking to the National Art Education Association secondary president, and surfing the block waves on the Internet, no research was found on the effects of block scheduling upon visual art courses. Many people have already contacted this author for copies of the research presented in this paper because art teachers have no content-specific resources regarding block available Where do art educators go when they want strategies to address problems encountered by art educators who face implementation of block into their traditional schedules? Many school districts have implemented (this block method) as a means of school restructuring yet there is no published research addressing the effects of block scheduling on the visual arts

Research Purpose

There are three purposes for researching this topic:

1. To review how current literature and research evaluates the effects of block scheduling specific to the visual arts curriculum at the secondary level.
2. To survey art teachers who are teaching within the time frame of block to explore several variables such as: enrollment, negative and positive impact on instruction in the art classroom, and strategies to cope with the negative aspects of block.
3. To provide insight (on block scheduling) for art teachers that could be used to inform schools considering block scheduling or to assist teachers who would like strategies to maximize the positive effects of block upon their visual arts curriculum.

Statement of the Problem

Many school districts have gone to block scheduling as the means to schedule time at the secondary levels. Most literature and Internet locations discuss general information on block and what to expect when using this method.

However, there has been little or no conclusive research completed on the topic, especially taking into account its impact on the visual arts.

There needs to be information compiled to specifically address visual art considerations and the effects of block scheduling upon the visual arts curriculum.

Rationale

There has been a substantive amount of literature reported about the positive and negative effects of block scheduling on the general curriculum. There has been expressed need for information on this topic in the field of art education. Many educators fear what block could do to their program. Fears are: Will it affect my class size? Will my program be cut from the budget? Will my students have room in their schedules to participate in art? Will it affect artistic development? This study will be very useful for secondary or elementary art teachers wishing to become stronger advocates for their programs as well as knowing what weaknesses must be addressed if block is to be effective.

Research Question

What are the effects of block scheduling on the visual art programs at the secondary level? From this main question stem several subquestions:

1. How will block effect enrollment of students in the art program?

2. Does block scheduling limit students' choices for electives or are art programs overflowing because of the lack of study halls in block?

3. What are some strategies to use in overcoming the limitations of block as well as educational time use in the classroom?

4. How does this scheduling method affect students' artistic development?

Limitations

The limitations of this research were based on the lack of available literature specifically about art and block scheduling. The information collected was from surveys sent to 30 schools from Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Colorado, Massachusetts, and West Virginia. The information collected from the Internet often did not have an author or year in conjunction with the information. Another limitation was the poor timing of the survey, April-May, because of the art contests and competitions for which teachers were preparing their students. This may have had an impact on the return rate to some extent. In addition, because of the small sample size, the information may not be generalizable to all art teachers in all situations.

Definitions

Visual Arts: The term is used to describe high school courses, sometimes electives, directly relating to the making of, learning history about, and critiquing of visual artistic products. Examples include: drawing, painting, ceramics, graphic design, and sculpture.

Performing arts would encompass music and drama which have unique considerations when developing a block scheduling time schedule.

Traditional Schedule: This method of structuring secondary school time involves breaking up the day into six, seven, or eight periods per school day. Classes meet every day on an equal time basis, about 45-50 minutes, with an equal amount of time devoted to each period.

Block Schedule: Generic term for any method of lengthening the traditional class period. It is a way to reorganize the school day to allow students and teachers more time on each subject.

4X4, Intensive, or Traditional Blocks: All Standard year long courses are converted into half year long semester courses of 90 minutes in length. A student takes two morning classes and two afternoon classes- with a total of four classes per day. Teachers only teach 3 classes. At mid year there are new courses for students and teachers.

A/B, Block 8, or Alternating Block: This is similar to the 4X4 concept, except classes meet on alternating days (A day· B day). Four classes meet per day for 90 minutes each. Each semester is 18 weeks in length.

CHAPTER II

INTRODUCTION TO BLOCK SCHEDULING

Block scheduling, in the most basic description, is known as having at least a portion of the daily school schedule arranged around larger blocks of time. An example of this would be periods longer than 50 minutes in length.

A major reason schools have opted to go with block scheduling has to do with retooling the time in the school day to meet the needs of staff and students. The traditional scheduling of time, in a secondary setting, usually involves class changes and time lost to class maintenance activities, such as taking attendance, other classroom duties, and multiple preparations for teachers. With constantly changing gears all day there is little time and opportunity for interdisciplinary work or using different methods of teaching in the classroom (Cawelti, 1994; Cusick, 1973; Hottenstein, 1997; Siefert & Beck, 1984).

How many schools are going to block scheduling? In Gordon Cawelti's (1994) educational research report, " High School Restructuring: A National Study," he found "One fourth of responding schools were already fully (10.9 percent) or partially (12.1) employing this schedule, some 15.4 percent reported they planned to introduce it during the next school year" (p. 23).

In a more recent publication Canady (cited in Winans, 1997, p. 4) estimated that "50 percent of high schools are now in or studying block scheduling."

Disadvantages and Advantages of Block Scheduling

There were discrepancies among the studies investigated about block and academic achievement. For example, on the surface there appears to be few negative aspects to block. The studies showed that there was an increase in the number of A's and B's, and the number of students on the honor roll. There was also an overall decrease in the number of F's. In many studies teachers and students supported block after they had tried it and did not prefer to return to the traditional style of scheduling (Curry, 1997). Yet there is very little systematic research on the in-depth effectiveness of block. Most of the research consists of the reporting of the feelings from administrators, teachers, and students (Sadowski, 1996) reacting to the initial surface experiences.

There may need to be a modification in teaching methods and organizational systems to overcome problems not always readily apparanent under block scheduling (Laurie, 1995). Teachers may not cover as much material as they intended per class even though they may be able to address material in greater depth. Some disciplines prefer to see students every day which may or may not be possible in block. Reluctant or learning disabled learners have problems keeping their attention focused. Make-up work can be twice as much per class. It is hard to get students to remember assignments and there is a

lack of study halls in which students may get extra help. If there are any school days lost to bad weather, such as snow days, students can be confused about which day it is or what classes are being held when they return.

On the other hand, one of the leading benefits of this scheduling method is that it allows more prep time for teachers to plan for extended lessons (Winans, 1997). With half as many classes to teach there is more time for teachers to prepare because their prep periods are spread over two days instead of just one (Gilligan, 1997). It has been reported that 16 percent, or about one whole hour of the school day, is lost on average to attendance and other classroom duties (Justiz, 1984). Many teachers like block because of this very reason; more planning time with the bonus of having fewer distractions during the day and fewer classes back-to-back (Curry, 1997 ; Gilligan, 1997; Hottenstein, 1997). Since the day is less fragmented, teacher planning time is ideally spent designing higher quality assignments. Restructuring the traditional school day with block can mean time for the students to create and interact in a supportive system that makes room for student discovery (Donahoe, 1993). There is also more time to individualize instruction Teachers have time to plan interdisciplinary units by collaborating with other educators and will have fewer classes for which to prepare for each day in block.

More time in a class period does not necessarily mean that students learn more, especially if teachers refuse to change their teaching strategies. Teachers who weight

their teaching practice heavily with lecturing instead of breaking class time into varied learning experiences risk teaching in a way that is not conducive to learning more under block scheduling. Since there is more time in a class period, this can mean that there is a greater window of opportunity for students to learn a concept if diverse learning experiences are provided (Curry, 1997; Gilligan, 1997; Sadowski, 1996).

How can educators make block work in their classrooms? It is paramount for teachers to be in-serviced in alternate models of instruction prior to implementing block. Some useful methods for teachers to learn are: cooperative learning, innovative inquiry methods, teaching to different learning styles, using multiple intelligence activities, group discussion techniques, concept development, role playing, exploration of feelings, and conflict resolution (Gunter, Estes & Schwab, 1990; Joyce, 1992; Winans, 1997). It is also easier to arrange field trips and guest speakers. Ted Sizer (1992) said that structural changes in schools, which include lower student loads for teachers and changing the time schedule, are crucial for pedagogical changes to succeed in the individual classroom. If schools jump into block without planning, or administrators force it upon an unwilling staff, block is likely to fail (Freeman & Schneidecker, 1996).

It is difficult to look at a school where block has failed and judge why it has failed. There are many factors that could play a part in failure besides the resistance to change at times inherent in implementation of a new system.

It could have failed because of top down management, lack of resources, or lack of adequate preparation (Hottenstein, 1996).

What other issues do teachers need to be aware of when going into block scheduling? Douglas S. Fleming (1997, p.6), who consults with schools on integrated curriculum, believes that, "The teacher's role in block is for teachers to act as facilitators or coaches during block lessons." According to Gil Spencer (1996, p.1), "Pro blockers say this system allows teachers to get into material 'in depth' and helps students to develop critical thinking skills, but detractors say students' retention of material is poorer, especially in subjects that require repetition of time on task to learn."

In summary, the reported benefits were (a) more prep time, (b) the opportunity to use innovative teaching methods in the classroom, (c) classes are longer to allow for more individualization, (d) fewer class periods in a row, (e) increased time for field trips and guest speakers, (f) less fragmentation of instruction with higher quality assignments and, (g) expanded opportunity for interdisciplinary teaching.

The reported disadvantages were: (a) teachers not utilizing block time correctly, (b) absent students and the issue of make-up work, (c) lack of study halls for extra help outside of class, and (d) keeping the attention of reluctant of learning disabled learners during the extended time that block offers.

There were no printed literature resources, books, websites or articles that specifically addressed the subject of how block effects the visual arts (see Appendix A). There is quite a bit of information about block on the internet. There are many home pages and helpful information for a beginning block teacher. Some areas that the researcher explored were: block scheduling books, Internet sites, three list serves, the National Art Education Association, Area 7, and ERIC Documents.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Because there is no published research on the topic of how block's impact on visual art programs at the secondary level, the literature search was limited to information on block that was generic in nature or focused on other disciplines taught at the secondary school level. A survey of secondary art educators was decided upon to introduce an initial study of block and visual art into the literature base.

Description of Subjects

A list of schools currently using block was obtained from Iowa's State Department of Education in February of 1997 to determine which schools to target for survey purposes. Only 16 schools, according to the list, teach in the block method in Iowa. All were surveyed. Ten more were selected randomly from Minnesota, one from Missouri, one from Colorado, one from Massachusetts, and one from West Virginia.

Survey Development

The survey was developed to help art educators find some answers to the questions that were developed from literature on block and its ability to provide assets or deficits to secondary visual art programs. The survey instrument (see Appendix B) was designed with key questions based on the literature about block scheduling. The questions were organized around the following areas: (a) the type of block being used, (b) art class

offerings prior to block and after block, (c) overall enrollment numbers, (d) average class sizes, (e) art student achievement, (f) teacher time and utilization, (g) time devoted to study of block prior to implementation, and (h) who initiated block at the school.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF SURVEY

This chapter will consist of sections devoted to the responses the survey elicited from survey participants. Not all questions were answered by every participant and it should be noted that this survey sample was very small and the findings provide only a general idea of how block scheduling impacts the visual arts at the secondary level .

Nevertheless, the survey instrument helped to find answers to some questions that weigh on the minds of art educators facing the new prospect of using block scheduling at their schools. Surveys were mailed to high school art teachers in 16 schools in Iowa, ten from Minnesota, one from Missouri, one from Colorado, one from Massachusetts, and one from West Virginia. Fifteen were returned and were used for data collection purposes, resulting in a return rate of 50%. Out of the schools that responded to the survey, six described themselves as small town schools, five were rural, four were suburban, and one was urban.

Questions 1 and 2 on the art block survey asked participants the number of year-long art classes and semester- long art classes offered before and after the implementation of block scheduling at their school (see Table 1).

After comparing the percentages of classes offered before and after, this researcher found that out of the fifteen respondents, there was a decrease in semester- long classes after implementing block and an even bigger decrease in year- long classes.

Insert Table 1 about here

Questions 3 and 4 sought the following information about what kinds of block the surveyed schools were using in their restructuring effort. The majority, 66.7%, were using the 90-minute, 4-block day (see Table 2).

Insert Table 2 about here

In questions 5 and 6 the respondents were asked about the size of the average art class before and after block implementation (see Table 3). The researcher found that there was either an increase or no change in class sizes with block scheduling. There was a range of an additional eight students per class to no change in enrollment size.

Insert Table 3 about here

The next set of questions on the survey called for all true or false responses. The results from questions 7-18 were condensed into one table of information (see Table 4).

Insert Table 4 about here

In the variables associated with enrollment size, the following information was compiled: There was an increase in enrollments per semester, an increase in class sizes, and an increase in enrollment per year. Almost all art classes at these schools are considered electives.

The next variables involved quality of art instruction. Most students get more done in art classes with block scheduling. Some students retain more information. Teachers have more time to plan and assess art. There are also fewer discipline problems in art classes in schools that have implemented block scheduling.

The next variable pertained to the area of scheduling art classes. Forty percent of the teachers responding felt that there were students put in the art program who did not belong there. Students had more room in their schedules for taking an art elective but the majority of teachers (53.3%) reported having mixed ability levels concurrently in their rooms.

Question 19 asked about the location of the survey participants (see Table 5). The majority of the respondents were from small towns (40%) or rural areas (33.3%)

Table 5 about here

Question 20 dealt with the population of the school at which each participant taught under block scheduling (see Table 6). There was no one category that had the overwhelming majority but the mode was a school population of 1,000-1,500 (33.3%). The number of students ranged from 150 students to 2,500.

Insert Table 6 about here

Survey question 21 elicited information regarding overall school enrollment changes since block implementation (see Table 7). The majority of the schools stayed the same or reported an increase.

Insert Table 7 about here

The next questions on the survey, 22 and 23, focused on the enrollment of art students after block and before it was implemented in the schools. There are no tables representing this information because 60 % of the respondents chose not to reply to these two questions. Of the 40% who did respond there were no schools that showed a decrease in numbers for their art classes.

The next section on the survey inquired about the amount of time between the respondents first hearing about block scheduling being considered to the decision to go to block scheduling (see Table 8). Questions 24 and 25 explored the amount of time between the decision and implementation. The majority reported that the time between consideration and decision was less than one year.

Insert Table 8 about here

The next question explored the amount of time between the decision of going to block and the time that it was actually implemented in the school (see Table 9). The majority responded that it was one year or less. Twenty percent chose not to answer either of the questions pertaining to time line of implementation

Insert Table 9 about here

The responses to question 27 addressed who first initiated the idea to restructure the school through the block scheduling method (see Table 10). The majority responded that it was the principal's idea (46.7 %) followed closely by input from teachers (40%).

Insert Table 10 about here

Question 28 asked respondents if their role as an art educator was easier or harder in block scheduling (see Table 11). The majority (60%) reported that it was easier.

Insert Table 11 about here

The next questions on the survey 30 and 31, asked how long each teacher had been teaching at their present location and how many total years each art teacher had taught (see Table 12). The range of years taught was from 35 to 1 year of teaching. About a third (33.3%) were at the same school where they started.

Insert Table 12 about here

The next question asked respondents about the amount of time they were in-serviced in block scheduling prior to teaching in block (see Table 13). About 33.3% did not answer and the majority that answered showed one week of in-service time prior to implementation.

Insert Table 13 about here

The final question asked how long the respondents had taught in the block scheduling method (see Table 14). Some (26.7%) chose not to answer but those who did had from one to five years of block teaching experience.

Insert Table 14 about here

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

In this chapter, the survey results and published literature on block scheduling will be brought together to provide a comprehensive view of how block scheduling effects the visual arts in secondary education

The most important findings reveal main block affects on the visual arts. Those findings involve: (a) enrollment size, (b) quality of art education, (c) instructional considerations (d) implementation of timeline, and (e) who makes the decision to go to block.

Art class enrollments have increased in many schools using block. This encompasses increase in the overall size of the school year enrollments for art, semester enrollment numbers, and the average art class sizes. Eleven out of fifteen replied that they have increased numbers of students taking art classes now that block scheduling has been implemented.

What does this mean for art practitioners? Each instructor has an ideal number of students they prefer to have in one period at one time. In addition, some have limited physical space in which to add more seats and tables to accommodate increased numbers, while others do not.

Many schools can only afford to hire one art teacher and this can potentially mean too many students for one teacher to instruct effectively. An art teacher needs to be able to visit with each student daily to help with their products. This a very individual, time-consuming process. With more students added when block is incorporated, this could mean a work load strain for the art teacher and less time spent with each individual. There will be more art to critique and grade per period which could counteract one intended benefit of block.

The quality of art education seems to be the same or has increased. Fourteen respondents reported that students get more done in class. With block scheduling, teachers find that there is more time to plan lessons since they teach three out of four periods a day. All surveyed participants were from block schools with a four block day schedule with 90 minutes the average amount of time for a block.

Over half reported that their art classes contained students with mixed ability levels (i.e., beginning art students mixed with advanced level art students). This can pose a problem of having to plan for more than one level per period which could also counteract an intended benefit of block. Dividing attention among art students at widely varying levels can be an area of concern for art teachers. Having mixed abilities is not the ideal condition for teaching a quality curriculum because teachers can not fully focus on strategies and lessons for each individual group.

To compound the problem, school counselors view art rooms as dumping grounds for less-than-academic students, consequently, art teachers may spend instructional time dealing with discipline problems.

The teachers who worry that their art class numbers will dwindle because of block implementation probably need not be concerned. Eleven out of 15 reported students have more room in their schedules to take art as an elective. In most schools surveyed, art was an elective. This could explain the increased enrollment sizes in art classes

When presented with the question: is block scheduling easier or harder in which to teach?, nine out of fifteen said it was easier. Some of the reasons were: (a) better planning periods, (b) opportunity for field trips, (c) less time lost to getting materials out and cleaning up, (d) only have to see difficult classes every other day, (e) get to know students better, (f) more time for teacher and student reflection, and (g) cover difficult concepts (for example, throwing clay on the pottery wheel) better because the students have more time to make mistakes and learn from them.

The answers given for finding block scheduling harder were: (a) more prep time is needed to plan extensive lessons to fill time, (b) more projects to grade, (c) dealing with students at different ability levels and (d) part-time art teachers do not get a period to plan as full time teachers do, which makes a part-time teachers job more difficult.

While the benefits seem to outweigh the negatives when teaching the visual arts in block scheduling, the fact is an increase in the student - teacher ratio affects the quality of any curriculum. However, the initial results are good and many teachers who have tried block for a year have found that they like it better than the traditional schedule.

Here are some sugguestions for making the change to block a smooth transition. When planning to incorporate block, secondary art educators need to remember that numbers are likely to increase. Talk to principals, and guidance counselors about keeping the mixed levels of art abilities down to a minimum. For beginning art classes, try to break up the activities in one block of time so the less-than-artistic do not experience frustration and become behavior problems. Advanced level students may enjoy working on more than one project at once.

In all of the literature reviewed, the most important point to remember for block to work is prior planning in: (a) how to implement it, (b) what instructional strategies work best, (c) how to use the time so that it is beneficial for all, and (d) in-service methods that will help the teachers thoroughly maximize the potential effectiveness of this restructuring tool.

The survey showed that 11 out of 15 decided in a year or less to implement block in their school. At the other extreme was one school that took four years to study and educate its teachers before implementation of block. The initiators were primarily principals and teachers.

It was alarming to find how fast many people jumped on the bandwagon of this kind of educational reform. Teachers need to make good use of the time that block provides. To do so they need to be in-serviced in how to meet the needs of all their students. Workshops in cooperative learning, multiple intelligences, and assessment approaches have strengthened some schools' ability to manage time, curricular components, and student discipline. Lecturing, which is not recommended for block scheduling teachers, needs to be minimized to maximize student attention and learning. Units that incorporate interdisciplinary planning can help stretch the students' ability to make connections between the disciplines.

From the literature and the survey results, art educators can see the impact that block could have on their jobs, curriculum, and students. Increased numbers of students were the biggest factor found in the survey. Some teachers may not mind increasing the size of their classes but it is an element to consider before taking on this restructuring method

Some art educators worry that their numbers will decrease because of block but there should be no reason for administrators to cut an art position that has increasing numbers of art students brought on by block.

The increased time affords more hands-on time versus clean-up time. More art can be done at one sitting instead of rushing to the next class. Planning , before implementation and in blocks of preparation time, is the key to success across all disciplines. Block effects the arts in many positive ways but the most important thing to consider is what to do with the time in block.

Implications for Further Study

Colleges and universities need to be training educators how to teach within the framework of block. This would serve to dispel fear and anxiety by arming the educators with information of what basic block scheduling is, what types there are, and how to use the time to benefit the students.

Instead of worrying about how to use the time to cover as much content area as possible, educators need to be taught to develop a curriculum where they are the coaches that help teach the students how to learn. Teachers need to realize reasons why block has been initiated and that they cannot rely soley on the lecture mode of lesson delivery

The single most important factor in determining the success or failure of block scheduling programs will be the degree to which teachers successfully alter instruction to utilize extended time blocks effectively (Canady 1995).

If instructional practices do not change, the block scheduling movement of the 1990s, like the flexible modular scheduling movement of the 1960s and the 1970s, could easily be buried in a mountain of other restructuring attempts that have failed in the past. This is why it is paramount for higher education and school districts to start preparing educators to work successfully in a large block of time. Block can be a catalyst for art educators to invest in classroom time by adding additional activities to enhance learning for future students in the educational system.

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TABLES

Table 1

How Many Semester-long and Year-long Art Classes Did Your School Offer **Prior** to and **After** Implementation of Block Scheduling?

	Prior				**After**			
	Semester Long		Year Long		Semester Long		Year Long	
#of classes	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
(n = 15)								
0-3	4	26.64%	11	73.26%	6	39.96 %	10	66.6%
3-6	5	33.33%	2	13.32%	2	13.32%	2	13.32%
6-9	0	0.00%	0	0 .00%	2	13.32%	0	0.00%
9-12	2	13.32%	1	6.66%	2	13.32%	1	6.66%
12-15	1	6.66%	0	0.00%	1	6.66%	0	0.00%
15-18	2	13.32%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	6.66%
no answer	1	6.66%	1	6.66%	1	6.66%	1	6.66.%

Note. One respondent did not answer this part of the survey because their school has 16 9-week, 1 credit-classes.

Table 2

How Many Minutes are in Each Block

Length of blocks	80 minutes		85 minutes		90 minutes	
(n = 15)	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
	1	6.66%	4	26.64%	10	66.6%

Note: One respondent did not answer how many blocks per day but did write that they were 90 minutes long. There were a total of 15 respondents.

Table 3

Average Class Size of Art Classes Before Block and After Block Implementation

Students per class	% Before block		% After block	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
(n = 15)				
10-15	4	26.64%	3	19.98%
15-20	3	19.98%	3	19.98%
20-25	2	13.32%	2	13.32%
25-30	3	19.98%	4	26.64%
30-35	3	19.98%	3	19.98%

Table 4

Enrollment Size, Quality of Art Instruction and Scheduling

Variables	True		False		Does not apply	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
(n = 15)						
Enrollment size variables:						
Increased enrollment per semester	11	73.26%	2	13.32%	2	13.32%
Increased class size	11	73.26%	3	19.98%	1	6.66%
Increased enrollment per year	11	73.26%	2	13.32%	2	13.32%
Art classes are an elective	14	93.24%	1	6.66%	0	0.00%
Quality of art instruction:						
Students get more done	14	93.24%	1	6.66%	0	0.00%
Retention of art information	10	66.66%	1	6.66%	4	26.64%
More information is covered	10	66.66%	2	13.32%	3	19.98%
More time for planning lessons	11	73.26%	4	26.64%	0	0.00%
More classroom discipline problems	1	6.66%	13	86.58%	1	6.66%
Scheduling:						
Students who do not belong in program	6	39.96%	9	59.94%	0	0.00%
Mixed art levels in one class block	8	53.28%	7	46.62%	0	0.00%
Students have more room to schedule art	11	73.26%	4	26.64%	0	0.00%

Table 5

Location of Schools Surveyed

Response Choice	Frequency	Percentage
(n = 15)		
1. Urban	1	6.66%
2. Rural	5	33.33%
3. Suburban	3	19.98%
4. Small town	6	39.96%
5. Other	0	0.00%

Table 6

Population of School Surveyed

Response Choice	Frequency	Percentage
(n = 15		
Number of students		
1. 100-500	4	26.64%
2. 500-1000	4	26.64%
3. 1000-1500	5	33.3%
4. 1500-2000	1	6.66%
5. 2000-2500	1	6.66%

Table 7

Total School Enrollment Changes Since Block Implementation

Response Choice	Frequency	Percentage
(n =15) Enrollment has:		
1. Increased	6	39.96%
2. Decreased	1	6.66%
3. Remained the same	7	46.62%
4. Do not know	1	6.66%

Table 8

Time Period Between First News of Block and Decision to Implement

Time	Frequency	Percentage
(n =15)		
less than 1 year	6	39.96%
1 year	5	33.33%
2 years	1	6.66%
3 years	0	0.00%
4 years	0	0.00%
5 years	0	0.00%
No answer	3	19.98%

Table 9

Time Between the Decision to Implement and Implementation of Block.

Time	Frequency	Percentage
(n = 15)		
less that 1 year	5	33.3%
1 year	4	26.64%
2 years	1	6.66%
3 years	1	6.66%
4 years	1	6.66%
5 years	0	0.00%
No answer	3	19.98%

Table 10

Who Initiated the Ideas to go with Block Scheduling at Your School?

Response Choice	Frequency	Percentage
(n = 15)		
Superintendent	2	13.32%
Principal	6	39.96%
Counselors	1	6.66%
School board	0	0.00%
Parents	1	6.66%
Teachers	5	33.33%

Table 11

Role as an Art Educator in Block Scheduling

Response Choice	Frequency	Percentage
(n =15)		
Easier	9	59.95%
Harder	2	13.32%
The same	2	13.32%
No answer	2	13.32%

Table 12

Length of Time Teaching Art at Present School and Altogether

Years	Total Time		At Present School	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
(n =15)				
1-5	2	13.32%	2	13.32%
5-10	2	13.32%	2	13.32%
10-15	1	6.66%	3	19.98%
15-20	1	6.66%	2	13.32%
20-25	3	19.98%	2	13.32%
25-30	1	6.66%	0	0.00%
30-35	3	19.98%	2	13.32%
No Answer	2	13.32%	2	13.32%

Table 13

Amount of In-Service Time Prior to Implementation

Time	Frequency	Percentage
(n = 15)		
Nothing	1	6.66%
1 day	0	0.00%
2 days	2	13.32%
1 week	4	26.64%
2 weeks	1	6.66%
1 month	0	0.00%
1 year	2	13.32%
No answer	5	33.3%

Table 14

Amount of Time Teaching in Block Scheduling

Years	Frequency	Percentage
(n = 15)		
1	3	19.98%
2	2	13.32%
3	3	19.98%
4	1	6.66%
5	2	13.32%
no answer	4	26.64%

Table 15

Enrollment Changes for Upper Classmen (11th and 12th graders)

Response Choice	Frequency	Percentage
Increase of enrollment	9	59.94%
Decrease in enrollment	1	6.66%
No change	1	6.66%
No answer	4	26.64%

APPENDICES

Appendix A

April 4th 1997

Dear Art Educator:

You have been selected to fill out a survey about block scheduling and art education.

I have developed this survey as a tool to use in conjunction with my master's degree research paper through the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls Iowa.. My topic of research is "Block Scheduling and it's effects on the Visual Arts". Most information that I have found is related to the general effects of block on the school's curriculum. I need your perspective on block from the stand point of an art educator.

I would like to compile essential information that can help us all, as professional art educators, understand the essential components of block scheduling. This information can be used to help keep our jobs and help other art educators, who are starting in this method of scheduling, get a good idea of what to expect.

Your school, your name and any other personal information shared will not be included in the survey or the research paper. My plans are to take this information to write an article for an art education journal.

If you would like a copy of this finished compilation of block scheduling and art education, please add a sheet of paper with your name and address on it. A copy will be sent to you latter on in the summer. Please do not put your school name anywhere on the survey to protect the anonymity of yourself.

I understand how busy this time of year is with art shows and competitions. I am also preparing art for competitions and getting ready for conferences. I appreciate your time filling out this survey and sending it off. As a professional, I would greatly appreciate your time in filling out this survey and mailing it by April 20th. You will not only be helping myself but countless other art educators with the same questions.

Thank you,

Laura J Angove

Art Education and Block Scheduling Survey

Please check the following answers that pertain to your situation

1 How many semester-long and year-long art classes did your school offer in the year **prior** to implementing block scheduling?

semester-long classes _ ____ year-long classes

2. How many semester-long and year-long at classes does your school **presently** offer under block scheduling or did your school offer in the last year of block scheduling?

semester long classes __ ____year-long classes

3 How many blocks are in the school day at your school? ___ ___blocks per day
(If " for-credit" courses are offered before/after school, please explain: Feel free to continue or add to any response on the back)

4 How long are the blocks? _ minutes in each
(If lunch periods are of a different length, please explain:)

5 Average size of your art classes **before** block began _ students

6 Average size of your art classes **now** or the last year of block __ ___students

Please circle the appropriate answer

7 Block scheduling has increased art enrollment per **semester**. T F

8 Block scheduling has increased art class sizes
(If only in some cases, please explain:) T F

9 Block scheduling has increased art enrollment per **year** T F

10 All art classes are electives at your school T F

11. Art students get more accomplished with block scheduling T F

12 Art students retain more information better with block scheduling T F

13 I am able to cover more art history/background with block scheduling T F

14 I have more time to plan and asses work with block scheduling. T F

15 There are more discipline problems in art classes with block scheduling T F

16 More students are in art classes who don't belong there or who don't want to be there, with block scheduling. T F

17 Advanced art students are more likely to be placed in classes that contain beginning art students with block scheduling. T F

18 Student schedules have more room for art with block scheduling. T F

continued

19. The school I teach in is what kind of area (check 1): _____urban_____rural _____suburban
_____small town_____other_____
20. What is the total population of your school?_____
21. Total student population since implementing block scheduling has(check 1)
_____increased_____ **decreased**_____stayed about the same

22. How many students are enrolled in art at your school:
_____this semester _____this year
23. How many students were enrolled in art at your school:
_____**semester before block** _____**year before block**

24. When was about the first time you remember **hearing** your school might be considering block scheduling?
(month/year) _____/_____
25. When was the **decision reached** for your school to implement block scheduling?
(month/year)_____/_____
26. When did you **implement block scheduling** ?
(month/year)_____/_____

27. **Who** first initiated the ideas to go to block scheduling?
_____superintendent _____parents
_____principal _____teacher(s)
_____community leader(s) _____teachers association
_____school board _____other
28. Is your role as an art educator easier or harder with block?
_____harder _____easier _____ about the same
Why?

29. Please provide examples of ways in which time can be utilized in block that are different or not possible in a traditional 45-55 minute periods:

30. How many total years have you taught art?_____
31. How many years have you taught art at your school?_____
32. Anything else you would like to add or tell me about block?

33. If your school tried block scheduling but is no longer using block, how long of a trial did you give the system?
_____# of years. Why did your school discontinue block scheduling?

34. How much inservicing was done prior to implementation? ____1 day_____2 days_____1 week_____other
Please explain what this involved..ie: speaker?
35. How any years have you been involved with teaching in Block sheduling? _____year(s)
36. What kind of change in the numbers of Juniors and Seniors enrolled in art classes?
_____increase _____decrease_____no change

Thank you for participating in this survey.
Please mail it out by April 20th 1997. Use the self addressed stamped envelope enclosed for your convienience.

Appendix B

X-POP3-rcpt: sailors@hal9000
Return -Path: Jennings51@aol.com
From: Jennings51@aol.com
Date: Wed, 5 Feb 1997 23:43:29-0500 (EST)
To: sailors@forbin.com
Subject: Re: No subject

Laura,

Your findings-no printed resources on art and block- parallel my own. I just don't think we're there yet with publishing.

I will be completing my term on NAEA'S BOARD at the end of March. David DeLuca will be my successor,so you may want to contact him. His name and address are published in the Secondary Division Column in NAEA news.

A relatively new NAEA Research Commission has been formed with task forces working on demographics, conceptual, curriculum, instruction, contexts, student learning, evaluation, teacher education. They are interested in linking classroom practioners with university based researchers. You may want to contact to appropriate task force chair.

As an aside, you've probably found out, Virginia and Colorado seem to have a largish number of block scheduling schools.

Hope this is of help. Good luck with your work. Keep me posted on what you find as you delve into your research.

Denise Jennings