Transitioning from Trimester to Semester Schedule

The Cedar Rapids Community School District is developing a transition plan for moving from a trimester schedule to a semester schedule for the 2015-2016 school year. The impetus for this change is to better serve students by aligning the schedule with other school districts and post-secondary learning institutions. This will provide students a greater opportunity to expand their learning during their high school years.

A guiding task force of administrators, teachers, counselors, Cedar Rapids Education Association (CREA) representatives, and curriculum facilitators will continue to work together to:

• identify decision points, key/critical questions and barriers
• gather and provide information to stakeholders
• develop a proposed implementation timeline

Below are answers to some initial questions:

Q. When will this change go into effect?
A. At the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year

Q. How will the change from trimesters to semesters affect graduation requirements?
A. We will follow the State and Cedar Rapids Community School District guidelines for graduation requirements. A dual transcript will need to be used during the transition period.

Q. Will this change the course offerings for secondary students?
A. This will not impact the course offerings at the middle school level. At the high school level, some courses that are currently trimester courses will be re-designed as semester courses.

Q. Will middle and high school students receive quarter and semester grades?
A. Middle school students will continue to receive quarterly grades for electives. Official grades will be awarded at the end of each semester for both middle and high school students.

Q. How will this affect parent-teacher conferences?
A. Elementary and middle school parent-teacher conferences will be held in late fall and mid-spring. High school parent-teacher conferences will be held at mid-term (fall).

Q. How does this impact the District calendar(s)?
A. In an effort to have equal days in each semester and align the calendar with other area school districts and post-secondary learning institutions, the calendar(s) will be impacted beginning with the 2015-16 school year.

Q. How will decisions about the calendar be made?
A. The School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) will consider input from employees, parents, and other stakeholders. The SIAC will then provide recommendations regarding calendar priorities to the Superintendent.

Q. How can individuals provide input to the SIAC regarding the calendar?
A. Parents and teachers can provide input to SIAC at siac@cr.k12.ia.us.