



FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK

WHY HAVE DISTRICTS IN 26 STATES TRANSITIONED TO THE FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK?

- Teacher and paraprofessional recruitment and retention
- Decreased cost (transportation, insurance, & less need for substitutes)
- Student attendance issues



WHY HAVE DISTRICTS IN 26 STATES TRANSITIONED TO THE FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK?

- Quality of life (for all)
 - Four-day school weeks often start trends within the community
- Increased school morale
- 5-day work week is an antiquated system
 - When the 5-day work week model was created, men comprised the entire workforce and women worked in the home. Societal shifts and changing roles often leave the financial burden and household responsibilities on one parent.

PROS

- Decreased district cost (bus transportation, insurance costs, less sick days taken)
- Substitute shortage issues would decrease since teachers could schedule appointments on Fridays
- Well-rested staff and students ready to engage in learning

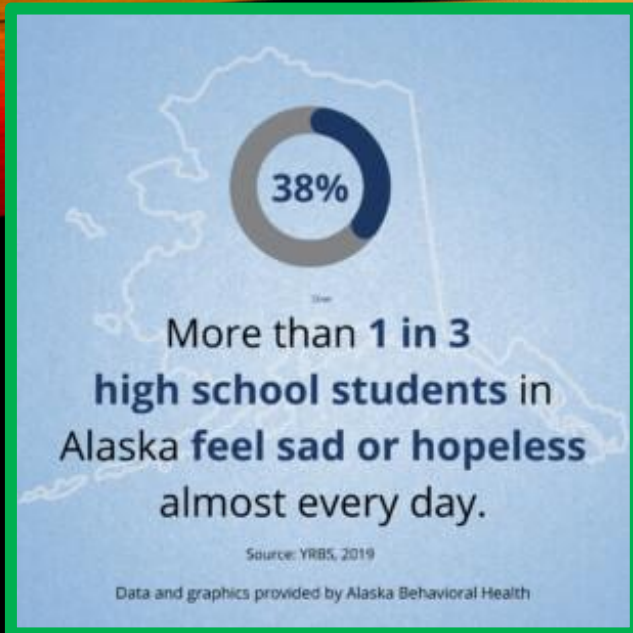


PROS

- Student attendance issues could decrease (parents and staff would have an extra day during the week for appointments or other needs)
- Longer school day presents an opportunity to reintroduce fine arts and create partnerships with our local vocational college for high school and middle school students (earn certifications that are desperately needed in the community- plumbers, electricians, mechanics, etc.)



PROS



- Quality of life (an extra day to enjoy the sun in the winter, day for chores- day for play- day for rest)
 - Especially important in a state with challenging mental health issues
- Longer day would mean less need for afterschool daycare Monday-Thursday, also resulting in less bus demand

PROS

- High School teachers could cover curriculum every day of the week without having to prepare for absent athletes (HS teachers report it is difficult to continue their curriculum when so many students are out of school for extracurricular activities on Friday)
- Bus transportation would no longer be as issue for sport teams on Friday



PROS



- Less bullying and fights in secondary schools
- High school students that help support their families would have an extra day to work
- Communities tend to adjust based on the school schedule (parents M-Th, people without children Tu-F) increasing quality of life for all.
 - New opportunities for childcare (teenage babysitters, new daycares, community programs)
 - Better mental health for all
 - Younger siblings could travel to sporting events

CONS

- Childcare challenges (less childcare needed M-Th would help with bus demands, but Fri could present a challenge for parents/guardians)
 - What are parents doing for early release? In the summer?
 - Boys & Girls Club? Snow school? Community programs? Are there opportunities for new childcare options? HS/MS student babysitting?



CONS



- Longer day for students and staff
- Opportunity for rotating fine art stations among teachers/ time for special programs like Reading Buddies
- CKLA curricular needs/more time for intervention



CONS

- Loss of wages for some support professionals (bus drivers, food service workers)
 - Bus drivers might be able to drive students to extracurricular events on Fridays?
- Reduced access of services for low-income students
 - Sacked Friday breakfast/lunch given to students that qualify for free and reduced lunch on Thursday afternoon?



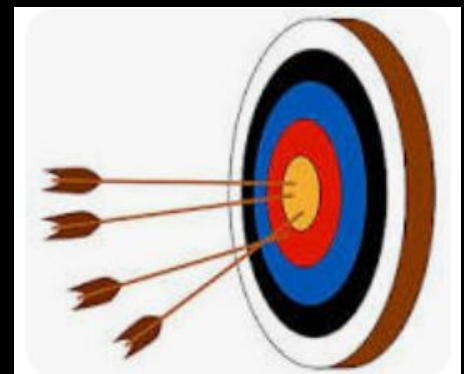
CONS



- Possible end to after-school elementary sports/ teacher stipend



- Could provide an elective hour during the school day for older elementary students
- Elementary sports on Friday for 3-4 hours
- Community programs for students on Friday (archery, snow school, ASLC, Boys & Girls Club)



- Allowing the community to take over sports and programs would increase community outreach. Students often must choose between activities due to many options available. Community planning can ensure that children can be involved in all activities!

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT SUGGEST?

The jury is still out....

- Anderson and Walker (2015) found a statistically significant improvement in math and reading scores among elementary students on a four-day schedule. A similar study found no significant differences (Hewitt & Denny, 2011).
- School principals, teachers, parents, and students reported believing that students learned just as much or slightly more in the 4dsw than in a 5dsw, and that the difference in minutes of instructional time had no real effect on student achievement (Kilburn et al., 2021).
- Thompson et al. (2023) found “minimal and non-significant differences” in the test scores of third-graders who attended kindergarten on a four-day schedule between 2014 and 2016 and third-graders who went to kindergarten on a five-day schedule during the same period.
- Morton (2023) found that a four-day week had no detectable effect on ACT scores.
- Thompson and Ward (2022) suggest that four-day school weeks that operate with adequate levels of time in school (32 hours per week) have no clear negative effect on achievement and, instead, that it is operating four-day school weeks in a low-time-in-school environment (29.95 hours per week) that should be cautioned against.

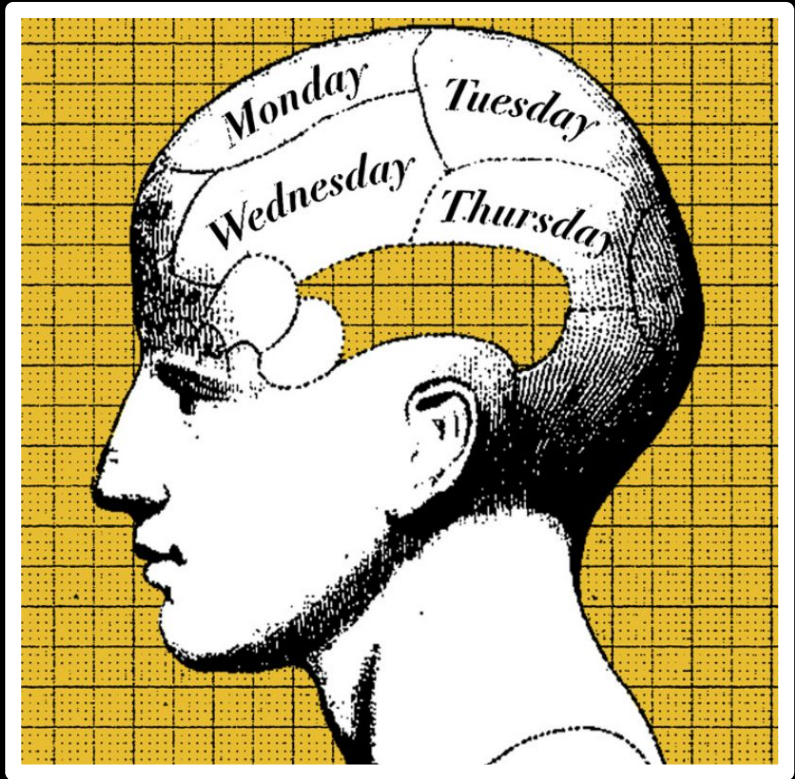
WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH SUGGEST?

- Kilburn et al. (2021) found improvements in student attendance, behavioral and emotional well-being, and school climate. However, the same researchers found no difference in the areas of sleep, fatigue, and student achievement.
- Morton (2023) found that four-day weeks led to calmer and safer schools. Results indicate that 4-day school weeks decrease per-pupil bullying incidents by approximately 39% and per-pupil fighting incidents by approximately 31%.
- The Rand Corporation (2021) found that elementary students in 4dsw districts got more school-week sleep than their peers in 5dsw districts, but there was no difference in the amount of sleep that middle and high school students got during the school week in 4dsw and 5dsw districts. The researchers also found that elementary parents indicated no significant difference in the perceived stress of 4dsw and 5dsw parents. However, focus group parents across all 4dsw districts felt it allowed more flexibility in their schedules and made it easier to spend time together as family.

IS THE FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK JUST FOR SMALL SCHOOLS? SMALL DISTRICTS?

- No, many large districts are also making the transition using YMCA, district childcare, teenage babysitters, and new childcare options.
 - Colorado School District (22,600 students)
 - Independence ISD- Missouri (17,497 students)

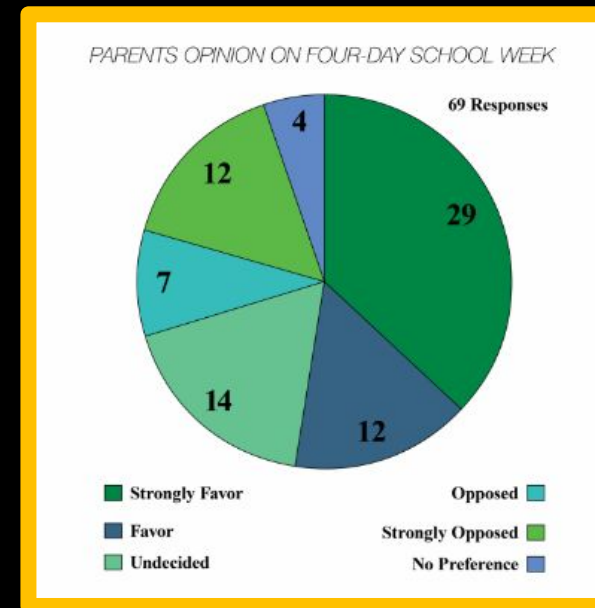
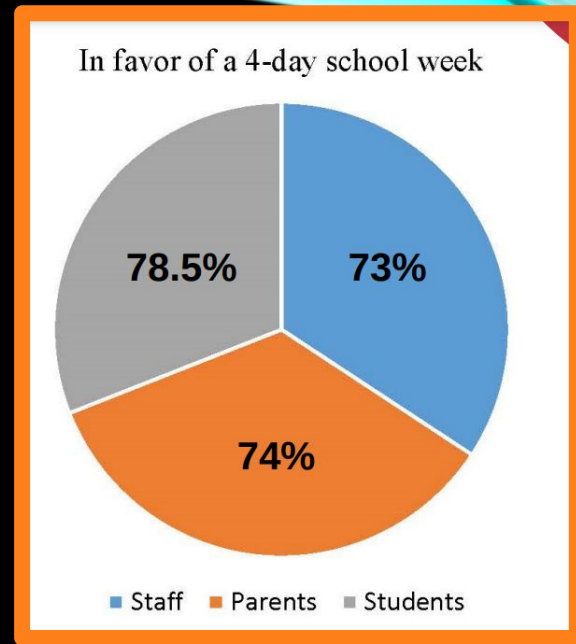
SO.....WHAT DOES A TRUE 4-DAY SCHOOL WEEK LOOK LIKE?



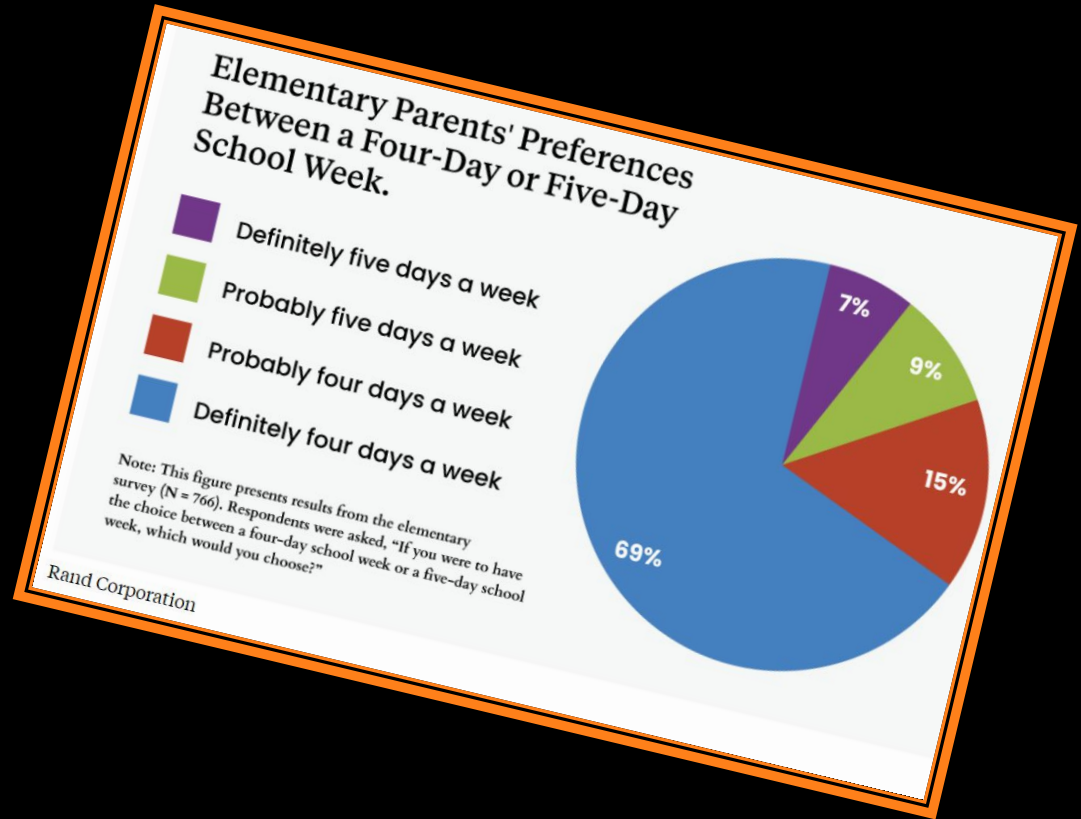
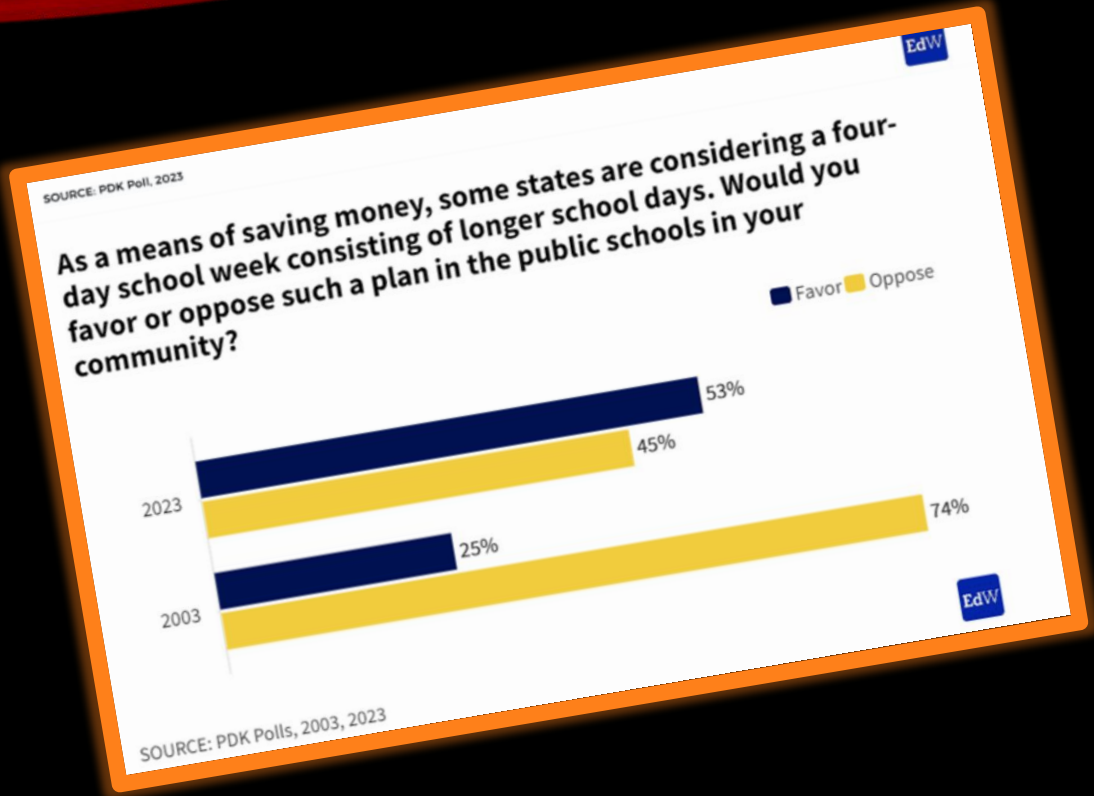
- Staff and students would have an extended day Monday-Thursday with Fridays off OR an extended day Tuesday- Fridays with Mondays off.
- Schools without a true 4-day week (teachers attend Fridays or every other Friday for professional development/workday) do not reap the benefits and many teachers report feeling more overwhelmed.

SURVEY RESULTS

- Prior to the four-day school week transition, most schools researched sent surveys to staff, students, and parent/guardians. They reported that the majority of parents, staff, and students wanted a four-day work week prior to implementation.
- School district were often surprised by the results and quickly realized that the loudest people are not always the majority. There is often a silent majority.



SURVEY RESULTS



THE MATH.....

(BASED ON THE 2024-25 CALENDAR)

- **Five-day week:**

- Student contact time 170 days x 6.5 hrs= 1,105 hrs/ 66,300 min
- Teacher work time 183 days x 7.5 hrs= 1,372.5 hrs/ 82,350 min

- **Four-day week:**

- Student contact time 140 days x 7.89 hrs= 1,105 hrs/ 66,300 min
- Teacher work time 152.5 days x 9 hrs= 1,372.5 hrs/ 82,350 min

- To ensure student contact time, students would come to school for 7 hours and 53 minutes a day.

- Possible schedule 8:00-3:53

- Teachers would work a 9-hour day

- Possible schedule 7:30-4:30

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- An 8-hour school day would be EXTREMELY difficult for kindergarten students . We might want to look at a morning/afternoon overlapping day, 5-hour days for each group with an overlapping 2-hour social time
- Kenai and Soldotna may have more parental pushback. School schedules can look different. Maybe some schools have a 4-day week and others have the traditional 5-day week.
- Would there be overtime for paraprofessionals on extended days? Overtime could potentially make-up for money lost.
- Would substitute pay be prorated for a longer day?



THINGS TO CONSIDER



- Many schools researched supplied a “Friday” sack breakfast/lunch on Thursday for those students that qualify for free and reduced lunch.
- Independence School District (Missouri) offers \$30 per day to help low-income families afford daycare. Teaching applications in this district increased four-fold.
- If student contact time is listed in days, the district would have to apply for a waiver from the state to do contact time in minutes. This is possible since Southeast Island School District has had a four-day week since 2013.

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