



# FOUR DAY SCHOOL WEEK



## PROS AND CONS



# PRESENTATION STYLE

Over the years we have been to many of these presentations during which powerpoint slides are read to us by numerous and various presenters. One of the most infuriating elements of these presentations is when the presenter reads the slide to the audience, as if educated people can't read the slides. Therefore, Mr. Benoit and I are going to try a different style of presentation and we hope you will enjoy it more than the traditional and typical style to which we've become accustomed and to which we've grown to hate...



# DEFINITIONS

**VARIABLE SCHOOL CALENDAR:** A school calendar that deviates from the traditional calendar: Less than 180, “year round”, “extended year”

**CONDENSED SCHOOL CALENDAR:** Typically referred to as the “four day week”. In NM, this is normally a 150 day school year that meets 1080 hours (extended days, 4 days/wk)

**TRADITIONAL SCHOOL CALENDAR:** A school calendar that is 180 days.



# SJM 12 – Variable School Calendar Act

- 1080 Hours (allowed for variations)
- Legislature reacts to concerns over “abuses” (perceived)
- SJM 12 calls for a study of various school calendars in place in NM and effects on teaching and learning



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. Can four-day school weeks help districts save money?
- 2. What should we consider when moving to a four-day week?
- 3. What is the effect of a four-day week on students, staff and the community?



# Can four-day school weeks help districts save money?

## TRANSPORTATION:

- SALARIES
- FUEL
- WEAR AND TEAR

## CAFETERIA:

- SALARIES
- FOOD AND SUPPLIES

## UTILITIES





# What should we consider when moving to a four-day week?

## IMPACT ON ALL CONSTITUENTS

- Students
  - Time Management
  - Extra-Curricular Impacts
- Teachers
  - Curriculum Scope and Sequence
  - Time Management
- Administration/Board
- Parents
  - Child Care
- Community at-large
  - Time out of School
  - PERCEPTION

# ??? QUESTIONS ???

- What are the pros and cons?
  - Teacher Perspective
  - Parent Perspective
  - Student Perspective
- What Changes/Challenges were you presented with?
  - Curriculum Scope and Sequence
  - Teaching Strategies
  - Length of Day/Period
  - Unique District Issues (NMCCH)





# What Was Asked?

## ■ QUALITY OF EDUCATION SURVEY

- 2007 93% support 4-day schedule (59%)
- 2008 97% support 4-day schedule (89%)
- 2009 97% support 4-day schedule (86%)
- 2010 93% support 4-day schedule (65%)





# What Was Asked?

## ■ Staff Survey

- What are the Pros/Cons from Teacher Perspective?
- What are the Pros/Cons from Parent Perspective?
- What are the Pros/Cons from Student Perspective?
- What adjustments or considerations impacted Curriculum Scope and Sequence?
- Were there impacts on teaching strategies?
- Is length of school day an issue?

# Teacher Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Longer Classes</li><li>■ Students better prepared</li><li>■ Improved Attendance</li><li>■ Re-Teaching, practice, and discussion time</li><li>■ Fridays are great for<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Prep</li><li>In-Service</li><li>Admin Mtgs</li><li>Appointments</li><li>Trips</li><li>Admin Work</li></ul></li><li>■ Increase Family Time on Sat/Sun</li><li>■ Labs are easier to plan/complete</li><li>■ Ancillary service time</li><li>■ Classroom Admin Duties efficient</li><li>■ Students out less for activities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Creativity/Planning</li><li>■ Dr's Closed Friday is a problem</li><li>■ Hard to make up missed time</li><li>■ Hard to make up missed time</li></ul>

# Parent Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ “Latch Key” kids are home shorter periods of time before parents. Parents only have to find “one day” of care, rather than 5 days of 1-2 hours each)</li><li>■ Older kids can work (at home or employed) on day off</li><li>■ Students miss less school for athletics and other events or appointments</li><li>■ Students (and staff) seem “more ready to go” each week</li><li>■ Savings in fuel and clothing (purchase and upkeep)</li><li>■ Students who already struggle with school like only going 4 days</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Child Care Issues (think out of the box?)</li><li>■ Day is long, kids come home hungry</li></ul>



# Student Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Have Fridays off to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sleep In</li><li>Work</li><li>Complete Projects/Homework</li><li>Complete concurrent courses</li></ul></li><li>■ More “ready to go” on Monday</li><li>■ Miss Less School</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Day is long, go home hungry</li><li>■ Miss Less School</li></ul>



# CURRICULUM COMMENTS

- “Longer Lessons allow for material to be covered more thoroughly on a regular basis”
- “Preparation time is better used”
- “Fridays are a great day for uninterrupted preparation time”
- “I have been challenged to vary my instructional styles daily”
- “I have more time for enrichment activities”
- “Time in class” actually increased”

# On Teaching Strategies...

- “I have always changed strategies to meet needs of students...the four day week did not change that...More time to gauge effectiveness of strategies with individuals and groups.”
- “Free Days” are even more absurd on a four day week than a five day week!



# Summary of Research: What Works?

- Student drop-out rates decline.
- Student disciplinary referrals decrease.
- Student achievement is generally not affected either positively or negatively.
- Student and teacher attendance improves
- Students and teachers benefit from less interrupted class time as a result of longer class periods and fewer transitions at all grade levels. This increases the efficiency of instruction.
- Marked improvement in school morale .
- More time for quality staff development
- Shift of extracurricular activities and personal business
- Students better able to manage part-time employment.
- Benefits for the School in General:
  - Significant savings on utility bills, substitute teacher pay, school buses, and building wear and tear.
- Can make up school cancelations





# Summary of Research: Concerns

- Child care issues:
  - (1) Full Day Care vs (5) short (1-2 hour) sessions of child care???
  - High School Kids (or programs) can provide care?
- Primary-aged students: Is longer day an issue?
- At-risk students: Retention Difficulties
- School reform movement: Does four day week conflict with school reform idea that students need more time in school?
- Community Norms? Are there other activities for kids?



# Summary of Research: Recommendations

- Become as familiar with the concepts and implications of a four-day week as possible. Talk to other administrators and teachers using this schedule.
- Share and discuss Information with all stakeholders.
- Design the schedule to accommodate the needs of teachers and students. Make sure all changes stay within accreditation guidelines.
- Some restructuring and repacing of the curriculum will be necessary.
- Provide ample time for staff development.
- Annually Monitor staff, students, and community on thoughts and feelings
- Allow a sufficient time period for implementation and evaluation
  - Is One Year Enough?
  - How do we assess success?
    - Morale
    - Test Scores
    - Other?
- Consider providing enrichment activities on non-school days

# FEEL FREE TO CALL

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