

### **How were the committees for this initiative formed?**

As with any committee brought together to work on something that impacts the students and staff of the ISD, district leadership cast a wide net among the ISD population to ensure broad, fair, and accurate representation. In an effort to include parents as partners in decisions affecting their children and families, a committee of parents, staff, and community representatives was formed. Representatives from local businesses, the three collective bargaining units, local nonprofits, current ISD students, and other community partners were also included in the committees. Recommendations for committee members were based on outreach to administrators, the Chamber of Commerce, and people who work in the schools. The time commitment of a committee member is extensive; not everyone recommended was interested or able to join. The pool of prospective committee members was narrowed to the number needed to address the tasks at hand within a reasonable and timely manner.

There are three committees: Calendar Committee, Early Education / Kids' Safari Committee, and Fifth-Day Committee. They began meeting in September and October, and will continue to do so until they meet committee objectives. Upon its completion, all of the work will be presented to the Board of Education at future monthly board meetings.

### **If the four day instructional week is approved, will it go into effect next year?**

Yes - if approved by the Board of Education, the four-day school week would begin August 2023, for the 2023-2024 school year.

### **When will a calendar be available to see?**

As is the process each year, a Calendar Committee spends weeks in the fall working on a calendar draft for the upcoming school year. These are usually presented to the Board of Education in January. This year, because we're entertaining the possibility of moving to a four-day school week, our calendar committee was formed and began work sooner to ensure enough time for input and editing. The committee's goal is to have both a four-day and a five-day calendar ready to present to the Board of Education at the November board meeting. Any approved versions of the 2023-2024 school year calendar will be posted to our [online Four Day Information Center](#).

### **What day will be the day off on the calendar?**

Monday - most national holidays fall on Mondays, so we've always had a handful of Mondays scheduled off anyway during the school year. Monday off is the best option to both accommodate families and stay within the parameters of the state-mandated start date and a school year end date prior to Memorial Day.

### **How long will the school day be?**

In terms of the length of the school day, there are both instructional minutes and passing time (lunch, time to get in between classes, recess.) If we move five days worth of time into four days, the instructional time and passing time will be adjusted to scale. District leadership will not reduce the amount of instructional time, which means the calendar drafts are resulting in an approximate 40-minute increase in the length of the school day. However, the exact times and

numbers of minutes are determined by the Calendar Committee, so that information will not be finalized until the Board of Education approves the final calendars.

**What will the beginning and ending times be for each of the schools?**

This information has not been completely decided, but will be after the Board of Education approves the final calendars. We do not intend on changing tiers across levels; in other words, high schools will still start before elementary schools.

**Will meals be provided on the Mondays we don't have school?**

The district will provide meals on the Mondays that school is not in session. The logistics have not been finalized, but this will likely work the way that Kids Safari does at combined sites when school is not in session. We will not offer meals at every building on Mondays, but all ISD families and staff are welcome to eat at any site where meals are offered.

**Will teachers be forced to work the 5<sup>th</sup> day?**

During most months, teachers will come in for one day. This is part of the work the calendar committee is doing. That time will be designated as either a "work day," a "professional development day," or some combination of the two. Outside of that one day, teachers will have all the Mondays off that students do.

There will be an opportunity for teachers to earn extra income by coming in on Mondays to help run the enrichment opportunities for students: tutoring, clubs, remediation, etc. Staff would be paid for this time and it would be voluntary. The district is also looking at expanding Career Ladder opportunities to allow for more teacher participation. If the Board of Education approves a four-day school week for the 2023-2024 school year, the district will work to finalize further details such as specific opportunities, hours, and pay.

**Will the school year start earlier or extend into June if we switch to a four day week?**

No - due to Missouri state statute, the start of public school cannot occur any earlier than 14 days prior to Labor Day. The calendar committee has been working to conclude the school year prior to Memorial Day in both the four-day and five-day versions of the 2023-2024 calendar.

**I am an ISD employee. Will this affect my sick time or personal leave time?**

No - the change to a four-day instructional week will not affect the amount of sick time or personal leave time offered to employees.

**I am a classified ISD employee. How would the move to a four-day school week affect my pay?**

For most classified employees, the number of hours will remain the same. Instead of working five shorter days, you'll work four longer days. We are aware that there is a small number of employee groups whose hours would decrease because of the move to a four-day week, and this is something district leadership is looking at very closely. The goal is to find a way to make adjustments, either by offering work hours in other roles on the "fifth day" or by adjusting pay, so that none of our employees will face a loss of pay, if possible.

**Will summer school continue to be four days a week as it was last summer?**

Summer Success 2022 is the first time the ISD held summer school four days a week instead of the traditional five days for K-12. Though no formal survey was conducted, the general consensus among staff and students was that the four-day school week model was preferred. Regardless of whether the 2023-2024 school year calendar has a four-day or five-day school week, Summer Success will stay on the four-day model for all levels offered (K-12).

**Will our Thanksgiving and Holiday breaks be the same length?**

This is another answer that we won't know until the Board of Education approves final 2023-2024 calendars, but it is not anticipated on current calendar drafts that there will be a significant difference in the length of these breaks on either the four-day or five-day calendar.

**Will this impact snow days?**

There is a possibility that snow day makeups will be held on some of the Mondays that normally would have been scheduled off if a four-day week is used. The Calendar Committee chose this option because the alternative would be to extend the school year past Memorial Day Weekend, possibly into June.

**Will practices and games continue on Mondays?**

Yes - practices and games will continue on Mondays. We are currently working through the logistics of providing transportation to and from practices for middle school students.

**Will extra recess time occur during the day at elementary schools?**

Yes - if we move five days worth of school time into four days, the instructional time and passing time will be adjusted to scale. This means there will be additional recess time added.

**Will early release time continue at the high schools?**

No - early release would not continue. Activities that students and staff participate in during current early release times will be incorporated into either during the four-day school week or during Monday professional development or work day time.

**How often will 5<sup>th</sup> day enrichment opportunities be offered for students?**

Enrichment opportunities will be offered on the Mondays in which staff does not have a professional development day or work day scheduled.

**Why consider a four-day school week?**

This is not a cost-savings measure. Teacher and staff recruitment and retention is something that districts across the country are struggling with as we face the impacts of the Great Resignation following COVID. Many teachers retired during the height of the pandemic or chose a different career path. Coupled with the fact that fewer college graduates are choosing to study the field of education, the industry as a whole has seen an increase in open positions, from bus drivers to custodians, to paraprofessionals to teachers. Education is now also competing with other businesses and industries that are in a position to be more flexible with hours. We consider the onboarding and training of all of our staff members as an investment into the ISD,

and we want to make sure our quality employees stay with us. The ISD was fortunate that we began the year with all of our teaching positions filled, but there were instances where we had to consolidate or reduce sections in several of our buildings. Many classified positions remain unfilled due to a lack of applicants. We believe the four-day instructional week model will potentially help us keep the great employees we have, as well as attract new people to join our community.

**What does a four-day week actually look like?**

The ISD has not made any decisions about day or time changes, but in theory, it would look something like the graphic below. Instead of the current five school days, teachers and students would instead attend four longer school days. As we look at adjusting schedules, we are working to keep approximately the same amount of *instructional minutes*, which means there might be adjustments in things like lunch periods, passing time in between classes, etc. That fifth day (Monday in the example below), would be used once a month for teacher and staff Professional Development or other DESE-required training (instead of our current model of closing school on sporadically scheduled days throughout the school year.) Some departments and services may stay on a five-day schedule that will allow for work in buildings when there are no students or staff present.

*Example*

	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI
	8 am				
	3 pm				

  

<b>No school Monday</b>	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI
<b>Start 15 min earlier</b>	7:45 am	7:45 am	7:45 am	7:45 am
<b>End 30 min later</b>	3:30 pm	3:30 pm	3:30 pm	3:30 pm

**What opportunities is the district exploring for parents who work five days a week?**

In the multiple conversations that ISD leadership has had with superintendents and others in four-day school week districts across the country, the resounding response is that there are great opportunities to have extended learning opportunities on the 5th day. The ISD is currently working through plans for fifth-day opportunities which could include childcare, enhanced learning opportunities, and community partnerships, among multiple other possibilities.

**Will my student spend less time in the classroom?**

While the ISD has not made any decisions or changes, we are working toward a plan that would actually increase the *value* of the time students spend. While there would be fewer days on the school calendar, the length of the day would be increased to have approximately the same amount of classroom instruction. For example, on any given current school day, there is time allotted to get from class to class, lunch periods, etc. Any plans to move to a four day school week would include streamlining the school day so any time change is accounted for and there is no learning loss.