

**To: PIAC Co-Chairs, Sharon Grant, and Zena Shereck
Parent Involvement Advisory Committee**
Prepared By: Executive Superintendents, Uton Robinson and Shirley Chan
Date: May 29, 2024

Re: Recommendation from Tuesday, February 20, 2024, Virtual PIAC Meeting

On behalf of the Director of Education, please find a response to the recommendation below, brought forward at the Tuesday, February 20, 2024, Virtual PIAC Meeting:

“TDSB directs the Director of Education to implement the Monday to Friday 5-day cycle schedule with the appropriate number of switching days (usually 7 days) to maintain a balance of the schedule days for elementary schools either system-wide or providing it as an option to be allowed at schools where there is support from parents/caregivers, students, and educators for the 2024-2025 School Year at the earliest or within a reasonable period of time and with recognition that buy-in from Elementary Teachers of Toronto (ETT) local of the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO) is essential.”

This recommendation is being brought forward to the Program School Services Committee (PSSC) on April 3, 2024. As it is operational in nature, staff are asking that it be referred back to staff who will report back to PIAC in the next meeting cycle.

Introduction

Returning to a Monday to Friday 5-day cycle schedule for elementary schools in the TDSB was taken under consideration and discussed with the Elementary Teaching Advisory Committee.

Though there may be a variety of positive outcomes from using a Monday to Friday schedule, there are significant challenges. Many of these challenges are what led to implementation of a system-wide Day 1-5 schedule.

These concerns include the impact on students and staff, as well as other areas (i.e., access to facilities, scheduling of itinerant staff).

Impacts for Consideration

The following are impacts on students:

- Concerns around holidays and PA days, and students are always missing the same classes.
- Students missing the same specialised classes when scheduled on Mondays or Fridays (for example instrumental music, art, physical education, science, library, if scheduled on a Monday).
- Some students with external agency related appointments may miss the same classes on a regular basis.

- Some students find the beginning or end of the week to be more difficult to concentrate and/or find it conflicts with weekend activities, as such the rotating of classes provides a variety.
- Itinerant staff who are assigned to multiple buildings can follow a consistent schedule throughout the system, these might include music instructors, ESL itinerants.
- The idea of making these days up seven times over the year, may seem to address the physical number of classes, but do not help with the continuity of learning. To say you missed a specific class one month, so it will be made up by having it two days in a row a month away does not help with the flow of learning. In fact, it also means that you will miss another class in order to make up for the missed class.

The following are impacts on staff:

- Itinerant Music Instructors and other centrally assigned staff (i.e., ESL, prep) currently are on Day 1-5/1-10 schedule.
- Central resource staff who support multiple schools also follow the same schedule to better support students in a consistent way.
- The existing Day 1-5 schedule was also put into place to make lost prep times more equitable. Even by “replacing” the days throughout the year with the use of seven “switching days,” it just means someone else loses their prep that week. These can be exemplified if a Monday or Friday is a double prep day.
- Supervision duty schedules are similarly affected with a Monday - Friday schedule.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s) for grade teams can be embedded into Day 1-5 or 1-10 schedules.
- The Day 1-5 schedule maximises use of speciality rooms in middle school opportunities for partnering with teacher teams.

Other impacts identified:

- The weeks where Fridays or Mondays were moved to another day could be confusing.
- Communication around the flip days is challenging.
- Communicating the flip days to parents and students in a school with a high ESL population will be challenging.
- There are some exceptionally large schools (e.g., 1500 - 2000 students) that use a double 5-day cycle or 10-day cycle, to ensure access to speciality spaces such as the gym are maximised.
- Using a Monday - Friday schedule would lead to violations in Collective Agreements, such as overages on Supervision Schedule. Aspects of the Collective Agreement are based on the 5-day cycle. (i.e., 80 minutes of supervision over a 5-day period, 480 minutes of prep time over a 10-day period). These requirements follow the 10-day and 5-day and are not based on a full year.

Consultation with Elementary Teachers of Toronto (ETT)

Senior Manager and Centrally Assigned Principals in the Elementary Teaching Office met with ETT on the Elementary Concerns Committee on Thursday, April 4, 2024, to discuss the merits of a Monday to Friday schedule.

On April 10, 2024, ETT advised that a Monday to Friday schedule would violate the elementary teacher Collective Agreement.

Strategies to Support Communication

The following strategies are identified as effective tools for supporting the communication of the Day 1 to Day 5 schedule:

- The TDSB has a Google Calendar that all staff should copy and use for their school Google Calendars. This would help all staff with their planning throughout the year. (<https://tdsbweb.tdsb.on.ca/system-calendar> - on the left-hand side, 5-day elementary calendar).
- Use of Google calendars on school websites, Google classrooms and other platforms.
- Wider distribution of the Day 1-5 schedule, including on all communication mediums and in student agendas.
- Consider other visual cues to support Day 1-5 identification, such as signage, reminders in regular newsletters, use of social media or messenger after breaks.
- Consider multiple additional ways to share with parents/guardians/caregivers on a more regular basis.

Next Steps

The following next steps are recommended:

- A return to a Monday-Friday schedule as a system or by individual schools is not supported for the above reasons.
- PIAC to share additional strategies with staff to support more effective and accessible communication to families regarding the Day 1-5 or 1-10 schedule.
- Strategies related to improving the communication of the elementary school day cycle schedule to be shared with schools in the fall.