

BELL SCHEDULE UPDATES

As part of our ongoing *Quest for Excellence*, Valley Christian High School will modify our bell schedule for the upcoming year. Since adopting a block schedule in 2004, we have identified small changes that will improve our students' experience. Our high school students need a later start time, and all students need intentionally-designed time during the school day to connect with peers, reflect on their spiritual formation, and access academic support in order to develop their social, spiritual, and academic well-being.

School leadership took a full year to analyze data and listen to various stakeholder input. The new schedule was developed collaboratively, with focus-group meetings of teachers, parents, and students as well as the recommendations of leading educational consultants.

As we shift to a new bell schedule in the fall, we will work as a community to observe, listen, and adjust to the needs of our students and their families. Please join us in prayer as we look forward to an exciting conclusion to our current school year and anticipate the smooth implementation of our modified schedule in the fall.

View the [VCHS 2023-24 Bell Schedule](#)

ADDITIONAL SCHEDULE INFORMATION

Start Time

Students will still take seven classes, providing needed unstructured time for our students to either rest, complete work, or seek out assistance.

The "early day" with four classes will now start at 8:00 am.

The "late day" with three classes will now consistently start at 9:25 am.

Class Length

Class time will be consistently 75 minutes each day, rather than a range between 70-85 minutes that changed based on the bell schedule.

End Time

Rather than an inconsistent early release on either Tuesday or Thursday, students will consistently have an early release at 2:00 pm every Tuesday and Friday. This allows time for faculty professional development and collaboration each Tuesday and for an earlier start for students' after-school commitments twice a week.

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Warrior Time Block

By creating a Warrior Time block in the schedule 3-days per week, VCHS will eliminate the need for separate schedules for chapel, rallies, and assemblies.

Wednesday Warrior Time

- Wednesdays will continue to be set aside for chapel services, time dedicated to the spiritual development and growth of our students through worship and age-appropriate Bible-based messages.
- Approximately once per month, students will miss chapel to meet with their academic counselor about college readiness, college applications, or receive training on soft skills, such as career readiness and study habits.

Monday & Thursday Warrior Time

- Flex Time: VCHS will incorporate flex time into the schedule, enabling students to choose to attend activities that meet their needs, whether by getting extra help from a teacher, making up a test missed after an illness, meeting with a club, exercising to embrace their wellness, or much more! Some examples of Flex Time offerings include:
 - Club meetings
 - Subject-specific tutoring
 - Late testing
 - Counselor meetings
 - Recess
 - Intramural program activities
 - Quiet study rooms
- When student-life rallies and assemblies occur, they will take the place of Monday or Thursday Flex Time.

Next Steps

VCHS invites our incoming high school families to join us for an in-person session about the schedule for next year and picking classes & clubs at the VCHS Counseling Team sponsored "Navigating College Admissions" on Saturday, March 11 from 9:00 am to 11:30 am on the skyway campus.

FAQs

- **Why change the bell schedule?** During the 2021-22 school year, VCHS hired outside educational consultants to provide recommendations for improvements that would benefit student learning and well-being. After receiving those recommendations, VCHS conducted parent and teacher surveys, held teacher steering committee meetings, interviewed hundreds of students, and conducted student and parent focus groups. Between the educational experts and our VCHS stakeholders, we have collected suggestions that we believe will allow us to keep what stakeholders love about the schedule and add elements that students need. Keep reading to see what VCHS is considering based on feedback from our consultants and our stakeholders.
- **What if I already like the VCHS bell schedule?** VCHS will not make major changes to the bell schedule but believes that making small, meaningful adjustments can help our students establish more balanced, healthy routines.

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- **Who decided on this bell schedule?** VCHS solicited ideas from stakeholders throughout our Warrior community, including students, parents, teachers, campus administrators, program leaders, counselors, and other staff. This feedback was prayerfully and thoughtfully considered, and we are excited to introduce a bell schedule that encompasses our nurturing community values.
- **Will all clubs run during Warrior Time?** VCHS will move most clubs with VCHS advisors into the Warrior Time block, protecting students' lunch time to provide an authentic break during the day.
- **Will students be limited to only joining 2 clubs?** For most students, limiting involvement to only 2 clubs encourages healthy boundaries and prevents students from overcommitting. However, because some clubs may not require students to attend every meeting, some students may be able to join more than 2 clubs.
- **How will Flex Time attendance be tracked?** Before each Flex Time block, students will sign up for the activity of their choosing in our online scheduling system. Teachers will use the system to take attendance, just as they would in PowerSchool. Although students can choose where they will be, they do need to check in during Flex Time, unlike lunch or breaks.
- **Can students eat during Flex Time?** Yes. Students will be able to eat during most Flex Time activities. Some Flex Time meetings may be restricted, however; for instance, a scientific research club conducting a dissection would prohibit eating for safety reasons.
- **Can students treat Flex Time like an additional break or lunch?** Students will be allowed to eat and/or purchase food during Flex Time, but it will be more structured than lunch or break time. Flex Time is designed to provide enrichment, growth, and wellness opportunities for students, whether socially, academically, spiritually, or holistically. VCHS will provide Flex Time activities that promote wellness, such as guided stretching led by trained athletics staff, meetings with wellness counselors, and a quiet room for students who need down time.
- **Can students change their Flex Time activity?** Students will be able to opt into or out of Flex Time activities on different days, depending on their interests and needs. For instance, a student may choose to leave one club to join one that's better matched to their interests. Alternately, a student may choose to attend a recess activity one day and tutoring during the next Flex Time.
- **If clubs are offered 2-times per week, does every student have to join 2 clubs?** VCHS wants every student to join at least 1 club so they get involved on our campus. We encourage students to leave the other Flex Time open to explore other offerings, such as recess, intramural programs, and tutoring. Students will have the flexibility to attend these activities when they need them most. For instance, a student might choose a wellness seminar during a stressful week or choose tutoring right before a test.
- **Can students start their own club?** VCHS is proud of its students' initiative and desire to form new clubs aligned with our students' passions and God-given talent. Students who wish to start a club should speak with Vice Principal of Student Life, Mr. Smith. Clubs for the 2023-24 school year must be approved by 3/31/23.
- **Can students attend their teacher's office hours during Flex Time?** Although students may not always be able to meet with their own teacher, VCHS teachers will offer subject specific tutoring during Flex Time. For subjects with specific content needs, multiple tutoring rooms will be available. For instance, science teachers will staff different rooms for chemistry, biology, and physical sciences, and math teachers will staff multiple rooms based on the level of math. Teacher office hours will continue to be held at other times during the week.

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- **What opportunities for spiritual growth will be available during Flex Time?** The office of Spiritual Formation is working to develop discipleship and growth activities for students. These may include Bible study, worship, and/or prayer in the Conservatory Chapel.
- **Can students use Flex Time to complete homework?** Students will be able to sign up to go to the Learning Commons during Flex Time to complete school work independently or in small groups.
- **With shorter classes, will students have more homework?** No. VCHS homework limits will not change. Teachers have been provided with additional planning time this semester to adapt lesson plans and pacing for the upcoming schedule change to maintain our academic standards and rigor without increasing students' homework load.
- **Will bus times be adjusted to reflect the new schedule?** Yes. Updated schedules will be provided by the transportation department.