

Balanced Day Consultation

Board of Trustees

May 26, 2026



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Strategic Priorities

2025-2030



Inspire
Thrive
Connect



Vision

Rooted in community, formed in faith, ready to change the world.

Mission

We accompany students in faith-filled, safe, and inclusive Catholic schools - nurturing their God-given potential in heart, mind, and spirit.

Values



Consultation Participation



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Staff Consultation

- A virtual information session was offered to all elementary school staff
- Staff were advised via memo on January 8th. The session was held on January 15th
- Presentation by Julie Selby, Superintendent of Learning and Darren Kahler, Superintendent of Human Resource Services
- YouTube Live - 263 views
- The presentation was also shared with staff via email



Staff Consultation

- 320 total responses (made available to over 1500 employees)
- Representation across employee groups
 - Teachers - 248 responses
 - Principals / Vice Principals – 11
 - Support Staff - 61
- Responses from multiple regions of the Board
 - Peterborough – 136
 - Clarington – 99
 - Northumberland – 41
 - CKL - 41



Parent/Guardian Consultation

- A parent/guardian consultation was held via the Engage platform from January 16th to 30th
- The consultation was also open to students and community members
- There were 952 responses in total:
 - 938 - Parent/guardian
 - 9 - Community member
 - 5 - Student
- Parents/guardians were provided with an overview of the balanced day schedule and asked to provide their thoughts on the benefits and challenges of such a schedule



Parent/Guardian Consultation

- Geographic Breakdown of Responses
 - Clarington - 310 - 32.6%
 - Peterborough City - 298 - 31.3%
 - Peterborough County - 157 - 16.5%
 - Northumberland - 107 - 11.2%
 - City of Kawartha Lakes - 80 - 8.4%



Staff Consultation Results



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Staff Consultation - Benefits

- Improved Instructional Flow & Fewer Transitions
 - Strong consensus that longer blocks reduce interruptions and lost instructional time.
 - Staff noted better ability to get into deeper learning tasks and three-part lessons without stopping/restarting.
 - Particularly beneficial for literacy and math blocks. This is aligned with PVNC Catholic goal of longer, more focussed blocks for math and literacy.



Staff Consultation - Benefits

- Better Student Regulation & Focus
 - Many staff responders feel that fewer behavioral incidents will occur due to fewer transitions and there will be improved student stamina during learning blocks
 - Staff quotes:
 - “Fewer transitions therefore reducing behaviours.”
 - “Less transition times... behaviour tends to show up during transition times, so the fewer the better.”



Staff Consultation - Benefits

- Enhanced Well-Being (Students & Staff)
 - Perception that the day feels more “balanced”
 - Staff Quotes
 - “The day feels more balanced for both students and staff.”
 - “The flow of the day just works better—it feels more even.”
- Increased Instructional Time
 - Even when actual minutes are similar, staff perceive there will be more usable teaching time and less “wasted time” transitioning in/out of recess/lunch



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- Supervision and Duties
 - This is one of the most dominant concerns - but also a lot of positive feedback
 - Perceived increased number of supervision periods
 - Less downtime for staff during the day
- What are staff saying?
 - “Less breaks throughout the day, increased duties...”
 - “Will all teachers be required to have an outdoor duty of some sort or will it fall upon RECEs to go outside for two longer blocks...”
 - “Potentially more options for supervision.”



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- Supervision and Duties cont...
- How is this being addressed?
 - Teachers are capped at 80 minutes supervision per week
 - A balanced day schedule does allow more flexibility (e.g. there can always be teachers on the yard)
 - When teachers are supervising and performing duties will change - more in the middle of the day rather than before and after school
 - EAs, who typically must supervise during lunch, will now have a greater ability to be with the students they support - less breaks during instructional periods



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- “Loss of a True Break”
 - No meaningful uninterrupted lunch break, eating on break or during duty
- What staff are saying:
 - “Protecting 40 minutes uninterrupted lunch for teachers while also covering student supervision.”
 - “Not all staff could be off having lunch at the same time.”
- How is this being addressed?
 - Allows for Support Staff to have more flexibility on lunch, breaks, etc
 - Provisions in the collective agreement provide for a committee to be convened to agree on supervision schedules - staff will have a voice in how supervision looks
 - OECTA CA does require a 40 minute uninterrupted lunch - this will continue



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- “Loss of a true break” cont...
 - Teachers - when not scheduled for duty - will have two 40-45 minute breaks - creative scheduling could allow for them to have two days of supervision and be free the rest of the week OR to have short duties each day - lots of options



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- Less opportunity for extended outdoor play for students
 - Shorter time to decompress, less time for play
- What say are saying:
 - “Less time outside for students to get fresh air, play with friends, and burn off energy is a huge negative”
 - “Kids needing time outside and away from the classroom.”
- How is this being addressed?
 - Students will have between 45-50 minutes each day of scheduled time outdoors
 - Teachers can use the required 20 minute DPA time to extend outdoor time or find new time outdoors
 - Outdoor education and land-based learning opportunities are also a focus next year and can create time outdoors for students



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- Impact on Extracurriculars
 - Staff feel as though extracurriculars which are currently scheduled during the 60 minute lunch will be impacted
- What staff are saying:
 - “Reduced flexibility for lunch clubs/intramurals unless staff give up break time or supervision is redesigned.”
 - “Possible strain on school sports/extracurriculars with coaches potentially on different schedules than the athletes.”
- How is this being addressed?
 - The Balanced Day provides more opportunities for sports or extracurriculars, if flexibility is employed



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- **Impact on Extracurriculars cont...**
 - For example, both intermediate boys and intermediate girls could run a practice at lunch in the gym on the same day - one at first lunch, one at second lunch. This would require students to eat before or after practice - however, allows for two long blocks for practices
 - Principals and staff work collaboratively on supervision schedules - duties for those staff involved in extracurriculars is always considered and will continue to be



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- Student Nutrition
 - Staff feel as though students, in particular younger students, won't have enough time to eat and be ready to go outside
- What staff are saying:
 - “Students are rushed to eat and often don't finish their lunches.”
 - “Many students spend most of the nutrition break talking and then go outside without eating enough.”
- How is this being addressed?
 - Communication with parents to ensure they are aware of how to pack a lunch for two nutrition breaks



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- Student nutrition cont...
- Ongoing communication with students to ensure they are aware of the time constraints on how long they have allocated to eat
- School based tools - differing supervision by division, warning on announcements, etc
- Now two longer eating times rather than one
- Additional “Flexible Snack” Opportunities
- Consideration of outdoor time first, eating afterwards, which is already employed in many schools



Staff Consultation - Challenges

- Scheduling & Programming Constraints
 - Challenges fitting Prep time, specialty subjects, shared staff (e.g., SERT, itinerant roles)
- What staff are saying:
 - “Prep coverage becomes much harder to organize.”
 - “How prep time works without disrupting instructional blocks is difficult.”
 - “Special programs do not fit naturally into the balanced day structure.”
- How is this being addressed?
 - Excellent schedules have been prepared which ensure teachers have daily prep scheduled
 - Each Principal will develop their schedule as they do each year. Teachers will be provided with resources to ensure they can schedule appropriately in accordance with Ministry of Education guidelines.



Parent Consultation Results



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Parent Consultation - Benefits

- Improved Learning Focus & Fewer Disruptions
 - Many parents felt longer instructional blocks help students settle into learning without constant interruptions.
- More Predictable Daily Routine
 - Parents described balanced day as more structured, easier for students to understand and helpful for younger learners who benefit from routine.
- Regular Eating Opportunities
 - Some parents thought the opportunity to eat more than once in the day was more aligned with their child's needs
- Positive Impact for Younger Students
 - Some parents feel as though the balanced day was often seen as better for Kindergarten and primary students and students who need routine and structure



Parent Consultation - Challenges

- Student Nutrition Time
 - A large number of parents cited concerns with the amount of time students have to eat. Concerns included rushed eating, unfinished lunches, students prioritizing play over food and hunger later in the day
- What parents are saying:
 - “Students are rushed to eat and often don’t finish lunch.”
 - “They choose play over eating and come home starving.”
 - “20 minutes is not enough time to eat and get outside.”
- How is this being addressed?
 - Communication with parents to ensure they are aware of how to pack a lunch for two nutrition breaks
 - Ongoing communication with students to ensure they are aware of the time constraints on how long they have allocated to eat
 - School based tools - differing supervision by division, warning on announcements, etc
 - Additional “Flexible Snack” opportunities
 - Two meaningful eating opportunities
 - Play before eating



Parent Consultation - Challenges

- Reduced Outdoor Play & Physical Activity
 - Parents worried about less recess, less physical movement and less free outdoor play
- What parents are saying:
 - “Children need more outdoor time.”
 - “Less recess is a major concern.”
- How is this being addressed?
 - Under the current model, students would have about 60 minutes outside daily (35-40 minutes at lunch break and 25-30 minutes total between two recesses)
 - Under the Balanced Day, students would have about 50 minutes outside daily. Considering some time is lost to transition, and there is one fewer of these, the overall amount of time lost is mitigated
 - Teachers can use the required 20 minute DPA time to extend outdoor time or find new time outdoors. Outdoor education and land-based learning are also a focus and can create time outdoor for students.



Parent Consultation - Challenges

- Long Instructional Blocks
 - Parents have concerns about attention loss, fatigue, younger students struggling with stamina
- What parents are saying:
 - “100 minute blocks are too long.”
 - “My child needs more frequent movement breaks.”
- How is this being addressed?
 - Ministry guidance on learning blocks for literacy and math are 60 minutes for each. The Balanced Day schedule allows for the required, dedicated, uninterrupted time for instruction in both of these areas, which is currently of concern
 - Classroom teachers retain the flexibility for micro-breaks, classroom movement breaks, and variety in learning activities to ensure students remain engaged learners



Next Steps

- Senior Administration is in the final steps of finalizing the decision
- Communication to follow for school staff, students and families



Questions

- Questions?

