



## MEMORANDUM

**Memo No. 18-097**

**TO:** Trustees  
Student Trustees

**FROM:** Jennifer Adams, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board  
Frank Wiley, Superintendent of Instruction

**DATE:** 22 June 2018

**RE: International Baccalaureate at Merivale High School**

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At the Committee of the Whole meeting on 5 June 2018, a report outlining the staff recommendations for the implementation of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program at Merivale High School beginning in September 2019 was presented.

The report recommended that Merivale High School adopt a non-semestered program delivery model starting in September 2019 and that the non-semestering be implemented over 3 years. During the debate, trustees raised a number of questions related to the proposed phase-in of non-semestered programming at Merivale High School. Clarification was sought about the timetabling of non-semestered programming and Appendix A illustrates the timetabling of non-semestered programming. Concern was expressed over the potential impact of this change for the current grade 8 cohort who would be affected in grade 12. As a result, staff was asked to provide further information on the impact of this proposed change, the supports that would be available to the students in question, and an alternative implementation plan for consideration.

Over the past two weeks, staff has examined this issue in some detail and looked at a variety of implementation strategies. This work has reaffirmed that a non-semestered programming model is preferred; a move to a non-semestered model can be implemented in several different ways. Any implementation model will either require a cohort of students to move from semestered to non-semestered during their high school years OR will result in one cohort being the only non-semestered group in the school during the students' grade 12 year.

Appendix B provides a detailed description of the advantages and disadvantages of a three year and a four year implementation strategy. Other options were considered, but were felt to be not as effective. Both of the implementation strategies outlined in the appendix would begin in 2019-2020. Either of these strategies could be effectively

implemented with slight differences in terms of implications for student learning, staffing assignments, and the need for teacher overlays. From a student learning perspective, three year implementation affects the fewest number of learners, but it does create an additional transition for the current grade 8 cohort.

The District has experience supporting students in a concurrent, de-semestered model in their grade 12 year. Strategies that could be implemented to support student learning include:

- Differentiated guidance support for the cohort of students beginning in grade 10 to ensure students and parents are aware of the different pathway options and required course selections;
- Deliberate student timetabling to ensure that required courses are spread as much as possible over the grade 11 and 12 years to minimize the chances of an unduly heavy grade 12 year;
- Staff coordination between teachers and departments to ensure that major projects and assessments are spread well throughout the year and at summative assessment time to minimize overburdening the students at critical points in the year;
- Grade 12 students would need additional supports (staffing, guidance, resources) to ensure full pathway choices to complete their OSSD; and
- Increased access to e-learning and continuing education programming for students in grade 12 requiring grade 11 courses who would not be able to “reach back” due to differences in program delivery models.

There are differences in resource implications with the three year versus four year implementation strategies. The most significant implication is teacher overlays. The three year implementation plan is estimated to require 1-2 FTE (\$105,000 - \$210,000) overlay for one year whereas the four year implementation strategy is estimated to require 4-6 FTE (\$420,000 - \$630,000) overlay for one year, but may require portables and have implications on classroom utilization.

**Summary:**

The introduction of a second IB program is a very positive step forward for students in this District and will positively impact student learning at Merivale HS. However, the program implementation will require transition for at least one cohort of students and for the staff. Our challenge is to find the implementation which minimizes the impact, ensures students are well supported through the transition, and allows the school to start functioning as one school community rather than two disparate parts. On that basis, the three year model is the staff-recommended option. Regardless of the implementation model selected, appropriate resources, planning and supports can be put in place to ensure that students’ opportunities for success are optimized.

Attach.

cc: Director’s Executive Council  
Manager, Board Services  
Corporate Records

### Daily Schedule in Non–Semestered Delivery Model

Many questions were raised about how students manage 8 courses in a non-semestered system versus four courses in a semestered system. In both systems, students have 4 classes per day for 75 minutes per class. The following table reflects the daily schedule of a concurrent delivery model.

Table 1: The proposed concurrent daily timetable.

<b>Period = 75 min</b>	<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Day 2</b>	<b>Day 3</b>	<b>Day 4</b>
Period 1	1A	2A	1B	2B
Period 2	1B	2B	1A	2A
Period 3	1C	2C	1D	2D
Period 4	1D	2D	1C	2C

**Three and Four Year Implementation Strategies**

i. **Three-Year Implementation**

The three-year implementation was the original staff recommendation. With this implementation strategy, Merivale High School would see the introduction of non-semestered programming for students in grade 9 beginning in 2019-2020, for students in grade 10 beginning in 2020-2021, and for students in grades 11 and 12 in 2021-2022.

School Year	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
2018-2019	Semestered	Semestered	Semestered	Semestered
2019-2020	Non-Semestered	Semestered	Semestered	Semestered
2020-2021	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	Semestered	Semestered
2021-2022	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	<b>Non-Semestered</b>
2022-2023	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered

**Advantages for Students:**

- Gradual implementation beginning with the first IB grade 9 cohort;
- Supports a broader range of student course choice in senior grades;
- Supports flexibility in staffing, reduces need for staffing overlays, and access to specialized learning spaces;
- Does not isolate a single cohort of students in grade 12 which would allow grade 12 students to reach back as necessary, grade 11 students to reach ahead; and
- Smaller cohort sizes at grades 11/12 would allow all options maximized.

**Considerations:**

- One cohort would need to adjust to a new delivery model in grade 12;
- All students would continue to have 4 classes on any given day, but would carry up to 8 courses over the school year which may be advantageous for some students, but potentially challenging for others; and
- May require a short-term staffing overlay in year three due to cohort size at year of implementation of 1-2 FTE (\$105,000 - \$210,000)

ii. **Four Year Implementation Strategy**

An alternative option is to implement this model over four years. Students in the current grade 8 cohort would not transition to a non-semestered model during their four years of secondary school. Non-semestered programming would be introduced in 2019-2020 for the incoming grade 9 students only; grade 10 students would move to non-semestered programming in 2020-2021 as this cohort of student advances; grade 11 would de-semester in 2021-2022; and grade 12 in 2022-2023.

School Year	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
2018-2019	Semestered	Semestered	Semestered	Semestered
2019-2020	Non-Semestered	Semestered	Semestered	Semestered
2020-2021	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	Semestered	Semestered
2021-2022	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	Semestered
2022-2023	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered	Non-Semestered

**Advantages for Students:**

No student would be required to transition from a semestered to a non-semestered model of delivery during their four years of secondary school and transition from having up to four classes in a semester to potentially 8 classes in a year.

**Considerations:**

As the number of grade cohorts that remain semestered reduces, constraints on staffing and space utilization for those cohorts increase. This would become particularly acute in the 2021-2022 school year when only the grade 12 cohort remains semestered. Impacts in this year would include:

- Staff assigned to teach grade 12 classes could not easily be assigned to classes in other grades. Students in this cohort will likely have the same teacher for multiple classes;
- In order to further address the staffing challenges/inefficiencies described above, additional staffing overlays of approximately 4-6 FTE (\$420,000 - \$630,000) would be required for grade 12 classes;
- Similar learning space constraints/inefficiencies would also occur for this cohort and may require 4-6 (\$140,000 - \$210,000) additional portables be placed on site; and
- Students in grade 11 in 2021-2022 would not be able to reach ahead and take grade 12 courses in day school.

### **Other Implementation Strategies**

Other implementation strategies were also considered, for example, having the current grade 8 cohort transition to non-semestered for their grade 10 year, leaving the grades 11 and 12 cohorts semestered, and the following year only grade 12 would be semestered. This option was not recommended as it would potentially negatively impact two cohorts. First, the grade 10 cohort changing delivery models after a year of being semestered, and then the grade 11 cohort being isolated for grade 12 when they are the last remaining semestered cohort in the school. There is no transition plan that does not see either a single cohort of students transitioning from semestering to de-semestered during their grade 12 year, or a final semestered cohort in a school that is otherwise de-semestered isolated in their grade 12 year.