

Markville experiment a success

From page 1.

Coupled with stress because many older students' independent study units are due around that time, staff found trips to the guidance office from stressed students were also spiking.

Since changing the schedule this year, suspensions have dropped by 50 per cent, Ms Belanger said.

The time off also allowed students to make university and college campus visits, she added.

For Keswick High School students, a slightly shorter summer break has also had a dramatic impact on performance.

Now in their third year of switching vacation time, former principal Chris McAdam said the

week off in November made a remarkable difference.

"We found that the last week

'We know that children slip during the summer.

Having summer programs keeps them active. Two months is a long time for children not to be engaged.'

of October and the first week of November was their highest meltdown point," Ms McAdam said.

Giving students a week off in

November had noticeable results.

"The attendance was better because students knew they were getting a break," Ms McAdam said.

The different schedule also allowed school officials to get administrative business sorted out in the last week of August, allowing for a smoother transition to start the school year.

Ms McAdam admitted the move was initially met with skepticism by some parents and students, but once it was in place, the skeptics turned into advocates of the idea.

"We found that parents were pulling their kids out of school for vacation at that time anyway," Ms McAdam said.

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