

Day One

Keynote • 9:00 – 9:30 am

“Unlocking the Power of the Block Schedule” – Vince Mancuso

Block schedule isn't just about longer class periods – it's an incredible opportunity to enrich teaching and learning. How can we best keep students engaged and fit curriculum into a condensed school year without sacrificing depth or rigor? Explore powerful strategies to structure our time, lessons, and practices to maximize efficiency, engagement, and student learning. Let's kick off two great days together, reenergized and ready to strengthen our approach to teaching in the block schedule!

MORNING SESSIONS • 9:40 am – 12:10 pm

Choose **ONE** Full Morning Session OR **TWO** 70-Minute Sessions • *One mid-morning break*

Full Morning Session • 9:40 am – 12:10 pm

A-1: Engaging All Learners in Your Block Classroom – Janet Crews

What is the number one thing secondary teachers want from their students? Engagement! Examine common instructional pitfalls to be mindful of and avoid, and effective ways to deliver your instruction that will improve student focus and interaction within your extended periods. Discover small adjustments to your daily routines that will promote strong student focus and engagement. Gain teacher-tested tools designed to make a difference for your diverse block schedule learners.

First 70-Minute Morning Sessions 9:40 – 10:50 am

CHOOSE ONE: A-2 or A-3

A-2: Block Transitions: Decrease Off-Task Time and Increase Student Learning – Janice Davis

Movement, both physically and mentally, is a must for the block setting. Explore quick ways to keep students engaged and thinking without distractions. Engage students in differentiated thinking, effective transitions, and application of your objectives. Integrate a “progression of talk” with sentence starters that model how to climb the ladder of richer discussion. Explore debate strategies that offer safe conversation yet hold high expectations for evidence and elaboration in the discussion.

A-3: Instructional Models for the Block: Organizing Time With Purpose and Flexibility – Vince Mancuso

Explore adaptable lesson models that break your extended periods into purposeful, engaging segments to strengthen student learning and maintain momentum. These models work across content areas and organize your instructional time in ways that will foster clarity, focus, and flow – while incorporating scaffolding to increase student success. Leave with customizable formats that will enhance direct instruction, collaborative learning, assessment, and reflection, empowering you to make every minute of your block count.

Second 70-Minute Morning Sessions 11:00 am – 12:10 pm

CHOOSE ONE: A-4 or A-5

A-4: In-Class Practice: Making the Most of Block Learning – Janice Davis

The block setting provides wonderful opportunities for individual and group practice of lesson objectives. Examine ways to help students review, analyze mistakes, explore common ideas in new ways, and more! Move more fluidly between instruction and application of information. Discover effective ideas for structuring homework, independent practice, group work, and extensions in your block setting. Gain interactive review strategies and ways to get students learning independently with your guidance only as needed.

A-5: Avoiding Common Pitfalls in Your Block Teaching – Vince Mancuso

Prevent passive lecturing, ineffective pacing, and engagement drop-off. Learn great ways to structure lessons that balance direct instruction with hands-on learning, utilize transitions effectively, and maintain student focus. Discover practical solutions to maximize instructional time and learning, while creating a thriving block classroom. Sidestep common challenges and make the most of your extended class periods. Learn from real experiences, avoid unnecessary frustrations, and set yourself up for block schedule success!

Lunch break • 12:10 – 1:10 pm

“Engaging, relevant, interactive, informative. Extremely useful and applicable information.”

– Jennifer Cavagnaro,
Educational Technologist



“Very informative. Lots of great strategies for me to implement in my block schedule classes.”

– Traci Harris,
Biology Teacher



Team Discount

ONE DAY

One Person: \$325

BOTH DAYS

One Person: \$595

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“A wealth of information with great ideas for teaching in the block.” – Luis Oliveira, ELL Teacher 3

Who is BER?

The Bureau of Education & Research is North America's leading presenter of training for professional educators. Our goal is to provide high-quality PD programs, based on sound research, with an emphasis on practical strategies and techniques that can be immediately implemented.



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Related Online Courses

A related On-Demand Video-Based Online Learning course, *Strengthen Student Learning in Block Schedule Classes*, for Grades 6-12, is available for immediate registration. To enroll, visit www.ber.org/online

Day One

AFTERNOON SESSIONS • 1:10 – 3:40 pm

Choose **ONE** Full Afternoon Session OR **TWO** 70-Minute Sessions
One mid-afternoon break

Full Afternoon Session • 1:10 – 3:40 pm

B-1: Differentiated Learning Preferences: Boost the Success of Your Block – *Janice Davis*

We know students benefit from varied learning approaches and ways to show their learning. But how might this look in a block setting? Explore great ways to set up lessons, units, and assessments with options for all students to showcase their strengths and preferences while building on areas of growth. See detailed examples of how you can differentiate based on several major learning preferences within your block schedule lessons, units and assessments.

First 70-Minute Afternoon Sessions 1:10 – 2:20 pm

CHOOSE ONE: B-2 or B-3

B-2: Making Students Want to Invest Time, Attention, and Effort in Your Block Classroom – *Janet Crews*

We've all heard students ask, "Why do I need to know this?" Learn practical ways to make your block classroom "worth" investing in, creating a space where students' time, energy, and effort are rewarded. Boost student motivation and drive in your block classroom. Explore ways to use tools of inquiry, choice, empathy, challenge, authenticity, voice, reflection, relationship, and purpose to provide what students need to engage and thrive within your existing curriculum.

B-3: Pacing and Planning: Fitting it All Into Your Block – *Vince Mancuso*

Explore block techniques that prioritize essential content and ensure key learning objectives are met without sacrificing rigor or depth. Effectively streamline instruction, pace lessons, and integrate interdisciplinary connections to maximize student learning. Discover strategies for balancing direct instruction, hands-on activities, and assessments to make the most of extended class periods. Leave with practical tools and actionable strategies to maintain high-quality instruction and student engagement, while fitting your curriculum into the block model.

Second 70-Minute Afternoon Sessions 2:30 – 3:40 pm

CHOOSE ONE: B-4 or B-5

B-4: Understanding Students' Brains to Make Block Schedule Work for Them, and You! – *Janet Crews*

Explore what your secondary students' brains need to improve their understanding and memory, and what can often get in the way. Learn how to use this information to better structure your block schedule activities to be highly engaging and impactful. Increase repetition and feedback, strategic thinking, and motivation. Easily incorporate these research-based activities into your extended period classes and watch as your students put down their phones and engage more fully in the learning!

B-5: Block Schedule Assessment That Works – *Vince Mancuso*

Assessments look different in block versus traditional classrooms. Position your assessments to drive learning, provide meaningful feedback, keep students engaged, and foster ownership of learning. Explore assessment strategies tailored for extended periods, including formative and summative assessments, performance-based tasks, student-led reflections, and alternative grading models. Discover innovative strategies that measure understanding and inform instruction without overwhelming students or consuming excessive class time. Transform assessments into valuable learning opportunities in your block classroom.

Day Two

MORNING SESSIONS • 9:00 – 11:40 am

Choose **ONE** Full Morning Session OR **TWO** 75-Minute Sessions
One mid-morning break

Full Morning Session • 9:00 – 11:40 am

C-1: Block Instructional Strategies to Increase Student Engagement and Learning – *Vince Mancuso*

Explore powerful instructional strategies to sustain student interest, promote active participation, and enhance comprehension. Discover strategies that incorporate movement and collaboration, ensuring students remain focused and invested throughout the lesson. Leverage these strategies to create a dynamic block classroom that balances direct instruction with active learning. Explore techniques such as chunking content, utilizing brain breaks, and inquiry-driven instruction to maintain energy and engagement. Leave with ready-to-use strategies for strengthening your block classroom.

First 75-Minute Morning Sessions 9:00 – 10:15 am

CHOOSE ONE: C-2 or C-3

C-2: Collaborative Block Classrooms: A Key to Deeper Learning – *Janet Crews*

What does great collaboration look like? Often, we assume our students come already knowing how to work well together but find it doesn't magically happen on its own. Learn how effective group work in the block requires teaching, scaffolding, modeling, and practice. Leave with strategies to teach your students how. Discover exercises designed to create meaningful collaboration that will promote deeper student understanding and learning, perfect for use in your block schedule classes.

C-3: Puzzles, Games and Activities to Enhance Your Block Classroom – *Janice Davis*

The block setting allows for rich thinking and problem-solving. Infuse short puzzles and games throughout your block lessons to keep students engaged, manage transitions, and build student learning. Enrich students' thinking beyond your classroom walls and into real-world applications of your objectives. Reinforce key skills through extended thinking games and activities that bind multi-day lesson elements together. Explore a variety of games you can use immediately in your block classroom.

Second 75-Minute Morning Sessions 10:25 – 11:40 am

CHOOSE ONE: C-4 or C-5

C-4: Getting Your Students to Own Their Learning – *Janet Crews*

When students ask us what grade we're "giving" them, they aren't owning their learning. Examine ways you can get students to take charge of their learning with how you structure your feedback and assessments. Instead of an overfocus on grades, shift students' thinking about assessments to progress over time and evidence of understanding or content standard performance. Discover ways to engage students in the assessment process in your block classroom.

C-5: Block Schedule Assessments: Venturing Beyond the Classroom to the Real World – *Janice Davis*

Authentic assessment and project-based learning provide great opportunities to assess our students in the context of their real-world application of key skills. Explore practical ways to enhance your assessment options, specifically within the block setting. Embed authentic assessment of skills and units within real-world learning and application. Explore a variety of easy-to-implement ways to give students greater choice in the assessment process while maintaining the integrity of your objectives.

Lunch Break • 11:40 am – 12:40 pm

Comprehensive Digital Resource Handbook

You will receive an extensive digital resource handbook, specifically designed for this conference. Included in the handbook are resource materials for ALL conference sessions, even those you don't attend. These materials include:

- Cutting-edge ideas and strategies for immediate use in your block schedule classes
- Tools, resources, methods, and models for organizing your time and teaching within extended class periods
- Proven strategies and activities for keeping grades 6-12 students engaged during the whole block



"I really appreciated the numerous strategies in the handbook and that were presented."

– Amy Wiebe,
Science Teacher / Department Head



"Great strategies for block teaching to keep students engaged." – Teresa White, Instructional Coach

On-Site Training

Conferences like this one along with many other topics can be brought to your school or district. Please view all of our On-Site PD options at www.ber.org/onsite or call 877-857-8964 to speak with an On-Site Training PD Consultant.



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Day Two

AFTERNOON SESSIONS • 12:40 – 3:20 pm

Choose **TWO** 75-Minute Afternoon Sessions
One mid-afternoon break

First 75-Minute Afternoon Sessions 12:40 – 1:55 pm

CHOOSE ONE: D-1, D-2 or D-3

D-1: Intentional Inquiry: How Thoughtful Questions and Responses Drive Deeper Student Thinking – *Janet Crews*

What you ask – and how you respond – can either spark deep thinking or shut it down. Explore the power of intentional questioning, and response strategies that actively promote student thinking. Discover how your tone, phrasing, and follow-up can transform classroom conversations. Reflect on your current practices, engage in real-time questioning exercises, and leave with practical tools. Better invite, extend, and sustain student thinking in your block classroom.

D-2: Start Strong and Finish Well: Keep Students Engaged Bell to Bell – *Janice Davis*

Explore ways to effectively bridge the beginning and end of lessons – and between lessons – revisiting and rebooting with another view of the day's skill set. Discover instructional strategies that will bind skills throughout your lessons and units to get students taking greater ownership of their learning. Gain bridging activities, transitional moves, and quick "reboot" ideas for more engaging and effective ways to open and close your daily block.

D-3: Make the Most of Every Minute: Strategic Transitions for Extended Periods – *Vince Mancuso*

Dive into powerful block lesson transition techniques that provide cognitive breaks, while maintaining your learning objectives. Explore various transition strategies ranging from quiet transitions to movement-based, collaborative transitions. Create more a seamless flow between learning opportunities. Discover how intentional transitions can serve to prevent mental fatigue, sustain engagement, and maintain momentum. Optimize your instructional time, minimize distractions and ensure students' minds remain actively involved from the beginning to the end of class.

Second 75-Minute Afternoon Sessions 2:05 – 3:20 pm

CHOOSE ONE: D-4, D-5 or D-6

D-4: Block Learning: Going Beyond Passive Compliance to Active Engagement – *Janet Crews*

We're uniquely positioned in a block schedule to unleash student creativity and learning. Level up your block lessons with easy-to-incorporate tweaks to promote innovation and authentic learning. Gain practical strategies to move students from passive compliance to active engagement, immersing them in learning that is meaningful and relevant to their lives. Acquire strategies to help students be more self-directed, independent, collaborative, and creative in your block classroom.

D-5: Create Richer Student Discussions in Your Block Setting – *Janice Davis*

Debate-centered instruction (DCI) inspires richer, constructive, and in-depth discussions through persuasive arguments. Explore specific strategies to engage students in differentiated debate-centered activities, all involving constructive conversation based on claims, research, and solid evidence. Incorporate strategies that are wide open to all content areas. Receive several completed activities or lessons utilizing DCI and learn how you can modify your current lessons to incorporate argument protocol and many other DCI techniques.

D-6: Cultivating Meaningful Discourse in Extended Class Periods – *Vince Mancuso*

Explore block strategies that foster deep conversations, critical thinking, and collaboration. Empower your students with learning activities that strengthen communication and participation. Learn how to structure discussions that sustain engagement over extended periods, create opportunities for student-led dialogue, and use questioning techniques that spark curiosity. Gain ready-to-implement discussion-based strategies and activities that position discourse as a powerful tool in the block classroom, transforming passive learners into active participants.