

**Frequently Asked Questions for Parents  
Fifth Block of Instruction in APS  
2015**

**Q: Why does Aurora Public Schools offer a Fifth Block of Instruction?**

**A:** Aurora Public Schools offers a Fifth Block of Instruction to provide students the opportunity to receive additional instruction in math and literacy. This voluntary fifth block of instruction is for those students who have shown academic growth and the most potential to make progress toward becoming proficient. This block of instruction is one of many strategies APS is offering to increase achievement.

**Q: Who is eligible to attend?**

**A:** Fifth Block is designed for any student is not yet proficient in math and literacy. Priority is given to students who are not proficient in both literacy and math, both unsatisfactory and partially proficient.

It is offered to incoming second through incoming tenth graders who are not yet proficient. It is for students who have had continuous enrollment in APS for at least one year (March to March), consistent attendance and overall good behavior. Students who plan to attend school in another district or a charter school during the 2015 -16 school year are not eligible for Fifth Block.

**Q: Can I opt my child out of attending? If so how will this affect his/her grade?**

**A:** Fifth Block is voluntary. Parents choose whether or not to send their child. Because of the progress and academic growth the recommended student has demonstrated throughout the year, the extra Fifth Block of Instruction has proven to help students reach proficiency in math and literacy as they enter the next grade.

**Q: What happens if you do not select my child and I still want him/her to attend?**

**A:** If your child is not recommended for attendance in Fifth Block, you are encouraged to seek out and find other programs that might be beneficial. Fifth Block is open by invitation only.

**Q: Will the Fifth Block of Instruction be a regular school day?**

**A:** Yes, every school will offer 5.5 hours of full-day instruction as well as a lunch period.

**Q: What are you teaching in Fifth Block?**

**A:** Classes will be offered in math and literacy (reading and writing). The instruction will be designed to address gaps that are found in the achievement of each student. High schools may offer language arts, math or both for credit recovery or credit advancement.

**Q: Will you still provide English language acquisition and special education support for students?**

**A:** Students recommended for the program will be provided appropriate supports.

**Q: How many students will be in my child's class?**

**A:** Class sizes will be limited to 25 students.

**Q: How can you effectively teach more than one grade level in a class?**

**A:** Because the students are selected based on demonstrated progress toward reaching proficiency and their good attendance throughout the year, teachers can better focus on supporting math and literacy instruction. The grade level is not as significant in this case as the proficiency level of students.

**Q: Will my child earn credit for Fifth Block?**

**A:** Math, language arts or elective credit can be earned in high school during Fifth Block.

**Q: When is the regular school year?**

**A:** The regular school year runs from August 5, 2014 – May 20, 2015.

**Q: What are the dates of Fifth Block?**

**A:** The Fifth Block of Instruction will be offered from May 26, 2015 to June 25, 2015 for the 2014-15 school year.

**Q: What are the hours of Fifth Block?**

**A:** Start and end times will vary by school, but students will attend a full day of school at elementary, K-8 and middle schools.

**Q: Will you serve my child breakfast and lunch?**

**A:** Breakfast and lunch will be offered to students at each school during Fifth Block. For those qualifying for free or reduced lunch, there is no need for parents and guardians to reapply.

**Q: What is the Fifth Block attendance policy?**

**A:** Students are expected to attend classes every day. Attendance will be monitored in Infinite Campus. Once Fifth Block begins, if students miss the first day of classes without an acceptable excuse, the school immediately contacts the parent to confirm intent to attend. If the student will not attend, they will be dropped and the waiting list students will be invited to attend. Students with an unexcused absence on the second day will be dropped and waiting list students added. After the third day, no new students will be added to Fifth Block. A student will be withdrawn from Fifth Block after a total of three unexcused absences.

**Q: Will you provide transportation? Will the bus pick up at our regular stop?**

**A:** Transportation will be provided to all qualifying bus riders according to district policy. Some bus stops may be consolidated and information will be provided to parents before Fifth Block begins.

**Q: What about a program for my gifted and talented child?**

**A:** Aurora Public Schools has a strong commitment to meeting the needs of gifted and talented students. APS offers gifted and talented education at Aurora Quest K-8 and the International Baccalaureate Programme at Elkhart and Wheeling elementary schools, East and Aurora Hills middle schools and Gateway and Hinkley high schools. In addition, there are advanced placement and honors courses offered in every comprehensive high school. Fifth Block is an effort to meet the needs of the middle range of students who might benefit most from additional instruction but have not had special programs to support their academic needs.

**Q: Who will be my child's teacher for Fifth Block?**

**A:** In most cases, your child's teacher will be selected from teachers at his or her own school. As soon as assignments are made, information will be provided to parents on who will be teaching Fifth Block at each school.

**Q: Which schools will have Fifth Block?**

**A:** In most cases, students will be taught in their own schools using the district curriculum.

**Q: How many students will benefit?**

**A:** Fifth Block will benefit approximately 3,000 student's district-wide, providing them extra learning time to make progress toward proficiency in math and literacy.

**Q: If my child is selected, may I open enroll him/her in a school other than my neighborhood school?**

**A:** Open enrollment will not be available for Fifth Block.

**Q: At what point during the school year will parents be notified if their children have been selected to participate in Fifth Block?**

**A:** School staff will notify parents of eligible students from March 3, 2015 to April 3, 2015, and parents must return signed contracts notify to accept participation of their child in Fifth Block no later than April 10, 2015.

**Q: Will there be any nursing services available during Fifth Block?**

**A:** If needed, students will have access to required medication and nursing consultations.