



Centennial School

Dave Ogren, Principal



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May 10, 2024

Re: Continuation of the Balanced School Day at Centennial School for 2024 – 2029

Dear Mr. Reid,

I wish to request a continuance of the Balanced School Day at Centennial School for the next five school years (2024 – 2029).


We have been following a Balanced School Day since 2010 and it has become the norm for our school. Feedback from parents and teachers has remained positive throughout the time we have had the Balanced School Day. New families to the school have also expressed appreciation for this schedule. Positive feedback tends to focus on the value of scheduled nutrition breaks, longer activity times, and longer uninterrupted instructional blocks. Teachers feel that this all results in increased concentration and focus in students.

In a traditional school day, students receive 300 minutes of instructional time. They also receive two fifteen-minute recess breaks and an hour long lunch break. We have scheduled our Balanced School Day such that students receive 300 minutes of instructional time, a 35-minute nutrition and recess break, and an hour long lunch break. Instructional time remains exactly the same in both models, but has been distributed into longer blocks during our Balanced School Day, which allows for longer blocks of uninterrupted teaching and learning time.

With your approval and that of the School Board, we wish to go forward with an application to the Minister of Education to continue the Balanced School Day schedule for the next five years.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



David Ogren
Principal, Centennial School

Centennial School and the Balanced School Day

Solid blocks of instruction time	Quality time for daily physical activity and play	Built in time for students to “feed their brains” during the school day	Improved student concentration and energy levels
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Centennial School has adopted a *Balanced School Day* schedule which balances solid blocks of instruction time with scheduled nutrition and activity breaks.

Instead of the traditional school day that involves 300 minutes of instruction, two 15 minute breaks, and a one hour lunch period, the Balanced School Day equalizes instruction time with two longer breaks during the school day. It involves three blocks of solid teaching time of approximately 100 minutes each, broken up by two nutrition/activity breaks.

Centennial School’s timetable looks like this under the Balanced School Day:

Balanced School Day Bell rings at 8:45
8:50 – 10:35 105 minutes of instruction • 15 minutes of daily routines • Three 30 minute periods
10:35-11:10 15 minute nutrition break 20 minute activity break
11:10 – 12:45 95 minutes of instruction 5 minutes transition time Three 30 minute periods
12:45-1:45 15 - 30 minute nutrition break 30 - 45 minute activity break
1:45-3:25 100 minutes of instruction • Three 30 minutes periods • 10 minutes of home room routines
3:25 dismissal

- Requirements for curriculum/instructional time are being met in the Centennial Balanced School Day.

In both the traditional and Balanced School Day timetables, there are 300 minutes of instruction and a one hour lunch break that includes 30 minutes of eating and 30 minutes of physical play. The difference comes in the breaks. In the traditional time table, there are two 15-minute recess breaks, whereas the Balanced School Day offers one 35-minute nutrition/activity break.

What are the benefits of the Balanced School Day?

Academics

- More instruction time with less interruptions
- Longer lessons can be continued without interruption (ie. Solid blocks of literacy and numeracy time; science activities, art classes, and talent development activities that require more time to complete; an opportunity to schedule some 45-minute phys. Ed. classes versus 30 minutes for our older students, etc.)
- Time and flexibility to program reading, writing, and oral activities in a more integrated way without interruption.
- An opportunity to provide each grade level team with solid blocks of uninterrupted home room instruction.

Nutrition

- Research indicates that children need frequent food breaks during the day
- Balanced School Day Schedule provides two opportunities for students to sit down and eat in their classrooms through nutrition breaks as opposed to eating on the run at recess or during instruction time.
- Students who are nutritionally satisfied can concentrate better.
- Creates a culture of calm and healthy eating in the classroom

Physical Activity

- Allows students two longer opportunities to play and engage in games
- Quality activity time energizes students, helps them concentrate on school work, and promotes a healthy lifestyle.
- Built in snack and transition times allow students to engage in a full twenty minutes of activity during the first nutrition/activity break
- A second opportunity during the school day for students to engage in intra-mural activities

Summary

There are many noted benefits to the Balanced School Day at Centennial School. Comments from staff, parents, and students continue to be in support of the Balanced School Day. Students like the longer break periods and the opportunities to work uninterrupted for longer periods of time. Parents comment positively regarding the scheduled nutrition break and some have noted that their child does not come home hungry. Staff members are in agreement that the Balanced School Day is an effective organization of teaching/learning time. They feel that the longer teaching/learning blocks of time reduce transition times and allow for more sustained learning. They feel that the schedule of nutrition breaks and recesses increases student on-task focus and provides students with opportunities to meet their daily nutritional requirements. It is our experience that the Balanced School Day improves learning, promotes healthy eating, and encourages daily physical activity. This model has become the norm at Centennial School.



Centennial School
Parent Advisory Council

May 15, 2024

The Honourable Nello Altomare, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning

Dear Mr. Altomare,

I am writing on behalf of the Parent Advisory Council at Centennial School in Lac du Bonnet.

Please accept this letter as a show of support for our principal, Mr. David Ogren, in his request to continue the balanced school day structure at our school.

As parents, we see great benefits to our children and for the staff in this structure. In addition, the balanced school day has become the norm at Centennial School, having been in place for almost 15 years. We feel that changing this structure would be detrimental to the children, who are thriving under the current balanced school day structure.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Hudson-Stewart". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Jennifer Hudson-Stewart

Treasurer and acting Chairperson, Centennial School PAC