

## **Student Schedules and Course Changes:**

### When will my child get their course schedule?

Students in Grades 9-11 will receive their schedules on the first day of school (September 4<sup>th</sup>).

### Will they be able to make changes to their schedules?

There will be very few cases where we will be able to make changes to student schedules in September.

### Why?

The students' schedules are based on the course selections they made in the Spring.

\*\*Current students were also given a print out of their selections in May so that they could verify them and bring any needed corrections to their counselors' attention.

These selections are the basis for the school's timetable which consists of over 500 classes. The decision on which courses to run and how we will staff the school is based on the course selections. Making this giant puzzle even more complicated is the fact that it is done in the context of considering staffing capabilities, room availability, and adhering to class size and composition legislation.

Despite all of this, we are able to place students in the courses they selected as primary requests or alternates in most cases.

\*\*Courses will effectively be locked or closed in September and then careful adjustments made as new students register, etc. This process will be similar at all high schools in the district.

### Context:

In addition to the general complexities of timetabling, we are required to make our best efforts to balance the classes as per the Supreme Court of Canada decision pertaining to class size and composition language for schools in British Columbia. Generally, most classes cannot exceed a class size of 30 students. In some courses, such as Science, Computer and Business classes, the class size must not exceed 28. Elective courses such as Tech Ed and Home Economics cannot exceed 24 students. Furthermore, any class which has 3 or more students identified with special learning needs or English as an Additional Language students who are level 1 (have very little English language) must be reduced by 2 students. This means that a general class cannot be larger than 28, Science, Computers, and Business classes cannot be larger than 26, and Tech Ed/Home Economics courses cannot be larger than 22. Since Heritage Woods has approximately 140 designated students quite a number of our classes will be reduced. As a result, we have had to add a number of extra classes to our organization making classroom space even tighter. This was the reason for changing our bell schedule last year to make Block 1 a more useable option for additional classes. At this point we have again managed to keep the majority of students scheduled in blocks 2 through 5, but some will attend 1 through 4 and

others 1 through 5 depending on their course selections. The classes most likely to go in Block 1 will be those where space is required in a specialty area, such as PE, Home Economics, Band, and Science. Currently, we already have classes such as PE, Band, Red Cross and Foods running in Block 1 both semesters, but may need to add more given the need to meet the new class size and composition requirements.

### **Course Change Process**

The new restrictions effectively make course changes a thing of the past. To ensure that we are adhering to the legislation we need to track every course change to avoid putting classes into violation. In other words, if a student wants to switch a class, but by doing so that change makes the class go over on size or composition, we are not able to accommodate that request.

#### Criteria for changes:

If a student requires a change for one of the reasons listed below, they will see their Vice-Principal who will then direct them to their counselor if the request meets the criteria.

Course changes in September will only be made for extenuating circumstances:

- incomplete schedule
- change in course request due to summer school
- failed a course
- received courses that were neither primary requests or alternates
- received a course they have already taken

However, NO course changes will be made for the following reasons:

- Wanting a class in a different block
- Wanting a different elective
- Wanting a different teacher
- Wanting a class with a friend

Thank you for your understanding. Things will work out. Students take a wide variety of courses over the four years and they all add to the depth of their journey.

Todd Clerkson  
Principal