

# Governor Simcoe . . . a place to grow away from home

## Multi-Subject Instructional Period (MSIP) Schedule

### DESCRIPTION

The 5-Period Day consists of four instructional periods of 60 minutes and a multi grade supervised MSIP period of 60 minutes. The MSIP class is created by reducing each of the instructional periods from 75 minutes to 60 minutes. The MSIP class is essentially made up of 'bits' of instructional time ( $4 \times 15 = 60$  minutes), thus its name **Multi-Subject Instructional Period**.

#### Semester System

Period 1  
75 minutes

Period 2  
75 minutes

Period 3  
75 minutes

Period 4  
75 minutes

#### MSIP System

Period 1  
60 minutes

MSIP\*  
60 minutes

Period 3  
60 minutes

Period 4  
60 minutes

Period 5  
60 minutes

\*MSIP can fall in any of the 5 slots.  
Student schedule will dictate.

During MSIP students are expected to be working on their homework and other assignments from their regular classes. They are allowed to sign out to another area of the school, such as a computer lab, library, or classroom to meet with a subject teacher for extra help.

## HISTORY OF MSIP

The MSIP schedule was first used in 1990 at Athens District High School. It was developed to deal with the large number of timetable conflicts students were experiencing at this small school of 300 students. After introducing the MSIP schedule timetable many other benefits were observed. As a result four additional schools in that school board quickly adapted the MSIP schedule. Presently there are approximately nine schools which use an MSIP schedule in Ontario. Galt Collegiate and Vocational School is one of these schools. Their experience using the MSIP schedule now in its third year has been very positive. In 2005-2006 they presented a one day workshop on the MSIP schedule. Four staff members from Governor Simcoe attended this workshop. The recommendation to the Simcoe staff was to pursue implementation of the MSIP schedule at Governor Simcoe. After a semester of discussion and investigation the Governor Simcoe staff voted 90% in favour of changing to an MSIP schedule from the traditional semester schedule which Simcoe has followed since it opened. As a result a two year pilot will begin at Simcoe in the school year 2007-2008. A number of schools across Ontario are looking at implementing an MSIP schedule. Recent information suggests as many as twenty schools in Ontario could be on an MSIP schedule by 2007-2008.

## ADVANTAGES OF MSIP

While the MSIP schedule was not originally designed to improve student learning it has been discovered that it has many benefits for learners.

### Class Length:

MSIP better aligns class length with optimal learning time. Since its inception there have been concerns about the semestered system's 75 minute periods. While the 75 minutes allows full and active lessons in subjects like Technology, Physical Education, and Science, it can be problematic in subjects like English and Math particularly in grades 9 and 10. In the last 15 minutes it is often difficult to maintain students' focus. Issues around discipline often occur in the latter part of a 75 minute period. It should be noted that university lectures are 50 minutes in length. A 60 minute period will make classes more manageable for students and teachers. A teacher at Galt Collegiate summarized his position on class time this way, "I now realize that I taught for 75 minutes but they only learned for 60 minutes."

### Mastering Learning:

Research emphasizes the need for "do time" for consolidation of learning; MSIP provides this time. Each day students will have 60 minutes of 'do time' to complete homework, prepare for tests, and work on projects and assignments. This time will promote 'mastering' learning and prepare students to learn new concepts and skills, thus improving overall performance. One example is scores on the OSSLT (Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test) which have improved dramatically in schools like Galt Collegiate since implementing MSIP.

### Resources:

MSIP increases students' access to learning resources. During their MSIP, students are allowed to travel to an area like a computer lab to do research, to a science lab to complete an assignment, or see a teacher for academic support. Galt Collegiate reports that on any given period approximately 5% of students travel to an area outside of the MSIP class.

### Conflicts:

The MSIP schedule was initially developed to deal with the increased number of conflicts students were experiencing in a shrinking school. Having 5 slots to place classes reduces the probability of class overlaps. As experienced in the Upper Canada School Board, Galt Collegiate student conflicts have dropped dramatically. Previous to MSIP Galt averaged 500 conflicts, in the school year 2006-2007 that number dropped to 125 conflicts which is a dramatic decline from the 4 period day schedule.

### Cooperative Learning:

MSIP provides students with the opportunity to work together on group projects or help each other with day-to-day class work. MSIP classes are cross grade level, inviting senior students to model and share successful learning strategies with juniors. These cross grade level groupings will also have a positive effect on the tone and culture of the school.

## Student Success:

In the mid 1990's major changes were made to the curriculum in Ontario. A more 'rigorous and demanding' curriculum was introduced by the government. The number of credits required to earn a diploma was increased to 30 from 28, the number of compulsory credits was increased to 18, and the OAC year (year 5) was removed in favour of a four year system. This 'new' system put increased pressure on the learner. The result was higher failure rates, higher drop out rates, and increased stress in students. Over the past four years the Ontario government has put considerable resources into education in an attempt to reverse this trend. Schools that use the MSIP believe that this schedule better meets the needs of students in this new educational environment. This is because an MSIP schedule builds 'do time' into every students day. Pedagogical research emphasizes the need for consolidation of learning. MSIP provides students with that 'do time' each school day, improving retention and better preparing students for learning new concepts and skills and improving overall performance.

This 'do time' is particularly useful for senior students with post secondary aspirations. Many of them presently are experiencing a great deal of stress in their last year or two of high school. The curriculum expectations combined with co-curricular activities and sometimes part-time jobs make their lives very stressful. Students who have experienced an MSIP schedule appreciate the 'do time' for this reason. The vast majority of them feel it contributes to their success at school.

*SAMPLE TIMETABLE*  
**Grade 9 - Semester 1**  
 September - January

Period	Course	Times
1	Science	8:25 - 9:30
2	Physical Education	9:35 - 10:35
3	Geography	10:40 - 11:40
Lunch		11:40 - 12:25
4	MSIP	12:25 - 1:25
5	Technology	1:30 - 2:30

**Grade 9 - Semester 2**  
 February - June

Period	Course	Times
1	English	8:25 - 9:30
2	MSIP	9:35 - 10:35
3	Art	10:40 - 11:40
Lunch		11:40 - 12:25
4	Math	12:25 - 1:25
5	French	1:30 - 2:30

