

St. Andrew's Episcopal School "Spread The Word"

Over the past decade, St. Andrew's Episcopal School and its Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning have worked tirelessly to develop the most research-informed faculty in the country. This commitment to student-centered, research-based practice led St. Andrew's to redesign its academic schedule for the 2018-2019 year. Over an 18-month period, a task force of teachers and administrators gathered input and research, along with feedback from students and parents, to determine how the flow of each school day could maximize student learning and well-being. Specifically, the task force prioritized:

- Lengthening class periods beyond the school's 40-minute standard to promote creative teaching and deep learning
- Reduce the number of class periods per day (and therefore the number of homework assignments per evening) to promote focus and moderate the rushed tempo of school life
- Increase time for students to meet with teachers and their peers during the school day for academic enrichment and healthy socialization.
- Minimizing conflicts between class time and other important school activities, including assemblies, field trips, and athletic competition.

The result of this work is a new schedule that will provide St. Andrew's students with a rigorous research-informed education that gives them time to pursue their passions and focus on their well-being.

Middle and Upper School students will have four classes in a typical day with each class lasting 65 minutes. Research suggests that engaged, focused, deep learning requires longer class periods with fewer transitions during the school day and fewer, more meaningful homework assignments at night. Passing time between classes will be increased to 10 minutes. This creates more time for peer interaction and reflection, and a less stressful flow to the school day.

The schedule affords structured "office hours" several times a week for students to meet with teachers to receive individual enrichment and extra help, and allows for classes to be extended when necessary for science labs, studio art lessons, and other specialized learning. It also provides study hall for Middle School students. The schedule offers ample time for athletics, chapel, advisory, clubs, and assemblies without "borrowing" from academic periods, preserving essential teaching and learning time.

As a destination school for research-informed teaching and learning, St. Andrew's is excited for this next step in the school's evolution.