

The School Board Wants to Hear From You!

Please Join Us:

Wednesday, May 18th at 6:00 pm in the Gym

for a St. Paul Lutheran School Meeting of the Minds

(Parents, Teachers & otherwise Invested Individuals)



pixtastock.com - 21747120

The Main Topic of Conversation Includes:

- Consideration of a 4-Day School Week

We are seeking your input, thoughts and ideas as it applies to this potential.

Child Care will be provided during the meeting.

For Reference, here is an article from the National Conference of State Legislatures

<https://www.ncsl.org/research/education/school-calendar-four-day-school-week-overview.aspx>

Four-Day School Week Overview

4/1/2020

Shortening the school week to four days has become an increasingly common trend over the last decade.

Reasons for implementing the shorter week vary, but most school districts implement a shorter week seeking to cut costs due to budget constraints. [Research shows](#) that the maximum possible cost savings for districts on a four-day week is 5.43 percent, but average savings range from 0.4 to 2.5 percent. The vast majority of four-day week schools are in small, rural districts; however, in recent years some larger, more urban districts have begun to consider the option of a shorter week.

Most four-day week schools operate Monday through Thursday, with a few opting for Tuesday through Friday. School days are lengthened to deliver the same amount of instructional time over fewer days, as required by state law. Some schools may offer optional enrichment activities, tutoring, or schedule time for teacher development during the fifth day.

Best available research indicates that approximately 560 districts in 25 states have one or more schools on a four-day schedule. More than half of these districts are located in four states—Colorado, Montana, Oklahoma and Oregon—where a significant portion of districts have opted into the four-day week.

While the number of districts in these states is significant, the overall share of the student population on the four-day week is relatively small. For example, Colorado has the largest proportion of public school districts with one or more schools on a four-day week at 98. This number represents more than half of the total school districts in the state, but only about 13 percent of the student population.

How States Implement the Four-Day Week

School calendars are dictated by states' minimum instructional time requirements, which are in turn tied to funding formulas. Schools not meeting the minimum instructional time requirements will receive less funding from the state. Therefore, it is likely only schools operating in states where a four-day week does not violate these requirements would seek to do so.

Most states allow districts to opt into a four-day week, either through flexible requirements, explicit administrative rules, or a waiver approval process. The level of legislative involvement in this process varies. Most statutory guidelines do not specifically list four-day school weeks as an allowable schedule, but may allow calendar flexibility by expressing that the minimum instructional day requirement can also be counted in the hour or minute equivalent.

Some states establish additional guidelines school districts must follow to transition to a four-day week, but do not monitor the process directly or track the number of districts opting into such a schedule. Other states require districts to submit their four-day plans to the state education commissioner or superintendent for approval. In California, districts can only be granted permission to adopt a four-day week if specific legislation is passed. California also enacted legislation in 2014 stipulating that any school not meeting its academic performance targets would have its authority to operate on a four-day schedule revoked.

Pros and Cons of the Four-Day Week

Proponents of four-day school weeks say that even though cost savings are minimal, they are achieved. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that attendance improves; parents and teachers can schedule doctor's appointments and other weekday commitments for Fridays rather than during school days. District administrators also claim that the appeal of a four-day work week helps recruit teachers in areas where it is consistently difficult to attract new staff.

Opponents argue that longer school days are difficult for students, particularly those in elementary grades. Four-day school weeks can also pose a challenge to families who are unable to find affordable, enriching care arrangements on the fifth weekday. Further, students who are food insecure may not have access to sufficient meals during the off day. If optional activities are offered by schools on the fifth day, lack of transportation could limit access.

What the Research Says

Education researchers [have pointed out](#) that little is known about the effects of a four-day week on student outcomes. While large-scale research studies have yet to be performed, some state-specific studies have been published. The results are mixed; [one study](#) of students in Colorado showed a statistically significant improvement in math scores among students on a four-day schedule, while [a similar study](#) found no significant differences in student performance.

[An report from Oregon State University](#) showed a temporary decline in academic performance among students who switched to a four-day schedule, particularly among minority, low-income, and special needs students. Four years after the transition, student performance in four-day schools was not significantly different from that of five-day schools. These results make it difficult to draw conclusions about the effects on student outcomes.

[A recent study](#) in Colorado revealed another potential negative consequence of four-day weeks: increased juvenile crime. The authors estimate that shifting to a four-day schedule increases juvenile arrests for property crime—especially larceny— by 73 percent, but there was no change in drug-related or violent crimes. The increase in property crime was observed on all days of the week, not just spiking on the day when school is not in session.

Future of the Four-Day Week

There is not yet a complete picture of how four-day school weeks impact students and their families, but it is clear that more districts are adopting the schedule each year. While these districts are primarily smaller and rural, a few notable exceptions have raised questions about the possibility of more urban districts moving toward a four-day week.

Colorado School District 27J, located in the Denver metro area, [announced](#) that it would move to a four-day week starting in the 2018-19 school year. With an enrollment of more than 17,000, it is by far the largest district in the state to adopt the four-day schedule. For a fee, the district provides full-day child care on Mondays for students age 5 to 12, but the district is still evaluating needs and capacity for these programs. The local Boys & Girls Club also expanded its services on Mondays.