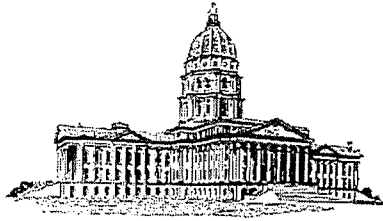


STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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BILL RHILEY
80TH HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE

February 15, 2023

Chairman Adam Thomas
Committee on Education
Room 218-N

I am writing this letter of support for House Bill 2224. I am in favor of increasing the number of school days and hours that must be provided by school districts for each school year.

Mr. Chairman, educating students must not be about starting and ending the school year as quickly as possible.

Currently, local school boards seem to set the school calendar based on the minimum days and minimum hours that are set in statute. School boards could add days to their school year. This added time results in more student contact.

Student contact is what teachers need to be effective. More school days, less time out of school will create increase opportunities for students to learn the material.

The other extreme is what we have seen over the last two years. We have seen that with less teacher contact, student learning will suffer, and test scores go down.

Another benefit of a longer school calendar is the flexibility. Schools can change curriculum and add vocational and extra-curricular classes.

Mr. Chair, I support HB 2224 and would like to recommend that you work the bill and send it to the Committee of the Whole to be heard.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Rhiley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Rhiley Sr
80th District Kansas House of Representatives

House Education Committee 2023
February 15, 2023
Attachment: _____

2022 Kansas Statutes

72-3115. School term; exceptions; conditions; employment of noncertificated personnel. (a)

Subject to the other provisions of this section, a school term during which public school shall be maintained in each school year by each school district organized under the laws of this state shall consist of not less than 186 school days for pupils attending kindergarten or any of the grades one through 11 and not less than 181 school days for pupils attending grade 12.

(b) Subject to a policy developed and adopted by the board of any school district, the board may provide for a school term consisting of school hours. A school term provided for in a policy adopted under this subsection shall consist of: (1) For pupils attending kindergarten, not less than 465 school hours in each school year; and (2) for pupils attending any of the grades one through 11, not less than 1,116 school hours in each school year; and (3) for pupils attending grade 12, not less than 1,086 school hours in each school year. Each board of education which develops and adopts a policy providing for a school term in accordance with this subsection shall notify the state board of education thereof on or before September 15 in each school year for which the policy is to be in effect.

(c) Subject to a plan developed and adopted by the board of any school district, the board may schedule the school days required for a school term provided for under subsection (a), or the school hours required for a school term provided for in a policy adopted under subsection (b), on a trimestral or quarterly basis. Each board of education which develops and adopts a plan providing for the scheduling of the school days or school hours of the school term on a trimestral or quarterly basis shall submit the plan to the state board of education for approval prior to implementation. The plan shall be prepared in such form and manner as the state board shall require and shall be submitted at a time or times to be determined and specified by the state board.

(d) Subject to a policy developed and adopted by the board of any district as an adjunct to the district's disciplinary policy or as a part of the district's school improvement plan, the board may schedule school days in addition to the school days scheduled for a school term provided for under subsection (a), or school hours in addition to the school hours scheduled for a school term provided for in a policy adopted under subsection (b), or both such additional school days and school hours for pupils who are in need of remedial education or who are subject to disciplinary measures imposed under the district's disciplinary policy. Any school day or school hour scheduled for a pupil under a policy adopted under this subsection may be scheduled on weekends, before or after regular school hours, and during the summer months. Inexcusable absence from school on any school day or during any school hour by any pupil for whom additional school days or school hours have been scheduled under a policy adopted under this subsection shall be counted as an inexcusable absence from school for the purposes of K.S.A. 72-3121, and amendments thereto.

(e) If the board of any school district, or its designee, shall determine that inclement weather will cause hazardous driving conditions, the board, or its designee, may close any or all of the schools within the district. The amount of time pupils have been in attendance when such determination is made shall be considered a school day of a school term or shall be considered the number of school hours for pupils to be in attendance at school in a day, whichever is applicable. Consonant with the other provisions of this section, a board may schedule any number of days or hours in excess of the regularly scheduled school days or school hours which the board determines will be necessary to compensate for those school days or school hours that schools of the district will remain closed during the school term due to hazardous driving conditions. If the number of days or hours schools remain closed due to hazardous driving conditions exceeds the number of days or hours scheduled by the board to compensate for such school days or school hours, the excess number of days or hours, not to exceed whichever is the lesser of (1) the number of compensatory days or hours scheduled by the board or (2) five days or the number of school hours regularly scheduled in five days, that schools remain closed due to such conditions shall be considered school days or school hours.

(f) The state board of education may waive the requirements of law relating to the duration of the school term upon application for such waiver by a school district. Such waiver may be granted by the state board of education upon: (1) Certification by a board that, due to the persistence of inclement weather, hazardous driving conditions have existed in the school district for an inordinate period of time; and (2) a determination by the state board that the school district cannot reasonably adjust its schedule to comply with statutory requirements. Such waiver shall not exempt a school district from providing a school offering for each pupil which is substantially equivalent to that required by law.

(g) Time reserved for parent-teacher conferences for discussions on the progress of pupils may be considered part of the school term.

(h) Time reserved for staff development or inservice training programs for the purpose of improving staff skills, developing competency in new or highly specialized fields, improving instructional techniques, or curriculum planning and study may be considered part of the school term for an aggregate amount of time equal to the amount of time in excess of the school term which is scheduled by a board of education for similar activities.

(i) Boards of education may employ noncertificated personnel to supervise pupils for noninstructional activities.

History: L. 1876, ch. 122, art. 5, § 2; R.S. 1923, 72-1106; L. 1943, ch. 248, § 38; L. 1957, ch. 384, § 1; L. 1969, ch. 314, § 1; L. 1975, ch. 366, § 1; L. 1975, ch. 367, § 1; L. 1976, ch. 309, § 1; L. 1977, ch. 243, § 1; L. 1978, ch. 288, § 1; L. 1979, ch. 221, § 8; L. 1980, ch. 217, § 1; L. 1982, ch. 293, § 1; L. 1984, ch. 261, § 6; L. 1984, ch. 262, § 2; L. 1991, ch. 220, § 1; L. 1991, ch. 219, § 1; L. 1992, ch. 280, § 40; L. 2001, ch. 215, § 11; July 1.

Legislative History of KSA 72-3115 (previously, 72-1106*)

Year	Session Ch.	Section	# Days	# Hours	Amendments to Law (Duration of School Term)
2001 [S Sub. for HB 2336]	215	11	186/ 181 (grade 12) 186 (K - 2.5 hours)	Alternative (by policy): K: 465 1-11: 1,116 12: 1,086	Modifies the school finance formula and addresses other education and taxation policy matters. Specific to the minimum school term requirements, the bill updates language to retain the most recent (1994-95 school year) criteria. Further, it permits a school district to adopt a policy that extends the school term for pupils in need of remediation or for disciplinary purposes. A school district board may adopt a disciplinary policy or school improvement plan that includes additional school time for pupils who are in need of remedial education or who are subject to disciplinary measures imposed under the district's disciplinary policy. Any school day or school hour scheduled for a pupil under such a policy may be scheduled on weekends, before or after regular school hours, and during the summer months. Inexcusable absence from school on any school day or during any school hour by a pupil for whom additional school days or school hours have been scheduled under the policy is counted as an inexcusable absence from school for the purposes of enforcing the compulsory school attendance law.
1992 [S Sub. for S Sub. for HB 2892]	280	40	1992-93: 181/ 176 (grade 12) 181 (K - 2.5 hours)	Alternative (by policy): K: 452.5 1-11: 1,086 12: 1,056	The bill establishes the School District Finance and Quality Performance Act, replacing the School District Equalization Act. It extends the minimum school term requirements as follows: 1992-1993 school year: grades 1-11, 181 six-hour days; grade 12, 176 six-hour days; and kindergarten, 181 two and one-half hour days. In addition, in connection with school reform provisions in the act, at least two days of inservice education for district personnel must be required. (Hours alternative: grades 1-11 -- 1,086 hours; grade 12 -- 1,056 hours; and kindergarten, 425.5 hours)
			1993-94: 183/ 178 (grade 12) 183 (K - 2.5 hours)	Alternative (by policy): K: 457.5 1-11: 1,098 12: 1,068	Extends the minimum school term requirement for the 1993-1994 school year as follows: Grades 1-11, 183 six-hour days; grade 12, 178 six-hour days; and kindergarten, 183 two and one-half hour days. In addition, at least three days of in-service education must be provided. (Hours alternative: grades 1-11 -- 1,098 hours; grade 12 -- 1,068 hours; and kindergarten, 457.5 hours)
			1994-95, thereafter: 186/ 181 (grade 12) 186 (K - 2.5 hours)	Alternative (by policy): K: 465 1-11: 1,116 12: 1,086	Extends the minimum school term requirement for the 1994-1995 school year and thereafter as follows: Grades 1-11, 186 six-hour days; grade 12, 181 six-hour days; and kindergarten, 186 two and one-half hour days. In addition, at least three days of in-service education must be provided. No specific number of in-service days are specified beyond the minimum school term requirement. (Hours alternative: grades 1-11 -- 1,098 hours; grade 12 -- 1,068 hours; and kindergarten, 457.5 hours)
1991 [SB 47]	219	1	180/ 175 (grade 12) 180 (K - 2.5 hours)	Alternative (by policy): K: 450 1-11: 1,080 12: 1,050	Amends the School District Equalization Act and law establishing the minimum school term in order to eliminate potential financial disincentives that could occur if a school district operates an extended school program based on a trimestral or quarterly concept. In order for a school district to operate an extended school program, using the trimestral or quarterly basis and in compliance with the statutory minimum school term requirement, that plan must first be approved by the State Board of Education.

1991 [SB 63]	220	1	180/ 175 (grade 12) 180 (K - 2.5 hours)	Alternative (by policy): K: 450 1-11: 1,080 12: 1,050	Requires school districts to provide kindergarten programs (under prior law, the provision of kindergarten was optional).
1984 [SB 888]	262	2	180/ 175 (grade 12)	Alternative (by policy): K: 450 1-11: 1,080 12: 1,050	Makes amendments to SB 601 (described below); amendments related to school term are technical in nature.
1984 [SB 601]	261	6	180/ 175 (grade 12)	Alternative (by policy): K: 450 1-11: 1,080 12: 1,050	Allows school district boards of education to enter into agreements for attendance of pupils residing in one school district in any of grades K-12 in another school district or districts (e.g., combination of enrollment for one ore more grades, courses, or units of instruction). Pupils attending school in a district other than the one of residence under such agreement would be counted as regularly enrolled and attending school in the district of their residence for the purposes of the School District Equalization Act (Equalization Act). The minimum school term for pupils enrolled in grade 12 is modified from 180 five-hour days (900 hours) to 175 six-hour days (1,050 hours). The Equalization Act is modified to account for a pupil in grade 12 that has combined enrollment in a school district and postsecondary institution.
1982 [HB 2870]	293	1	180	Alternative (by policy): K: 450 1-11: 1,080 12: 900	Retains prior law relating to school term and creates law in (b) specific to situations in which the school board closes school early because of inclement weather that will cause hazardous driving conditions. Under the prior law, the amount of time of any day in which the school was closed due to hazardous driving conditions could be considered as having had pupils in attendance for six hours. Under the bill, the number of hours that pupils are considered to be in attendance is the number of hours designated in the school board's policy as comprising the school day. (This same standard is applied with regard to days, up to a maximum of five, that may be "forgiven" due to school having remained closed because of hazardous driving conditions.)
1980 [HB 2752]	217	1	180	Alternative (by policy): K: 450 1-11: 1,080 12: 900	Retains standard of 180 school days (6 hours, grades 1-11; 5 hours, grade 12): (a)(1) Further specifies a school day shall consist of not less than 2.5 hours for pupils regularly enrolled in kindergarten if the school maintains kindergarten; Provides new alternative standards, consistent with current law but reflected in terms of hours: (a)(2) School board may, subject to policy adopted by the board, provide for a school term consisting of not less than: 1. 450 school hours for pupils enrolled in kindergarten; 2. 1,080 hours for grades 1-11 pupils; and 3. 900 hours for grade 12 pupils.

1979 [SB 219]	221	8	180	<p>Revises snow days for school. Allows school districts to schedule "any number of days" beyond the minimum school year requirement for which the local school board deems necessary to compensate for school closures due to hazardous driving conditions.</p> <p>Also inserts provision providing that if a district has more days closed due to hazardous driving conditions than what was originally planned for, the district may consider a number of those excess days as school days so long as the number of excess days counted does not exceed the number of compensatory days scheduled by the district or 5 school days, whichever is smaller.</p>
1978 [HB 2157]	288	1	180	<p>Inserts language stating that schools may count up to 5 days during which the school is closed due to hazardous driving conditions as school days so long as the board has scheduled days in excess of the minimum school year to compensate for said days.</p> <p>Also establishes a process by which the State Board of Education (Board) may waive the minimum school year and school day requirements for a district upon application if the following criteria are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Certification by the Board that inclement weather and hazardous driving conditions have existed in the district for an "inordinate number of days;" and 2) Determination by the Board that the district cannot reasonably adjust its schedule to comply with statutory requirements.
1977 [HB 2127]	243	1	180	<p>Makes technical adjustments to the definition of a school day for purposes of a school year. Also removed the 3 hour minimum attendance requirement to allow for a day cancelled due to inclement weather. Inserted language that the amount of time students were in attendance prior to cancelation due to inclement whether shall be considered a school day.</p>
1976 [SB 830]	309	1	180	<p>Requires a "school year" to consist of a minimum of 180 school days that meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 6 hours during which regularly enrolled K-11 students in a school district are under direct supervision of a teacher and engaged in educational activities; and 2) 5 hours during which regularly enrolled 12th grade students are under direct supervision of a teacher while engaged in educational activities. <p>Also inserts language allowing for staff development and in-service training programs to be counted toward determination of the "school day" for an "aggregate amount of time equal to amount of time in excess of the school year which is scheduled by a board of education for similar activities."</p>
1975 [HB 2272]	367	1		<p>Adds language allowing school boards to close schools due a determination that inclement weather will cause hazardous driving conditions. Also allows districts to count the day as a school day if students have been in attendance for at least 3 hours of the day prior to school closure.</p>
1975 [SB 29]	366	1		<p>Removes the definition of a "school month" and added the definition of a "school day" as consisting of 6 hours.</p>
1969 [HB 1229]	314	1		<p>Removes legal holidays as counting towards a "school month." Also stipulated time for parent-teacher conferences may be considered part of the school day. Boards of education are also allowed to employ non-certified personnel to supervise pupils for noninstructional activities.</p>
1957 [HB 458]	384	1		<p>Clarifies that time counted towards a "school month" must be time in which "pupils of a school are under direct supervision of its teacher or teachers while they are engaged together in educational activities."</p>

1943 [HB 149]	248	38			Allows schools to count legal holidays as part of the "school month".
1923	<i>KSA 72-1106</i>				Reorganized statute to be KSA 72-1106
1876	122	5.2			Defines a "school month" as being 4 weeks of 5 days each for 6 hours per day.

*Provisions of KSA 72-1106 were transferred to article 31, which pertains to school attendance.

Kansas Legislative Research Department

Vanessa Solis/Education Week and iStock/Getty images

In the last decade, shortened school weeks have been adopted in more than 1,600 schools in 650 school districts nationwide. Initially seen as a way to cut costs, rural districts in particular have lauded the model as a way to draw in teachers and students looking for more-flexible schedules.

However, implementation of the four-day schedules has varied significantly, and in recent years, the model has sparked heated debates over whether it is consistent with efforts to regain academic ground lost during the pandemic.

In Oklahoma, for example, districts can schedule fewer than 180 days in a school year, as long as they continue to provide 1,080 instructional hours, maintain student academic achievement, and show cost savings—criteria most districts have been unable to meet since the pandemic. That's led to fights between state lawmakers who want to do away with the shortened weeks and rural education leaders who back them.

As educators and policymakers continue to debate the use of shortened school weeks, here are four studies to know about how they can affect students and schools.

1. Maintaining instructional time is critical

At first blush, a 2022 study of the effects of shortened school schedules in 12 states seems pretty bleak. Nationwide, researchers found significantly lower math and English/language arts achievement at schools using four-day weeks during the time period from 2009-2018 than in schools using a traditional schedule.

However, when study author Paul Thompson, a public policy research

professor at Oregon State University, and his colleagues dug deeper, they found instructional time made the difference for student achievement. They found no significant differences in academic achievement between districts that used five-day schedules and those that used four-day schedules, as long as the districts with shorter weeks maintained a high or medium amount of instructional time for students.

The significant drops in math and reading achievement were concentrated in districts that had the least instructional time after moving from a five-day to four-day weekly schedule.

“Low time in school in conjunction with the four-day school week appears to be extremely problematic for academic achievement and school districts and states should be cognizant of these negative consequences,” Thompson concluded.

He suggested that schools could experiment with carving out more teaching time through limiting recess, lunch, or study periods, but should be careful to also track how these types of schedule changes affect student engagement and achievement.

2. Cost savings may be in the details rather than the bottom line

While some rural districts have been using shortened schedules for decades, the biggest momentum for the model came following the 2008 recession, when cash-strapped rural districts were looking for ways to cut costs.

That’s still one of the main reasons districts cite for moving to a four-day week, but a nationwide study by the Education Commission of the States suggests education leaders should not hope for a budget miracle

from schedule changes. The ECS found that districts using shortened weeks trimmed on average .4 percent to 2.5 percent off their budgets.

A more recent study of Oklahoma districts specifically found those that moved to four-day weeks saved about 2 percent of their budgets, driven by savings in noninstructional costs such as operations, transportation, and food services.

3. Shortened schedules may equal calmer schools

Shortened school weeks may have made Oklahoma middle and high schools calmer and safer, though the model has done nothing to improve students' attendance or academic achievement.

A study, in the journal of Educational Research and Policy Analysis, tracked student performance over a dozen years and attendance and discipline over nine years, as 411 districts across the state adopted the four-day model for at least some of their schools.

After moving to shortened weeks, schools saw on average a 39 percent drop in bullying and a 31 percent decline in the number of fights and assaults on campus. To put that into perspective, that's a nearly twice as large an effect as the average 20 percent drop in bullying behaviors seen for common school-based anti-bullying programs.

"You hear over and over again, from students, from teachers, that kids are happier, that there's increased morale, there's improved school climate, there's positive effects on school discipline," said Emily Morton, a research scientist at the Center for School and Student Progress at NWEA and the author of the study.

However, shortened schedules had no effect on discipline problems related to drugs or alcohol, vandalism, truancy, school bus misbehavior,

or bringing weapons to school. Likewise, the study found no significant difference in SAT scores, attendance rates and truancy, or disciplinary infractions for vandalism for high school students who attended under shortened weeks.

4. Urban districts may take a hit

While many rural districts have favored shortened weeks, one of the first urban school districts to adopt the model—School District 27J outside Denver—saw academic and community downsides.

A study released in January found that two years after making the schedule change, the district's implementation costs outweighed its cost savings, while student academic achievement fell significantly. Moreover, retention was 3 percentage points lower for teachers—and 5 percentage points lower for veteran teachers of 15 years or more—in schools with four-day weeks than in similar ones with traditional five-day weeks.

“This finding does not necessarily mean that teachers do not value a [four-day week]. Instead, it suggests that the teachers that [left the district] were unwilling to trade off the higher salaries offered by outside opportunities for the benefits offered by a [four-day week schedule],” researchers concluded.

The researchers found local home values dropped 4 percent in the communities with four-day school weeks compared to those just over the border in a different district with traditional schedules. As a result, homeowners paid \$700 to \$6,000 more than they would have in property taxes.

Takeaways for administrators

The emerging research suggests school and district leaders should think carefully if they choose to implement shortened school weeks, said Morton of NWEA. She recommended that leaders:

- Get community buy-in for the four-day schedule and communicate regularly with both parent and business stakeholders to identify the supports needed. “If parents aren’t gonna be able to support their kids on that extra day, it’s going to be a huge financial hardship for families,” she said.
- Audit instructional minutes for each subject and commit to maintaining or increasing instructional time even with fewer days. “Superintendents need to know that on average we do see negative effects of this schedule,” she said, “so make sure that you are not shortchanging your kids on the amount of time that they’re getting in those subjects.”
- Closely monitor student achievement and engagement and compare the data both to prior district data and those of surrounding districts. “We’ve seen some evidence suggesting negative effects may compound over time, ... so district leaders need to be very attentive to their own students and, if there’s evidence that this is negatively impacting students, ... switch back,” she said.

Sarah D. Sparks

Sarah D. Sparks covers education research, data, and the science of learning for Education Week.