

Christ the King School changes timetable to shorten lunch hour

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Staff Writer

The good news for students at Christ the King Catholic Secondary School in Georgetown is that starting Sept. 2, their day will begin 10 minutes later and end 20 minutes earlier than it did in 2007-08.

But at the same time, their lunch hour will be 35 minutes shorter than it was when students completed their most recent school year this week.

The proposal was recently passed by the Halton Catholic District School Board and Christ the King principal Dave DeSantis cited a number of reasons for the timetable change.

Supported by staff, Catholic School Council and CtK's Student Council, the move was made after studying similar successful changes at other Halton board system schools such as Milton's Bishop Reding and Notre Dame in Burlington.

Reasons given for the change include:

- Assisting to reduce the number of on-going discipline issues in the neighbouring community;
- Its consistency with the school's Student Success program-related initiatives;
- Increase opportunities for students to receive after-school assistance from teachers;
- Reduce missed instruction during the last period due to early dismissal for students and staff involved with co-curricular activities;
- Reduce the use of limited teacher on-calls for teacher coaches supervising students involved in co-curricular activities.

"It was a general consensus in our school community that using the same timetable that has been implemented in other schools in the system would be beneficial for the students and

we're here to act in the best interest of those students," said DeSantis.

"It's really not a good news, bad news situation. I suppose that's a matter of opinion for some people, but the Education Act states that 40 minutes is the time that should be set aside for lunch and anything above that is gravy. I think we've had only one e-mail from a parent who doesn't like the idea and most people involved with the school who've studied it feel the positives outweigh the negatives."

The length of classes hasn't changed, remaining at 75 minutes each, with the new schedule calling for period one to begin at 8:30 a.m., pushed back from 8:20 a.m. last year.

Instead of two 75-minute lunch breaks running from 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. and 12:15-1:30 p.m., period three will have three 40-minute time slots for lunch break, from 11:10-11:50 a.m. 11:50 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 12:30-1:10 p.m.

Period four is scheduled from 1:15-2:30 p.m., followed by dismissal for the day.

DeSantis added that students will still have the opportunity to leave the school during the lunch breaks, although it's hoped that the shortened time periods will be conducive to the students to remain on school property.

"The behaviour of the kids is not an overwhelming concern," he said. "Do they misbehave? Yes, sometimes this has happened, but we're looking at less than one per cent of our student population and next year we're probably going to have the largest number of students in the (Halton Catholic) system next year at close to 1,600. We're blessed up here to have great staff and students. Having spent a good part of my time as an educator south of Highway 5, I can assure you that we don't have comparable discipline issues that you'd see down there."



Geyser in Georgetown

A watermain burst on Guelph St. near Hall Rd. around noon on Friday, July 27. The water spout was almost three stories high, said reader Stephen Cochrane who took the photo. The volume of water that landed upon houses and cars on the other side of the street and flooded the road, "was incredible", he said. A Halton Regional Public Works crew tapped and repaired the watermain.

Photo by Stephen Cochrane

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