

DEIC Findings on 4-Day vs. 5-day School Week

Gladewater ISD School Board Meeting
March 25th, 2024



Research

Education researchers have pointed out that little is known about the effects of a four-day week on student outcomes. While large-scale research has 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.

A Rand Corp. study used quantitative and qualitative methods and collected surveys and interviews on the four-day school week experience in Idaho, New Mexico and Oklahoma. The research team examined student achievement, student health outcomes (sleep and physical activity), cost savings and more. The report highlights positive qualitative findings, such as improvements in student attendance, behavioral and emotional well-being, and school climate. But it also indicates when there was no difference in quantitative data, including in the areas of sleep, fatigue and student achievement.

A report from Oregon State University and NWEA on the effects of four-day school weeks on student achievement and within-year growth found very little difference on rural district academic effects, but a more significant difference for four-day schools in suburban areas. The report also found that reading suffered more than math on four-day schedules.

A study in the journal of Educational Research and Policy Analysis showed that shortened schedules can lead to calmer and safer schools. Across Oklahoma, 411 districts adopted the four-day model for at least some of their schools. Researchers found that Oklahoma high schools saw less fighting and bullying among students after switching from a five-day-a-week schedule to a four-day schedule. However, the researchers also found that a four-day schedule had “no detectable effect” on student attendance or scores on the ACT college entrance exam.

A 2021 study of four-day school weeks in Idaho, New Mexico, and Oklahoma conducted by the RAND Corporation found that leaders in districts with the abbreviated schedule believed it gave them a competitive edge in recruitment and retention, with many reporting long-empty vacancies finally being filled and more job applications when there were openings.

A 2022 report from the Texas Tribune stated that the switch to four-day school weeks has recently become popular among smaller and rural school districts across Texas that need an attractive incentive to recruit and retain teachers and that don't always have the financial resources to dish out dramatic pay increases like in bigger districts. The Mineral Wells district's base pay is \$45,000 for teachers. But it pales in comparison to districts like the Houston Independent School District, the largest district in the state, which has raised the starting salary for teachers to \$61,500 for this school year, up from \$56,869 in the 2021-22 school year. Other rural districts have made the same jump to four-day school weeks as they deal with unfilled positions and retention issues. Small, rural districts in various parts of the state, such as Devers, Athens, Jasper and Chico, have also made the switch.

East Texas 4-Day Districts

- Alba Golden ISD
- Alto ISD
- Apple Springs ISD: Started 2021-22 school year. Mondays off, school days 7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Athens ISD: Started 2019-20. Fridays off. School day is 7:10 a.m. to 3:55 p.m.
- Corrigan-Camden ISD: Started 2020-21 school year. Fridays off.
- DeKalb ISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off.
- Devers ISD: Started 2019-20. Fridays off.
- Elkhart ISD: Started 2023-2024. Fridays off
- Frankston ISD: Started 2023-2024. Monday's off.
- Grapeland ISD
- Hardin ISD: Hybrid schedule started 2022-23. 5-day weeks in August, September, January and May. Fridays off rest of the year.
- Hubbard ISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off.
- Hull-Daisetta ISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off.
- Jasper ISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off.
- Latexo ISD: Flex Fridays started 2020-21.
- Leverett's Chapel ISD
- Liberty ISD: Started 2021-22. Fridays off. 7:30 a.m. to 3:40 p.m. school days.
- Malta ISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off. 7:25 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.
- New Boston ISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off.
- New Diana: Started 2023-24. Fridays off.
- New Summerfield ISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off.
- Overton ISD
- Pewitt CISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off.
- Rains ISD
- Rusk ISD
- Sanger ISD
- Slocum ISD
- Sulphur Bluff ISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off.
- Timpson ISD: Started 2022-23. Fridays off.

Findings from Texas Schools

Pros

- Recruitment of Staff
- Retention of Staff
- Increased Staff Morale
- Decrease in Discipline Referrals
- Decrease in Student & Staff Absences
- Increased Professional Development Time
- Some Financial Savings

Cons

- Younger students have greater challenges with a shorter week
- Shared Staff Concerns
- Compressed Timeline/ No wasted Instruction Time
- Food Service Availability for Students
- Possible concerns with after school activities

GISD Survey Results

Parents (#1) 299 Responses; 72% for 4-Day

Parents (#2) 643 Responses; 67% for 4-Day

Employee (#1) 174 Responses; 92% for 4-Day

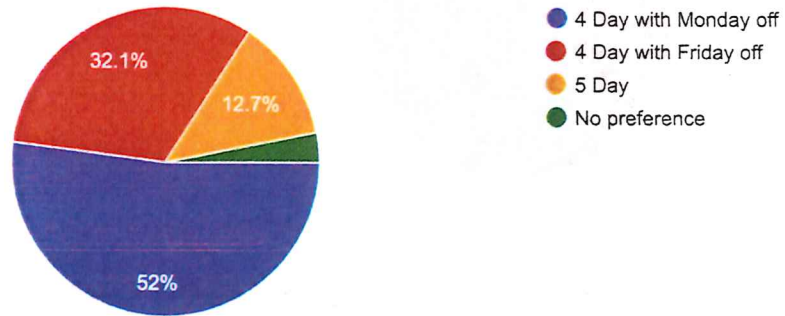
Employee (#2) 251 Responses: 78% for 4-Day; 10% No Opinion

Students (6th-12th grade) 610 Responses: 78% for 4-Day

Employee Survey #3

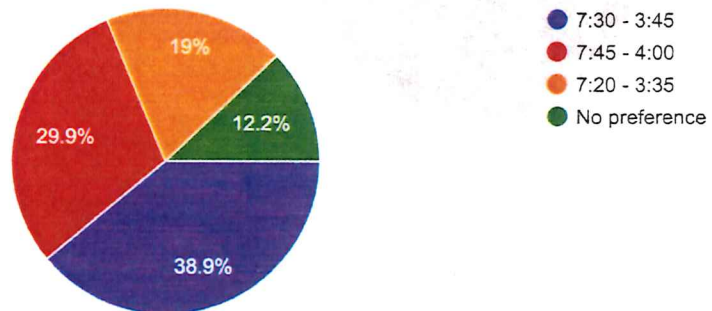
Which calendar would you prefer?

221 responses



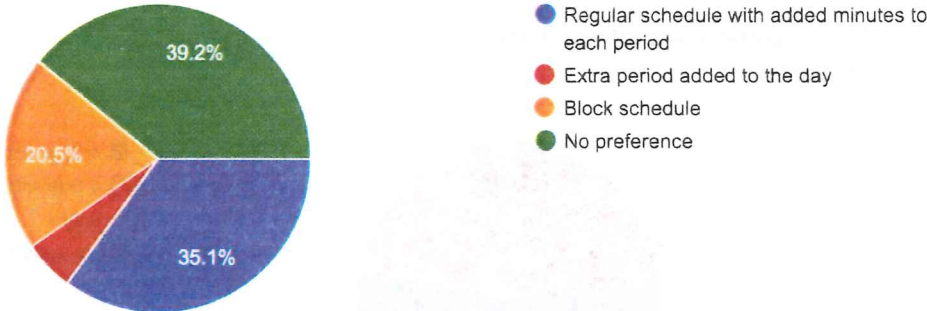
If a 4 day work week is approved, which start and end times would you prefer?

221 responses



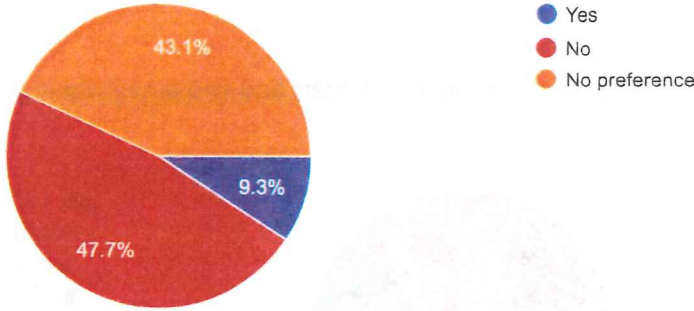
For GMS and GHS: Which type of schedule would you prefer if a 4 day week is approved?

171 responses



Would you prefer for parent/teacher conferences to be added back on the calendar?

216 responses



Questions:

1. What evidence do you have that a four-day week is good for kids? Four-day week seems to be good for the grown people, good for recruiting. We still have to teach kids. How is this good for them?
2. How UIL events, across all GISD campuses, will be addressed or scheduled or rescheduled due to changes? Even with our current 5 day a week calendar, UIL events take students time out of the classroom.

Comments:

1. I am wondering what the district would do for child care on the Monday or Fridays we would be here for a 4-day work week. I have a small child and both me and my wife are employees of the district. We do not have the funds to pay for child care so she would be with one of us on these days even if there were meetings scheduled.
2. I would like to see them stagger school start and dismissal times by campuses so we are not here after school for 45 minutes -1 hour waiting for students to be picked up. And that is a normal dismissal when there aren't any problems. I am for the 4-day week, so many benefits!
3. There are several area schools that have successfully implemented the 4-day week. It seems prudent to query those administrators and teachers regarding the schedules' good and bad points, as well as implementation practices that make or made the transition smooth.
4. I think that if we are on a four-day week we will have more teachers that will apply to the district.
5. I work with the students from Truman Smith. My suggestion is that if this passes, a meeting with staff over there needs to take place as soon as possible because an earlier start time will definitely affect the schedule at Truman as far as having students ready for bus arrival.
6. Possibly offer child care options for younger students and extra pay for GISD staff
7. My suggestion to help with drop off and dismissal is to stagger bus times. Primary school starts at 7:20 and all the buses pick up/drop off their first, Middle school and Weldon start at 7:30 and buses drop off/Pick up second at the same time. Teachers would walk students to the buses. And high school would start at 7:45 and be picked up/dropped off last.
8. I filled this out keeping in mind my students' concerns regarding a four-day week. Every one of them didn't want an earlier start time, but those in after school activities voiced concern about the possible extension of practice times.
9. I would like to see us wait a year to think through the four-day week. I know that it MIGHT bring in some teachers, but there are no guarantees. I think an extended day would work for older students but I do worry about the younger students. I would like an extra day off but some of the cons worry me for the students. We are here for the students and not just for ourselves. Love our GISD!
10. I am concerned about the extended day being too long for younger students. I would like for the district to consider a schedule where instruction mirrors grading periods and then staff and students can be off for a week or two. This would allow teachers to have a planning day that includes data review and planning for the next instructional 9-week period. I think there is a chance this might decrease teacher absences.
11. I am a parent & GISD employee and look forward to something new for our staff and kids. I truly believe that if the 4 day gets approved, no matter if it's Monday or Friday off will help our district out. I think as a parent and educator that we need to have that extra time for our households. For doctor's appointments, travel time for those families that travel, or maybe just an extra day to rest and relax after a long week at school.
12. Being a Central Office employee, if we went with a 4-day work week, Fridays off are better for me. School Board meetings will most likely still be on Monday evenings and I need to prepare for those. But I think I would prefer a 5-day week.
13. I would rather see the school year run just a bit into June rather than return as early as 7/30.

GLADEWATER ISD CALENDAR 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR (5-Day DRAFT)



July 2024						
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August 2024						
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ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

Nine-Week Grading Periods / Semesters		
1st Nine Weeks	Aug 12 - Oct 11	44 Days
2nd Nine Weeks	Oct 14 - Dec 19	41 Days
1st Semester = 85 Instructional Days		
3rd Nine Weeks	Jan 7 - Mar 7	41 Days
4th Nine Weeks	Mar 18 - May 22	44 Days
2nd Semester = 85 Instructional Days		
Total Instructional Minutes = 76,710/170 Instructional Days		

Total Instructional Minutes + Prof Dev Waiver = 6 days banked

September 2024						
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March 2025						
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Legend	
[]	Beginning/Ending of Nine-Week Grading Period
[Green]	Professional Learning (Student Holiday)
[Purple]	Teacher Workday (Graduation May 23)
[Blue]	Holiday for Students and Staff
[Pink]	Early Release: 12:55pm Students; 1:55 Employees
[Yellow]	STAAR-EOC Testing Window
[Orange]	Summer Hours: All GISD Offices Closed on Fridays

New Employee Orientation: July 30 & 31

October 2024						
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November 2024						
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School Closings	
School closings due to weather or other circumstances will be announced on TV Channels 7,19, and 56. School closings will also be announced via Blackboard Connect messages, and will be posted on Facebook, Twitter, and the GISD website.	

Early Release: 11/22, 12/19, 3/7, 5/22

May 2025						
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Bad Weather Days: 5/27-30. Student Holidays if not used.

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Presented to GISD Board of Trustees- April 2024

GLADEWATER ISD CALENDAR 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR (4-Day/Monday Off DRAFT)



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August 2024						
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February 2025						
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September 2024						
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October 2024						
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May 2025						
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June 2025						
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ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

Nine-Week Grading Periods / Semesters		
1st Nine Weeks	Aug 6 - Oct 4	36 Days
2nd Nine Weeks	Oct 8 - Dec 20	40 Days
1st Semester = 76 Instructional Days		
3rd Nine Weeks	Jan 7 - Mar 7	36 Days
4th Nine Weeks	Mar 18 - May 29	42 Days
2nd Semester = 78 Instructional Days		
Total Instructional Minutes = 76,230/154 Instructional Days		

Total Instructional Minutes + Prof Dev Waiver = 4 days banked

Legend	
[]	Beginning/Ending of Nine-Week Grading Period
[Green]	Professional Learning (Student Holiday)
[Red]	Teacher Workday (Graduation May 30)
[Blue]	Holiday for Students and Staff
[Pink]	
[Grey]	
[Yellow]	STAAR-EOC Testing Window
[Orange]	Summer Hours: All GISD Offices Closed on Fridays

New Employee Orientation: July 30 & 31

School Closings	
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Bad Weather Days: May 5, 12, 19.	

GLADEWATER ISD CALENDAR 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR (4-Day/Friday Off DRAFT)



July 2024						
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August 2024						
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Total Instructional Minutes + Prof Dev Waiver = 3 days banked

Legend	
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[Purple Box]	Teacher Workday (Graduation May 30)
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