



Elementary Guide to Instructional Time

Revised June 2017



Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide administrators and teachers with a guide to use when planning and scheduling in schools. This synthesis reflects mandates and policies from Ministry of Education documents, recommendations from curriculum subject associations and current research. It is intended to honour the integrity of the instructional time guidelines and teachers' professional judgment. Ways of managing instruction will vary from school to school, depending on student needs, timetabling and available facilities. While we recognize the unique needs of each school community, it is important to maintain Board-wide consistency in the amount of time allocated to each subject area over a 10-day cycle. Administrator support is essential to the successful implementation of these Instructional Time Guidelines. It is important to remember that it is not as much about adhering to these specific guidelines, but more about how the time is used, and the needs of your students.

What about Kindergarten?

Determination of instructional minutes is not applicable to Kindergarten. To facilitate an integrated approach to learning, the program expectations are represented in one or more of the following Four Frames: Belonging and Contributing, Self-Regulation and Well-Being, Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours, Problem Solving and Innovating.

What about curriculum integration?

Although there are specific instructional time guidelines for subject areas provided in this document, teachers are encouraged to continue to focus on integration of subjects which is fundamental to the successful implementation of the elementary curriculum. When teachers apply the principles of expectation-based planning, and cluster overall and specific expectations, subject integration is not only practical but necessary. Curriculum Services is able to assist administrators and teachers with these rich approaches to curriculum design.

“Research has consistently shown that students in integrated programs demonstrate academic performance equal to, or better than, students in discipline-based programs. In addition, students are more engaged in school, and less prone to attendance and behaviour problems.” (Drake & Reid, 2010). Curriculum integration is defined in Ontario curriculum documents as identifying opportunities to link related content and/or skills in two or more subjects and to give students practice in meeting expectations from two or more subjects within a single unit, lesson or activity. These documents suggest that for curriculum integration to be effective, emphasis needs to be on the underlying concepts and skills that strengthen student learning and achievement in all areas.

There are a number of different approaches to curriculum integration but all share the following:

- support a learning environment that honours individual students while ensuring the delivery of curriculum
- emphasis on backward planning from the curriculum, based on student needs/interests
- combination of subjects
- emphasis on rich learning experiences
- flexible scheduling/flexible student groupings
- use of authentic sources that go beyond textbooks

Curriculum integration may share the following:

- strategic infusion of themes from the environment, character education as well as, equity and inclusive education
- effective use of technology as a tool for learning (SMART boards, iPads, etc.)

As teachers work with curriculum and instruction in a connected, cohesive way, the opportunities for students to learn deeply, pursue areas of interest and communicate their thinking will become embedded in the school day.

When integrating, teachers must maintain the integrity of overall expectations of curricula for instruction, assessment and evaluation purposes.

When subjects are integrated through instruction, teachers find that within one over-arching learning goal, they can cluster learning expectations from across two or more curricular areas. When assessing, the teacher needs to be conscious of student progress in each area. In preparing a culminating task, the teacher can identify the specific success criteria that relate to each curricular area. This way, the teacher can monitor progress and students can set goals in distinct curricular areas.

- a) For example, a culminating task of creating a public service announcement to persuade adults in your community to make a choice that will impact the environment positively, combines expectations from both Language (Oral Language, Reading, Writing, and Media Literacy) and Science (Research, Science, Technology, Society and the Environment).
- b) For example, a measurement task in Mathematics could provide assessment and evaluation information in Measurement and/or Number Sense and Numeration (decimals, place value, proportional reasoning, fractions, etc.).
- c) By creating a sound scape as a culminating task in science, students could use their knowledge of how light and sound travel and would provide assessment and evaluation opportunities in science and music.
- d) In Health, students may create an advertisement that meets both Health expectations as well as Media Literacy expectations.

When evaluating for report cards, teachers can use the same culminating tasks to draw out marks in other curricular areas.

What about uninterrupted learning blocks?

In the past, an uninterrupted learning block was identified as a literacy strategy. However, a clearer, more current definition is “a large block of time devoted to specific instruction in any subject area”. Flexible thinking should be applied to what an uninterrupted learning block may look like. The learning agenda should determine what is done and where it may be done.

The purpose of uninterrupted learning blocks is to give students time to investigate, share, consolidate and reflect on the knowledge, skills and concepts that are being explored and taught.

What about Mental Health and Well-Being?

“What happens at school can have a significant influence on a student’s well-being. With a broader awareness of mental health, educators can plan instructional strategies that contribute to a supportive classroom climate for learning in all subject areas, build awareness of mental health and reduce stigma associated with mental illness.” (Ontario Curriculum)

Instructional Time Guidelines

(Revised June 2017)

GRADES 1-8 INSTRUCTIONAL TIMES GUIDELINES (Minutes per 10 Day Cycle, 50 Minute Periods)

GRADES 1-3	RECOMMENDED MINUTES	GRADES 4-6	RECOMMENDED MINUTES	GRADES 7 & 8	RECOMMENDED MINUTES	REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
Language	1000	Language	1000	Language	1000	All four strands must have a mark and language has a comment for both terms.
Mathematics	750-1000*	Mathematics	750	Mathematics	750	4/5 strands must have a mark and math has a comment in both terms. All strands must have a mark at least once in the year.
French as a Second Language	n/a	French as a Second Language	400	French as a Second Language	400	Core French (Gr. 4) in term one must have a mark and comment for Listening and Speaking. Core French (Gr. 4 Term 2 and Grades 5-8 Terms 1 & 2) must have a mark and comment for all strands.
Science and Technology	250-300*	Science and Technology	200-250**	Science and Technology	200-250**	Science must have a mark and comment in both terms. Over the course of the year, all expectations from all <u>4</u> strands must be assessed and evaluated by the Science educator in Grades 1 through 8.
Social Studies	250-300*	Social Studies	200-250**	History/Geography	200-250**	Social Studies (1-6) must have a mark and comment for both terms. History (7-8) must have a mark and comment in at least one term. Geography (7-8) must have a mark and comment in at least one term.
The Arts	250-300*	The Arts	200-250**	The Arts	200-250**	At least three of the four strands must have a mark and comment in both terms. All strands must receive a mark and comment at least once.
Health & Physical Education***	250	Health & Physical Education***	200-250**	Health & Physical Education***	200-250**	Physical Education AND Health must have a mark and comment for both terms.
Total:	3000 minutes	Total:	3000 minutes	Total:	3000 minutes	

*A school-based decision totaling 3000 minutes should be made about time allocation to these subjects in the primary division.

**For 3 of these 4 subject areas, choose 200 minutes/cycle. For 1 of the 4 subject areas, choose 250 minutes/cycle (a school-based decision).

***DPA is a minimum of 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on days where students do not have scheduled Physical Education

Please note: Creating Pathways to Success, Information Technology and Research can be integrated across content areas.

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
Intermediate Sample Timetable
 (Revised June 2017)

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10
Period 1 (50 minutes)	Physical Education	History/ Geography	Physical Education	History/ Geography	Physical Education	History/ Geography	Arts	History/ Geography	Health	Arts
Period 2 (50 minutes)	French	French	French	French	Arts	French	French	French	French	Arts
Period 3 (50 minutes)	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
Period 4 (50 minutes)	Science and Technology	Math	Science and Technology	Math	Science and Technology	Math	Science and Technology	Math	Science and Technology	Math
Period 5 (50 minutes)	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language
Period 6 (50 minutes)	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language
Daily Physical Activity (DPA) is a minimum of 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on days where students do not have scheduled Physical Education.										
Please note: Creating Pathways to Success, Information Technology and Research can be integrated across content areas.										

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
Junior Sample Timetable
 (Revised June 2017)

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10
Period 1 (50 minutes)	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
Period 2 (50 minutes)	Physical Education	Math	Physical Education	Math	Physical Education	Math	Physical Education	Math	Health	Math
Period 3 (50 minutes)	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language
Period 4 (50 minutes)	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language
Period 5 (50 minutes)	Arts	French	French	French	French	Arts	French	French	French	French
Period 6 (50 minutes)	Arts	Science	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science	Arts	Social Studies
Daily Physical Activity (DPA) is a minimum of 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on days where students do not have scheduled Physical Education.										
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DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
Primary Sample Timetable
 (Revised June 2017)

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10
Period 1 (50 minutes)	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language
Period 2 (50 minutes)	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language	Language
Period 3 (50 minutes)	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
Period 4 (50 minutes)	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Physical Education	Math	Physical Education
Period 5 (50 minutes)	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science	Arts	Social Studies
Period 6 (50 minutes)	Social Studies	Health	Arts	Physical Education	Arts	Physical Education	Arts	Science	Arts	Science
Daily Physical Activity (DPA) is a minimum of 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on days where students do not have scheduled Physical Education.										
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DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA

GRADES 1-8 FRENCH IMMERSION INSTRUCTIONAL TIME GUIDELINES: Minutes Per 10 Day Cycle/50 Minute Periods

According to *A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2013), page 40, the French Immersion program must provide a minimum of 3800 hours of French by the end of Grade 8. This is achieved by scheduling a minimum of three, 50-minute periods per day taught in French, totaling a minimum of 50% of the instructional program in Grades 1 through 8. In the District School Board of Niagara, the language of instruction for *Mathematics* will be English as of September 2017.

The following chart is a guideline. Integration should occur across all subject areas. Schedules should reflect professional judgment while honouring the recommended number of minutes per curriculum area.

GRADES 1-8	RECOMMENDED MINUTES
English Language	450
français	800
Mathematics	750
Sciences et technologie	250
Études sociales/histoire/géographie	250
Les arts	250
Santé et éducation physique	200 – (ÉP) 50 – (Santé)

Daily Physical Activity (DPA) is a minimum of 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on days where students do not have scheduled Physical Education.

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DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
French Immersion Sample Timetable
(Revised June 2017)

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10
Period 1 (50 minutes)	français	français	français	français	français	français	français	English	français	English
Period 2 (50 minutes)	français	français	français	français	français	français	français	English	français	English
Period 3 (50 minutes)	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
Period 4 (50 minutes)	Math	éducation physique	Math	éducation physique	Math	santé	Math	éducation physique	Math	éducation physique
Period 5 (50 minutes)	arts	English	arts	English	sciences	arts	sciences	arts	English	études sociales/ histoire/ géographie
Period 6 (50 minutes)	arts	English	études sociales/ histoire/ géographie	English	sciences	études sociales/ histoire/ géographie	études sociales/ histoire/ géographie	sciences	études sociales/ histoire/ géographie	sciences

Daily Physical Activity (DPA) is a minimum of 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on days where students do not have scheduled Physical Education.

Please note: Creating Pathways to Success, Information Technology and Research can be integrated across content areas.