



Dear Parents:

March 28, 2022

Since the beginning of the great recession, Pike County High School and the Ninth Grade Academy shifted from a 6-period day to a 7-period day to accommodate reduced funding and a reduction in the teaching staffing. As we navigated those exceedingly challenging times, we tried to make the best of it by expanding curricular offerings, ramping up dual-enrollment and work-based learning, and strengthening our partnership with the Griffin-Region College and Career Academy. As with any change, there are always implications. Many families took advantage of the early college opportunities made available by the 7-period day, but because of the General Assembly capping dual enrollment hours, many seniors now find themselves with a senior course load that may only include a few electives. This is not ideal preparation for a first-year post-secondary experience.

As we asked for feedback from parents and students, we decided it was time to reevaluate the schedule. Focus groups of students, parents, and teachers were assembled. We concluded that a 6-period day, without reducing opportunities, would better prepare students to transition from high school, thus the Board of Education supported the recommendation for Pike County High School and Ninth Grade Academy to return to a 6-period school day. This will help students reach their graduation goals, while allowing for a more reasonable workload without reducing opportunities.

The Pike County Middle School schedule will be unchanged, but the school day will shift slightly to accommodate bussing. The start times will be: Middle School will begin at 8:45 a.m.; Ninth Grade Academy and Pike County High School at 8:50 a.m. Release times will remain the same. Pike Primary and Elementary will be unaffected.

As a result of the later school start, students in grades 6-12 will enjoy a later bus pick-up in the morning. Additionally, car riders may also be dropped off later, although parents who must drop their students off earlier will still be able to do so—7:15 a.m. at Pike Middle and Pike High and 7:30 a.m. at the Ninth Grade Academy.

Students who choose to arrive early to NGA and high school may take advantage of opportunities that include Study Hall and “zero period” courses. Zero period courses are additional opportunities to receive credit in courses related to established pathways or general interest. These courses may be taught by an instructor or available in an online format for additional credits. This opportunity is optional. More information regarding zero period opportunities will be forthcoming.

Students who choose to arrive early to the middle school may take advantage of various opportunities, including morning athletic competitions, club meetings, study hall, and/or reading and math support.

We are excited about this new schedule, although, with any change, we will need to adjust and adapt. Please contact your school’s administration with any questions or concerns you have.

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**PIKE COUNTY SCHOOLS**

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