

# Secondary Structures – MacNeill Secondary 2023

## Timetable

There are two timetables that most secondary schools consider: **Linear** (students take 8 classes spread over a year) and **Semester** (students take 4 classes for the first half of the year and 4 classes for the second half). Below are listed the benefits of each option:

	Linear	Semester
<b>Student Learning</b>	Students have 10 months of learning each subject which allows for more processing time.	Students only focus on 4 courses at a time.
	There is a short gap in learning between grade levels (e.g., 2 months over summer vs. up to 12 months).	The content is covered at a faster rate, which can benefit some students.
	There is potential for more balance in overall workload between academic and elective courses.	There is an opportunity for a fresh start in the middle of the year.
	Struggling students can get year-round support in Learning Strategies' blocks.	There are more opportunities to repeat a course or take an equivalent graduation requirement (pending availability on the timetable).
	Student maturity and growth can be observed over the course of a year.	Students have more opportunities to accelerate their learning if they wish to complete two grade levels for a course in one year (pending availability on the timetable).
	Students have more time to catch up on work missed due to absences.	Senior students can graduate on an accelerated timeline.
		<b>Linear</b>
<b>Assessment</b>	There are three report cards and two interims per course.	There are two report cards and one interim per course.
	This option allows teachers more time to develop constructive and timely feedback to inform students' learning.	

	<b>Linear</b>	<b>Semester</b>
<b>Teacher Perspective</b>	This option allows teachers to teach a more balanced workload throughout the year.	Teachers complete three or four report cards per reporting period for fewer students at a time.
	Teachers can prepare more efficiently for courses they teach multiple sections of which gives them more time to support students.	Teachers have four courses maximum to prepare for at a time.
	<b>Linear</b>	<b>Semester</b>
<b>Student Well-being</b>	Students have a day in between classes which gives them more time to complete assignments/homework and complex projects.	Less stressful for students who can focus on 4 courses only.
	<b>Linear</b>	<b>Semester</b>
<b>Positive Relationships</b>	When teachers and students have more balanced workloads across the year there is more time for extra-curricular activities.	Seeing students every day allows teachers and students the opportunity for concentrated relationship building for half the year.
	Students with exceptionalities have more time to settle into their routines and relationships.	It is easier for teachers to track students and follow up with absences, behaviour, incomplete homework, and other challenges when they see them every day.
		Students with exceptionalities have more opportunities for different classes which increases experience with integration.
	<b>Linear</b>	<b>Semester</b>
<b>Creative Options</b>	Potential to add some senior semester courses within the linear option	Potential to add some junior linear courses within this option

## **Advisory**

Advisory class is an opportunity for students to develop and sustain meaningful connections with staff and peers. Through Advisory, each student is part of a small group with an ongoing connection to an individual teacher, ideally the same teacher throughout their five years of high school. Advisory classes meet regularly during the week and engage in connection-building activities, reflections and goal setting.

<b>Advisory</b>
Teachers can build and strengthen relationships with students over time, from Grade 8 through 12.
Students have another trusted adult to go to for support and guidance.
It offers a scheduled time to stop, reflect, and set goals.
Students can build connections amongst themselves through activities that promote team building and collaboration. They get to connect regularly with a smaller group of students.
Advisory is a non-academic course so there is no pressure to achieve. This creates a safe and caring environment.
It gives grade groupings an opportunity to focus on common goals or activities which builds community.
Teachers can focus on developing life skills or school success strategies with their Advisory students, as needed.

## **Personal Learning Time**

Personal Learning time is a scheduled time in the day where students have a choice of which teacher’s offering or support they wish to engage with. During this time, teachers offer additional learning support, engaging activities or specific instruction. Providing Personalized Learning Time (PLT) in the school day creates additional opportunities for students to engage in learning that is meaningful to them, collaborate with others, seek learning support, develop personal organizational skills, and reflect and set goals for future learning. Essentially, PLT develops and supports learners’ abilities to exercise choice and develop independence. In the 2022-2023 school year, PLT was scheduled on Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 8:30-9:30. The benefits to offering PLT are listed below.

<b>Personal Learning Time</b>
There is scheduled time for additional support.
Teachers are available during school hours for students seeking support.
It’s an opportunity for students to work with different staff and students.
PLT provides flexibility for assessments, enrichment, and other learning requirements (Core Competencies, Capstone/Career Education, group projects & potential guest speakers).
It promotes student agency and practice of managing time in an unstructured environment.
There is an option to have PLT in the middle of the day to increase attendance.

## **Timetable Rotation**

Some high schools choose to have a rotating timetable. This means that classes rotate regularly having different start and end times throughout the day. For example, English would fall during 1<sup>st</sup> period on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> period on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> period on Friday. To date, MacNeill has had

a non-rotating timetable which means classes occur during the same block (period) throughout the school year. There are advantages to both systems which are listed below.

<b>Rotating Timetable</b>	<b>Non-rotating Timetable</b>
Classes are held at different times throughout the day, over the course of the year, which benefits students who have varying alertness levels.	Allows for a consistent, predictable schedule that does not change over the course of the year which lessens confusion of what classes occur at what time on what day.
Students who have challenges arriving to school on time in the morning or have to leave early for extra-curricular activities, will miss fewer instructional minutes in one class.	Students enrolled in half-day programs at other schools can travel to their intended destination. Students in partial programs can have later starts or earlier finish times.
All teachers will have to deal with "troublesome" transitions (beginning of the day, after lunch) instead of just the Period 1-1 and 1-4 teachers.	Part-Time teachers will have fewer opportunities to pick up extra TTOC work in other schools (e.g., if they taught in Periods 1-1 and 1-2, they could TTOC in the afternoon, but when those rotate to P2 and P3, they can't). This will impact the overall availability of TTOCs which is already limited.