



TOPIC: New School Schedule Begins Fall 2021

Beginning Fall 2021, Foothill will be introducing a new weekly schedule. In lieu of dismissing students early on Wednesdays, Fridays will now become half days. *Wednesdays will return to regular, full-day dismissal times.*

2021 Friday Dismissal Times

TK, K, 1st - 11:30 AM

2nd – 5th - 11:45 AM

6th – 8th – 12:15 PM

1 Why are we making the change from early-out on Wednesday to half-day dismissal on Friday?

To give you a little history on where Wednesday's early dismissal began... this idea was adopted more than 20 years ago to allow time for teacher's meetings, technology training, and professional development. However, Wednesdays are key instructional days whereas Friday afternoons are the least optimal learning times. Teachers don't usually introduce new concepts on a Friday afternoon. In addition, Fridays tend to have lower attendance than any other day, with many students leaving early.

This new schedule is simply replacing lesser productive learning time on Friday afternoons with more productive learning time on Wednesday afternoons.

Benefits to Teachers

Teachers will now have a larger block of time for training, lesson prep, grade level unit planning, and grading. It is not an early out for teachers, but we are swapping the stress of Friday afternoon survival mode with more productive planning time.

Benefits to Students

Students are more engaged with their learning earlier in the week. By Friday afternoon they are in shut down mode. Switching to early-out days better aligns with their learning disposition and readiness. Net gain. Friday afternoons will now provide a larger time-block for occasional extended sports practices, theater practice, or club meetings without having to add them onto an already long school day.

Benefits to Families

As a result of COVID, many families have renewed their focus on the family unit. Several parents voiced their appreciation for the comfortable pace of learning and weekly rhythm that the reduced-day on Fridays allowed for. Parents had the freedom to use Friday afternoons to work on projects and assignments (or not) or spend the day doing family things. We all learned that "less is more". Families discovered ample time and



Parents have approximately 936 weeks from the day a child is born until he or she graduates from high school, and the time goes by fast! Imagine for a moment that weeks = marbles ... what a tangible visual.

We believe that when you see how much time you have left, you tend to do more with the time you have now.

When you apply this to the school year we only get 37 marbles each year. We need to be working together, both at home and school, to make these weeks count.

flexibility for homework, extra-curricular activities or even household chores. Time for errands, and extended conversations. Time for walks and bike rides and space to breathe. We think this makes more sense.

One of our goals at FCS is to help build healthy families. We believe excessive busyness creates overload. Overload Syndrome is a disease of our modern age and margin is its antidote. Restoring emotional and physical time for our families requires intentionality. Our family-friendly, Friday afternoon approach may not be the cure all, but it is one small change that has the potential to make big differences in the lives of our teachers, students, and families.

It has been said of parenting, "The days are

long, but the years are short!" We hope you and your family are able to capitalize on this newfound time together.

The following note captures it well...

To the Weary Parent of a Young Child,

*There is coming a day where:
they will climb onto your lap,
they will ask for a shoulder ride,
they will call your name at night,
they will reach for your hand,*

...and it will be the last time.

And neither of you will know it.

We've been granted an unknown, yet limited number of these. And what can sometimes feel like an interruption, is actually a limited-edition gift.

- Anonymous

2 How does this change impact Child Care?

Our childcare staff will be providing a variety of activities for students to enjoy on Friday afternoons. Our team, under Darryl Wright's leadership, have demonstrated their capacity to engage the kids in fun, enjoyable activities such as sports, competitions, arts and crafts, board games, archery, cooking and more. The kids will love it.

Full-Day or Afternoon (PM) Child Care Plans

Families on these plans will have no additional charge for the early out times on Friday afternoons.

Occasional Use Child Care

Those who need childcare on an occasional use basis will be billed at the same 15-minute increment rate (\$2.85). This is how it has been on Wednesday early dismissal days. Nothing changes there. However, we recognize the increment rate for a larger block of time on Friday half days, could add up to an unreasonable amount, so the Friday occasional use rate will not exceed \$25.