Learning Time in America:
Trends to Reform the American School Calendar

A Snapshot of Federal, State, and Local Action

SPRING 2013 UPDATE

"Over the last several years, momentum has been building across the country to expand learning time for American students. Educators in schools that have expanded beyond the conventional calendar of 180 six-and-a-half-hour days know that more time enables them to broaden and deepen the curriculum, to better address the learning needs of individual students, and to build in opportunities that enrich students' educational experiences."

— Learning Time in America, July 2011

This overview of the state of the expanded learning time movement opened the July 2011 report from the National Center on Time & Learning and Education Commission of the States, Learning Time in America: Trends to Reform the American School Calendar. In the nearly two years since its release, the drive to enable more schools to expand time has grown even more intense. Policy opportunities at both the state and federal levels, combined with significant initiatives in large districts, have acted to shift the concept of expanded time from a secondary education reform strategy to one that has become central to the national effort to improve schools serving high-poverty students.

Why should practitioners and policymakers alike pay close attention to the matter of learning time? Research indicates that the amount of time students have available to engage in learning is a key indicator of their level of achievement at both the individual and the school levels.[1] Consequently, how much time schools have to educate their students holds enormous implications for our ability to adequately prepare the next generation for their individual futures and, in turn, for the capacity of our nation to remain globally competitive. Moreover, research has also identified a yawning gap in spending on children's educational enrichment beyond school, with dollar amounts committed by families in the top quartile rising much faster over the past thirty years than resources committed by those in the bottom quartile.[2] This growing differential among children in learning outside the current school day and year means that, more than ever, schools operate as the primary institution through which our country can hope to equalize opportunity, and, in turn, expanding and strengthening the educational program at high-poverty schools has become a critical lever to achieve such equity.

The National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL), which is dedicated to redesigning and expanding school time to improve opportunities and outcomes for high-poverty students, has joined forces with the Education Commission of the States (ECS), whose mission it is to foster the exchange of ideas on education issues among the states, to produce this snapshot of school time in America. By focusing on some of the key actions that have taken place at the federal, state, and local levels since July 2011, we seek to advance the national conversation about how the nation's schools can harness the power of time to realize a vision of high-quality education for all.

We conclude this brief with an updated version of a number of **public policy recommendations** that we issued in the original report. These revised recommendations take into account the rapidly shifting policy context and provide policymakers a roadmap for how they can best support efforts to effectively expand learning time in schools.

The Broader Context

Among the public at large, there appears to be an emerging consensus that schools with more time than is conventional have much more to offer children. A February 2013 survey of 1,032 American adults administered by nonpartisan KRC Research revealed that more than 8 in 10 respondents (81 percent) are "concerned" or "very concerned" about the ability of public schools to prepare students for future success.

These same respondents view more time as a vital means to boost school effectiveness. Three fourths agree (32 percent agree strongly) that more school time for students will better prepare them for success in college and the workforce (Figure 1). A slightly larger majority (78 percent) agree that more school time will benefit high-poverty students, specifically (Figure 2).[3]

FIGURE 1

Do you agree that more time in school will better prepare students for success in college and the workforce?

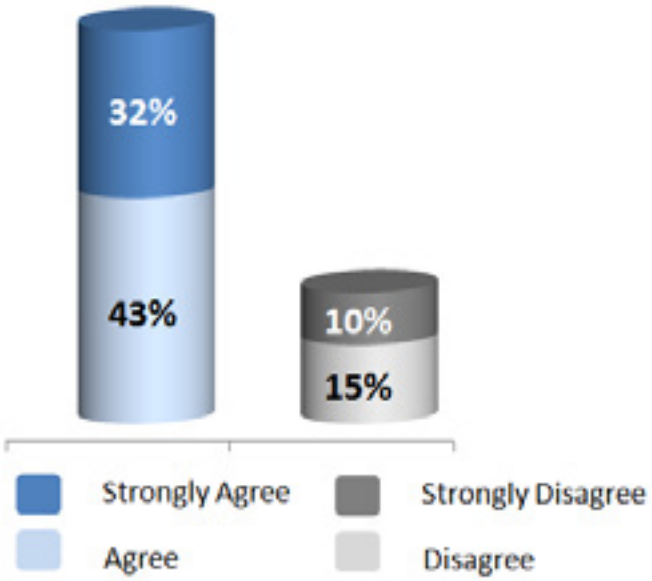
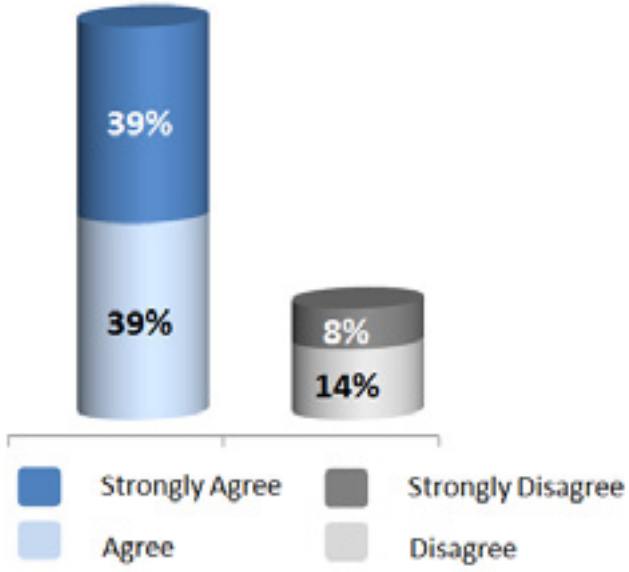


FIGURE 2

Do you agree that students in high-poverty schools can benefit from expanding the school day or year, allowing more time for academics and a well-rounded education?



Federal Action

School Improvement Grants

The largest federal program supporting increased learning time, both in terms of current funding and potential impact, continues to be the School Improvement Grant program (SIG), which is nested in Title I, the federal education funding stream reserved for schools serving poor students.[4] The U.S. Department of Education (USED) reports that of the more than 15,000 schools eligible for SIG dollars (because of their status as underperforming schools), 1,609 have been funded in 49 states since 2009.[5] Though the SIG program existed for many years prior to 2009, its structure and scope changed significantly that year because of an enormous infusion of new dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Under the new structure, SIG now requires that schools receiving funding—usually a three-year grant—select one of four reform models defined by USED. More than 90 percent of grantees opt for either the "Transformation" or "Turnaround" models, both of which include among their requirements the use of Increased Learning Time (ILT), defined as a longer school day and/or additional school days that would yield "significantly more" annual school hours for students.

Despite this directive, there is some evidence that the expanded time is not always implemented as intended, at least in terms of providing *all* students in the school substantially more learning time. According to a report by the Government Accountability Office in April 2012, "increasing learning time…requirements were challenging because the planning needed to implement them were complex and time-consuming, and stakeholders, such as unions and parents, were sometimes reluctant to embrace the changes."[6]

New Avenues for Federal Funding

In 2011, USED announced a new effort to grant waivers from some of the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and this policy shift has opened the door for more districts and schools to implement what is known as Expanded Learning Time (ELT). States that adopted their own accountability systems for intervention in their lowest-performing schools, and for teacher and principal effectiveness and support, were granted broad new flexibilities in how they can use federal funds. As of March 2013, 34 states and the District of Columbia have been granted these ESEA Flexibility Waivers.

Consistent with Obama administration policy, the waivers place a heavy emphasis on increasing learning time for students in several ways. First, the turnaround principles that apply to all low-performing school interventions include increasing learning time within the comprehensive reform package. Second, districts with the lowest-performing schools (in their respective states) are released from the requirement that they set aside 20 percent of their Title I funds for remedial tutoring and are free, instead, to implement more comprehensive whole-school reform strategies. Among these, high-quality expanded learning time school models are singled out as the example in the USED's guidelines. Third, the waiver process allowed states to request the authority to implement high-quality expanded learning time utilizing the 21st Century Community Learning Center funding—a $1.2 billion fund which had previously been limited strictly to out-of-school-time programs. To date, 21 states have requested and been granted this new authority.

The TIME Collaborative

The TIME Collaborative is a multiyear initiative that takes advantage of ESEA Flexibility Waivers to develop high-quality and sustainable ELT schools in five states (see list below). Through the TIME Collaborative, ELT schools will leverage additional time to empower students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences essential for success in higher education and careers. Participating schools will serve as national models for effectively converting traditional public schools to an expanded schedule in order to improve student achievement, engagement, and teacher effectiveness.

Each TIME Collaborative school will feature the following components:

- At least 300 more hours for all students (above the standard calendar of 180 6.5-hour days or 1,170 annual hours)
- Seven essential elements, including at least 120 minutes each week for individualized instruction, frequent data cycles, at least 90 weekly minutes of enrichment, and at least 120 minutes each week for targeted teacher collaboration and development
- Funding through the a mix of federal, state, and local sources

The Ford Foundation has committed significant resources to build capacity at the state and district levels, along with a technical-assistance infrastructure led by the National Center on Time & Learning, to bolster the converting schools. Throughout SY 2012-2013, more than 30 schools across the five states (11 total districts) committed to planning for implementation of the expanded-time model. In fall 2013, more districts and schools will join the following:

Colorado: Boulder Valley, Denver, Jefferson County
Connecticut: East Hartford, Meriden, New London
Massachusetts: Fall River, Lawrence
New York: Rochester
Tennessee: Achievement School District (Memphis), Metro Nashville

What's New in Learning Time across the States?

Economic Outlook and Expanded Time

Though economic growth has been sluggish over the past two years, there is evidence that state funding for K–12 education has been rising slowly from its low point in 2009. However, there remain some concerns among education leaders that the gradual increase in state coffers generally will not necessarily translate to more funding for schools. Legislators have signaled a more cautious approach toward budgeting for education because they, understandably, do not want to commit more dollars than revenue projections suggest might be available.[7] Such reticence among state policymakers to invest significant new resources in their school systems is reflected in policies related specifically to learning time. A few states, like Connecticut, have increased funding to support reforms that include expanding school time in low-performing schools. Most state action related to school time, however, has tended to revolve around the creation of flexibilities within the existing system that would enable the *possibility* of breaking from the conventional school schedule, rather than around programs that add significant dollars to education budgets to explicitly institute a longer day and/or year.

Over the past two years, the enacted legislation related to learning time falls roughly into three categories: (a) mandating increases to minimum annual instructional hours or days for all (or a subset of) public schools; (b) establishing a body to study the issue of learning time more carefully; and (c) granting districts and/or schools some flexibility in how the school day and/or year is structured, while still adhering to state minimums. Within this last category, there are instances in which such flexibility is allowed without state pre-approval and others in which some state agency or body must pre-approve changes to school time, often as part of a broader school reform strategy. (Table 1)

Additionally, states have continued to raise (or eliminate) caps on the number of charter schools, which, as explained in our 2011 report, typically results in the creation of more schools that deliberately expand beyond conventional school time. In 2012, voters in both **Washington** and **Georgia** approved measures that would pave the way for the creation of charter schools for the first time in those states. Meanwhile, enrollments in charters are rising across the nation, with 13 percent growth since 2010 and a student population now over two million. The KIPP charter network alone, which offers about 50 percent more school time than the national average, has 125 schools and serves 41,000 students.[8]

TABLE 1
State Legislation Related to School Time
January 2011–December 2012

Category	Laws Enacted	States Enacting Legislation
Increase in statewide minimums (annual hours or days)	2	FL[a], IL
Establishment of task force or commission to study school and/or learning time	2	IA, NC
Increased flexibility within state minimums that requires state pre-approval[b]	10	CT, KY (2 bills), MA, MD, NM (2), WA (2), WV
Increased flexibility within state minimums that does not require state pre-approval[b]	7	CA, HI, IL, AL, NC, OH, OR
TOTAL	21	

[a] Florida House Bill 5101 (enacted in April 2012) mandated an extra daily hour of reading instruction in the 100 lowest- performing elementary schools in the state.

[b] Legislation in this category includes proposals to fund schools specifically to expand time (usually through competitive grants), as well as proposals to provide schools greater flexibility from state or local policies related to school time, including changes to the calendar and "innovation" districts and schools.

Innovation Districts and Schools

An emerging concept in states' education reform efforts is the establishment of "innovation" or "turnaround" districts and schools. The mechanics of this type of arrangement vary from state to state, but the basics are consistent across states: granting some schools or whole districts increased independence from state and/or local requirements related to staffing, budgeting, scheduling and other structural elements. These autonomies are intended to spark innovation in schools' educational approaches in order to provide students with a higher-quality education. In some cases, the effort is targeted toward low-performing schools or those serving a high-need population. In other places, participation is available to any school in the state. In essence, this policy mechanism creates a new category of schools that are charter-like in their autonomies, but still live within their existing districts and are not created *de novo*. These innovation schools will join the more than 5,000 actual charter schools that now exist across the United States, most of which have the legal flexibility to operate with nonconventional schedules. (Table 2)

TABLE 2
School and District Innovation Legislation
2008–Present

State	Year Enacted	Description	Eligible Applicants	Notes
CO	2008	Authorizes schools to waive state and local policies in order to implement new staffing, budget, scheduling and other structures	Individual schools, groups of schools	
CT	2012	*Alliance Districts:* Districts submit improvement plans for schools to be approved by state in order to receive increased state funding; $39.5 million approved for Education Cost Sharing *Commissioner's Network:* Identified schools to submit a turnaround plan to state for approval to implement	30 lowest performing districts Up to 25 schools in Alliance Districts	
KY	2012	Grants districts authority for a five-year period to waive most state and local policies in order to implement reforms delineated in approved application	Individual districts	
MA	2009	Waives state and local policy identified as barriers in approved application; allows proposals for conversion and new school start ups; up to $50K available for implementation	Individuals, individual schools, individual districts, colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations	Specifically mentions ELT
ME	2011	Grants districts or schools authority to waive most state and local educational policies in order to implement reforms delineated in approved applications	All schools, all districts	Priority given to districts working together
TN	2012	*Achievement School District:* Places lowest-performing 5 percent of schools in a state-run turnaround district for five years; waives state and local policies based on turnaround plan[a]	Individual districts	

TABLE 2
(Continued)

State	Year	Description	Eligible Applicants	Notes
WA	2011	Waives state and local policies as defined in the approved application for 6 years; must be able to be implemented without supplemental funds	Individual districts	Priority given to proposals that have science or arts focus
WA	2011	The *Collaborative Schools for Innovation and Success Pilot*: Waives state and local policies, and professional educator standards for five years as defined in approved joint application of schools and school of education	Individual districts that have a partnership with a college of education	Limited to 6 districts; 3 grants available for start-up funds
WV	2009	Grants districts authority for a five-year period to waive most state and local policies in order to implement reforms delineated in approved applications	Individual districts	
WV	2012	Pilot program to test the effectiveness of the Innovation Zone to improve student achievement in an entire district	Individual districts	Limited to 1 district, with McDowell Cnty. given preference

Other Paths to Expanded Learning Time

Three further areas of state activity are worth noting. First, in **Florida**, the legislature has designated a specific funding stream ($15 million) to support the addition of one hour of instruction in literacy (for *all* students) in the 100 lowest-performing elementary schools in the state. The sponsor of the program, Senator David Simmons (R-Maitland), drew his inspiration from a 2007 pilot program that he had put in place while in the Florida House of Representatives. This aptly named "Plus One" program involved four schools (one each in Miami, Orange, Gadsden, and Duval counties) that all showed significant improvement in a single year. "We know these children, if you give them extra time, are able to do as well as their peers. But they need that extra time," Simmons explained.[9]

Second, two states— **Illinois** and **Ohio**—have passed legislation in the past two years that grants authority to the largest district in each state (Chicago and Cleveland, respectively) to supersede existing collective bargaining agreements such that they can (among other things) add time to the school day. In Illinois, the district has already taken advantage of this authority. (See "District-wide Conversions" below.)[10]

Finally, another two states—**North Carolina** and **Iowa**—formed commissions specifically to investigate a longer school day and year. The report released by the Iowa commission in October 2012, asserted, "Iowa must make efforts around extended time a priority and, in partnership with other measures, these efforts can help make a positive difference…. And those districts willing to make a commitment to innovations should be supported."[11]

New State Proposals to Watch

As of this writing, a number of state leaders have already taken a relatively aggressive approach to expanding time in schools. The most notable, to date, have come from the governors of **New York** and **Massachusetts**, who have each announced their desire to dedicate considerable resources to expanding learning time in schools across their respective states.[12] In New York, Governor Andrew Cuomo's initiative involves the creation of a competitive grant program to fund the expansion of learning time by 25 percent in those schools with redesign plans approved by the state. This program, which the New York legislature funded at $20 million in March 2013, enacts one of the recommendations of the *New* NY Education Reform Commission report released at the start of the year.[13] In Massachusetts, Governor Deval Patrick proposed building upon the state's successful Expanded Learning Time Initiative (ELT), which the legislature has funded for the last seven years, to make expanded time available to all schools with middle grades in Massachusetts that serve a population where more than

50 percent are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. While this proposal will not move forward as outlined this year, it has opened the door to serious policy discussions about the need to grow the ELT Initiative in the state.

Other governors, in their annual state-of-the-state addresses, also have proposed initiatives that would increase the number of expanded-time schools or address learning time generally. In **Connecticut**, for example, Governor Dannel Malloy, who has already put in place one of the more ambitious education reform programs in the country, called on the legislature to build upon the 2012 law. Specifically, he asked for continuing support of the "Commissioner's Network," a cohort of underperforming schools that have undertaken substantial transformation, including lengthening the school day. Governor Susana Martinez of **New Mexico** has asked for expansion of the state's signature K–3 Plus Program, which lengthens the day for primary students in underperforming schools in order to promote reading achievement. Governor Jay Nixon of **Missouri** has proposed increasing the state's instructional year to 180 days (from its current 174).

Also of note are two other recently filed pieces of legislation. In **Arizona**, State Representatives Ethan Orr (R-Tuscon) and Paul Boyer (R-Phoenix) filed a bill to provide districts or schools (including charter schools) 8 percent more funding if they add the equivalent of 20 days of instruction to the school year (either through an extended day and/or year). This proposed legislation builds on current law that provides 5 percent additional funding to 200-day districts. Orr estimated the total cost would be $10 million–$15 million if about one third of Arizona districts took advantage of the new funding opportunity.[14] In the current session, the legislation will not proceed to a full floor vote, but the sponsor has expressed his commitment to pursuing some form of expanded-time policy in this year's budget or in future legislative sessions. Meanwhile, in **Colorado**, State Senator Michael Johnston (D-Denver) led the effort to pass the "Future School Finance Act." (Box, "The State of Education Funding in Colorado")

The State of Education Funding in Colorado

In early May 2013, legislators in Colorado passed (and Governor John Hickenlooper is expected to sign) a law calling for a major overhaul of the state's school financing. In practical terms, the new system will mean an increase of 2.7 percent in per-pupil funding and hundreds of millions of dollars more for the state's public schools starting in 2015-2016. In addition to an across-the-board increase in per-pupil spending, the law also targets spending toward specific educational programs and initiatives, such as a fund to stimulate and support innovative practices, including extended school days and years.[a]

But no additional funds will start flowing until voters approve the new spending plan. By statute, any proposal that calls for increased spending above the rate of inflation—and this measure would require about $1 billion more annually—must be agreed to by a majority of Colorado voters to take effect.

Interestingly, back in November 2012, voters of California faced a similar choice, albeit with a twist. In spring 2012, the legislature had passed a bill calling for a decrease in financing to public schools—and a proposed 15-day cut to the school year to offset the lower state funding—unless the voters approved a proposal to raise additional revenues. A solid majority did vote to approve such a proposal in the form of Proposition 30, a measure that would enact increased tax rates on the state's highest earners along with a temporary hike in the sales tax. All told, it is estimated Proposition 30 will bring in an additional $6 billion to the state. (Another proposition to raise taxes more broadly, Prop 38, failed at the ballot box.) With these additional revenues in place, the proposed cuts to education and the school year will not take effect.

[a] For more information on the Colorado bill, see Todd Engdahl, "Finance Bill Caught in House Logjam," *EdNews Colorado*, 27 April 2013.

Adoption of the Common Core

All but four states have signed on to implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), a comprehensive set of learning standards for grades K–12 in both English/literacy and mathematics, by SY 2014-2015.[15] Furthermore, it is anticipated that states will implement new assessments based on content and skills framed by CCSS in spring 2015. This shift to CCSS signifies that, in countless classrooms across the country, the expectations for teaching and learning will undergo a fundamental transformation, especially in states where

current standards are less rigorous and focused than those codified through CCSS. (According to an analysis by the Fordham Institute, CCSS are more rigorous than the math standards of 39 states and more rigorous than the ELA standards of 37 states. Their rigor is equal to current standards in the remaining states.[16])

While it is difficult to gauge exactly what adoption of CCSS will mean for student learning and teacher development, there is little doubt among many state education leaders that having students assessed in a framework that is appreciably more demanding than the current expectations will produce marked declines in proficiency rates on standardized assessments. Consider that in **Kentucky**, where all schools were required to teach within the CCSS framework beginning in SY 2011–2012 and where all students were tested on these new standards in spring 2012, the percentage of students scoring proficient dropped by a third when compared to the outcomes on the previous state assessments (i.e., from spring 2011 and earlier).[17]

Based on the differential between proficiency rates on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP)—a test considered well-aligned to CCSS in both math and ELA—and those on current state assessments, many other states will almost certainly face similar declines.[18] (Table 3)

It is too early to surmise what the implications of the likely drop in proficiency rates will mean for learning time, but there are two areas that bear watching over the coming years. First, given the apparent gap between the learning expectations for students in most states now and what will be expected through CCSS, there may very well be the need to spend more time learning to reach what would constitute a higher degree of proficiency. Such a need would likely be even more pronounced among students from disadvantaged backgrounds, whose achievement already lags behind that of their more affluent peers.

The second area of concern relates to the time reserved for teacher professional development, collaboration, and preparation. Stakeholders are well aware that the switch to CCSS will require substantial work by teachers to adapt both the content and focus of their instruction. As Timothy Kanold, the past president of the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics, explains about the math standards, for example, "Students are expected to conjecture and reason and problem-solve. That's a new day in math. That's a shift for everyone; therefore, we have real professional development that needs to get done."[19] To wit, many states have developed sophisticated professional development plans, resources, and materials for their teachers.[20]

TABLE 3
States with Largest Differentials between Proficiency on NAEP and State Assessments, 2009 (Grade 8)

STATE[a]	State Proficiency	ELA NAEP Proficiency	Difference
TN	93	28	65
ID	91	33	58
CO	88	32	56
KS	85	33	52
AL	75	24	51
WI	85	34	51
GA	77	27	50
IL	83	33	50
UT	83	33	50
SC	71	24	47
DE	77	31	46
HI	68	22	46
Average (50 States)		**31**	**41**

STATE[a]	State Proficiency	MATH NAEP Proficiency	Difference
AL	74	20	54
GA	81	27	54
IL	82	33	49
NY	80	34	46
SC	75	30	45
MI	75	31	44
NC	80	36	44
IA	76	34	42
CO	81	40	41
CT	81	40	41
ID	78	38	40
WI	79	39	40
Average (50 States)		**33**	**33**

[a] States that have not yet adopted CCSS are not listed here (Alaska, Minnesota, Nebraska, Texas, and Virginia).

Largely unaddressed, meanwhile, is the matter of *when* teachers might engage in this professional development. A survey of teachers by Scholastic found that, on average, only 3 percent of a teacher's day (based on a 7.5-hour work day) is reserved for collaboration and another 7 percent for professional development; in other words, 45 minutes per day to prepare for 4.5 hours of instruction.[21] This relatively modest time reserved for collaboration may be why 74 percent of teachers in a recent EdWeek survey responded that to be adequately prepared to shift to CCSS, they would need more planning time. Likewise, 71 percent believed they would need more time to collaborate with colleagues.[22] To accommodate the time for such activities, a redesigned day that involves more time may simply be necessary.

Learning Time in Kindergarten

Time invested in early learning can have a significant impact on future academic and life success. Yet, ironically, policies related to kindergarten tend to be less prescriptive than those for grades 1–12. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the significant variations in instructional time offered to children in kindergarten both within and across states. Just 11 states require districts to offer "full-day" kindergarten programs (ranging from four to seven hours), and 34 states require districts to offer just a half-day of schooling (ranging from two to three-and-a-half hours). The remaining five states have no mandate for districts at all.

With variability both between and within half- and full-day programs, some kindergarten students can find themselves receiving less than one third of the learning opportunities than those in neighboring districts. That is, while all students will be expected to learn the same amount (as defined by the Common Core, which includes expectations for kindergarten), only a portion might have the opportunity to attend kindergarten for a "full day." Although there has been a dramatic rise in full-day kindergarten attendance in the last three decades, there is some evidence that those from disadvantaged backgrounds attend at a lower rate.[23] Furthermore, a majority of states do not actually require students to *attend* kindergarten, meaning that many first graders will likely enter school behind peers who have had the opportunity to be in structured learning for at least one additional year.[24]

Research shows that, like children of all ages, the quantity of time kindergartners spend in school correlates to their achievement. Specifically, children who attend full-day kindergarten classes outperform children in half-day programs on both reading and math competencies. In addition, the students who spent more time in kindergarten have been shown to exhibit better behavior and attendance. Moreover, these differences can persist throughout the early grades, with one study noting differences in reading achievement between full- and half-day attendees extended into seventh grade.[25]

Competency-Based Education

Often viewed as a reform that falls under the college readiness agenda, competency-based (sometimes called "proficiency-based") education also relates deeply to the matter of learning time. At its core, competency-based education entails a shift from the current system of advancing students to the next level of schooling based primarily on the quantity of time they have spent learning (i.e., so-called "seat time") to one where a school or district approves progress to a next level of a subject or the next grade only after students have demonstrated mastery of content. Thirty-six states already have laws in place authorizing districts to develop methods for determining proficiency apart from seat time, primarily at the high school level. And many districts have taken advantage of their own state's allowances by instituting systems of tracking student progress in certain skills and knowledge.[26]

According to a report from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation describing the work of some innovative high schools that have diligently implemented competency-based education, most of these sites still operate within a traditional school calendar and schedule, even as these vestiges hamper their ability to promote advancement via mastery to the fullest extent. As one school administrator predicts, "The biggest hurdle for public education will be changing the structures of schools. We have spent incredible amounts of time creating units of instruction and assessments, but in reality, this is the easy work, this is what feels comfortable. The difficulty will be when we push on structures like calendars and schedules."[27]

District Innovations and Ambitions

Innovation Schools

The new state laws that open up possibilities for creating semi-autonomous schools, which are still embedded in districts, have begun to bear fruit. In districts in **Colorado**, including Denver and Colorado Springs, schools have converted to an expanded day in order to enhance teaching and learning. (Box, "Denver Public Schools' Summit School Network") Other states, too, have seen districts and schools take advantage of new policy and funding opportunities—including **West Virginia** (20+ schools), **Washington** (22 schools), **Tennessee** (6 schools) and **Massachusetts** (44 schools). Many of these schools have integrated either an expanded day (or year) or a more flexible approach to learning time.[28]

In Detroit, site-level education reform has taken a more dramatic turn. In May 2011, Governor Rick Snyder, under a provision of a new state law, appointed an emergency manager for the district's public schools. In addition, a new entity, the Education Achievement Authority (EAA), was established to take over management of the city's 15 lowest-performing schools. Beginning in SY 2012-2013, EAA has implemented in these schools a host of whole-school reforms, including a schedule of 210 7.5-hour days. Modeled after the Recovery School District in Louisiana, the EAA has plans to expand beyond Detroit schools to other low-performing schools in Michigan, though, as of this writing, this expansion proposal is still pending in the state legislature.[29]

Large-Scale District Conversions

In terms of the number of schools and students affected, the largest ever single expansion of school time to take place occurred in fall 2012 in **Chicago**. For students in grades K–8, the school day has increased to seven hours (from a previous schedule of 5.75 hours), and the school year has increased from 170 to 180 days. The cumulative effect of these changes is more than 200 additional annual hours (or 15 percent) for the city's more than 230,000 K–8 students. Meanwhile, the daily schedule for the district's high schools, which already had close to a seven-hour day in 2011, has increased to 7.5 hours, four days per week (with one weekly early-release day of 6.25 hours). The school year for Chicago's 110,000 students in grades 9–12 also increased from 170 to 180 days.[30]

Other districts have taken on the challenge of expanding school time across a whole district. These districts include: **Elizabeth, New Jersey**, which, by applying additional equity funding from the state, has converted every one of its 30 schools to a school day of about eight hours; **Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina**, which, in the 2011–2012 school year, extended instructional time in elementary schools by 45 minutes; and **Prince George's County, Maryland**, which added 40 minutes to a majority of its middle schools.[31]

Race to the Top—District Innovations

In 2012, USED began a competitive grant program for districts to stimulate the implementation of substantial education reform at the school and district levels. With a total of more than $400 million to distribute, the USED promised to use the Race to the Top—District competition (known as "RTTT—District") to promote meaningful progress in initiatives "aimed squarely at classrooms and the all-important relationship between educators and students."[32]

Of the 16 winners announced in December 2012, three will use the federal funds explicitly to expand the school day and/or year (Middletown, NY; Puget Sound, WA; and St. Vrain Valley, CO). Meanwhile, other winners, such as KIPP-DC and Warren Township, IN, already have a substantially longer day as part of their educational model. If the winners of RTTT—District, among the 1,225 applications received, can be considered a cross-section of district programs, the fact that one third of winners are integrating expanded time as part of their educational improvement models demonstrates the high-priority place such a strategy holds in districts across the country.

Race to the Top—District Winners

District	District
Carson City School District, NV	KIPP:DC
Charleston County School District, SC	Lindsay Unified School District, CA
Galt Joint Union School District, CA	Metropolitain School District of Warren Township, IN
Green River Regional Educational Cooperative, KY	Middletown City School District, NY
Guilford County Schools, NC	New Haven Unified School District
Harmony Science Academy, TX	Puget Sound Educational Service District, WA
Idea Public Schools, TX	School Board of Miami-Dade County, FL
Iredell-Statesville Schools, NC	St. Vrain Valley Schools, CO

The Continuing Transformation of American Education

As we look back over the long history of our nation's efforts to build a public education system that provides a quality education for all, we should appreciate the extraordinary scope and pace of change taking place right now. Consider the following:

- After a long struggle to raise expectations for all of students' learning, almost every state is now set to implement the most robust set of ELA and math standards the country has ever known.
- Federal and state education agencies are focused intensively on improving the lowest-performing schools with an infusion of substantial resources and a commitment to whole-school reforms, including the implementation of effective teaching and learning practices.
- Around the country, countless education leaders at all levels have embraced the notion that schools must be empowered to experiment and innovate, knowing that excellent education ultimately takes shape in schools and classrooms, not in faraway policy offices. Many districts now encourage a range of school models to better serve their students—from independent charter schools and in-district charter-like models to traditional schools supported by nonprofit partners.
- This shift of assigning greater educational and organizational authority to individual schools has, in turn, led to the emergence of scores of schools that have proven that demography is not destiny: in these places, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are achieving at the same high levels as their more affluent peers.

Within these individual schools and, indeed, across the system as a whole, the appreciation for the power of more time continues to grow. To allow high standards to take full root, to provide teachers with the environments in which they can accelerate student learning, and to develop schools that enable all students to reach high expectations, schools must be able to use time more flexibly and expansively. Although our nation has not yet fixed a new norm of what might constitute adequate learning time, the chorus of policymakers and educators calling for and implementing school models on a platform of substantially more and better time is growing ever louder and more persuasive. Like much else in education today, learning time in America is beginning to transform before our eyes.

Recommendations

As policymakers consider options for improving education and expanding learning opportunities, we offer the following recommendations rooted in four overarching principles:

- **Focus on the needs of high-poverty students**—While all students can benefit from additional learning time, high-poverty students benefit the most. New data shows that families with some means are devoting an increasing amount of resources to broaden their children's educational and enrichment opportunities. This phenomenon only further widens opportunity and achievement gaps. High-need students achieving below proficiency require more learning time and benefit from the extra and individualized support that well-designed, high-quality expanded learning time schools provide.
- **Embed expanded learning time withing a broader reform and accountability framework**—Expanded learning time (ELT) will have much greater impact when implemented in combination with other reforms (e.g. teacher collaboration, data-driven instruction, individualized learning approaches) and, thus, is most successful when policymakers combine expanded time with a more comprehensive reform strategy, rather than let it stand alone as an isolated reform.
- **Incentivize innovation**—The ELT movement has been driven by innovative policies and education leaders. Offering regulatory flexibility and financial incentives to encourage innovative practices will help fuel the movement to expand learning time to meet the needs of today's students.
- **Highlight what works**—District and school leaders need more examples of successful ELT schools. Understanding how current expanded-time schools have leveraged the power of time—and done so in cost-effective ways—can help lead others to embrace the reform as well.

For Federal Policymakers

The most significant future opportunity for impact at the federal level is to prioritize expanding school time for high-poverty students in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The proposal framework should build upon the Time for Innovation Matters in Education (TIME) Act and successful state ELT policies, including lessons learned from the five-state TIME Collaborative. Specific ESEA policy recommendations include:

- Expanding the ESEA waiver option for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program to all states, as President Obama proposed in his 2014 budget;
- Explicitly authorizing and encouraging the funding of high-quality expanded learning time in Title I and Title II in order to promote the of use stable and reliable funding streams for ELT;
- Making high-quality expanded learning time an explicit part of Title II to support more time for teachers to collaborate, plan, and participate in professional development at ELT schools;
- Strengthening the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program by including funding for a planning period and by building in more requirements, including a minimum increase of 300 hours (above the standard 180 6.5-hour days) for all students in participating schools;
- Directing USED to dedicate resources to support technical assistance to SIG schools (and other schools that use federal funding for expanded time) in order to support high-quality implementation of expanded-time models; and
- Closing the "comparability loophole" in Title I funding in order to correct the current unbalanced system that often directs less funding than the district average to schools with the highest concentrations of poor children.[a] Closing the loophole would provide those schools serving large proportions of disadvantaged students the additional resources they need to boost their educational program with high-impact practices, including expanded time, which can also help attract and retain the highest-quality teachers.

Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education should:

- Provide guidance that, like the multistate TIME Collaborative, sets basic parameters for what is necessary to create a high-quality expanded learning time school;[b]
- Highlight the practices of high-performing expanded-time schools on websites and in its conferences, newsletters, and other publications and venues;
- Encourage those states granted ESEA Flexibility Waivers that allow the flexible use of federal funds (either through Title I or 21st Century Community Learning Centers) to embrace and even require the practices of successful expanded learning time schools; and
- Collect data on school schedules and instructional time through the Common Core of Data and other data-collection instruments.

For State Policymakers

As this review has made clear, states have enormous capacity to stimulate the creation of new ELT schools, as well as some ability to foster the effective use of expanded time. Of course, states also have the authority to regulate the learning time of all schools. Capitalizing on their strengths, state policymakers should:

- In developing policies to support the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, consider the time and support students and teachers will need to succeed with the more rigorous standards;
- Highlight expanded learning time as an essential intervention for the state's high-poverty schools and integrate the strategy within the state's accountability and school improvement strategy and system;
- Create competitive grant programs that incentivize

[a] For more information on this complicated problem, see Department of Education, Policy and Program Studies Service, "The Potential Impact of Revising the Title I Comparability Requirement to Focus on School-Level Expenditures," Policy Brief, November 2011, at http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/title-i/comparability-requirement/comparability-policy-brief.pdf.

[b] USED can also consult the NCTL publication Time Well Spent: Eight Powerful Practices of Successful Expanded-Time Schools (2011) for more information on models of high-quality implementation of expanded time.

both the expansion of school time by a substantial amount (e.g., 300 hours above the standard 6.5-hour 180 days, or 1,170 hours) and the effective use of school time across the school day and year;

- Grant greater flexibility to districts to innovate with expanded-time models that are both educationally valuable and cost-effective, and as more states create innovation districts or zones, the state should provide planning support so that schools use their autonomies to maximum effect;
- Establish, through both legislation and agency regulation, guidelines for what constitutes high-quality ELT designs, including:
  - Executing performance contracts holding schools (and local education agencies, or LEAs) accountable for reaching certain target outcomes;
  - Encouraging (or enforcing) certain research-based design principles that help to ensure focused and effective use of time and other resources (e.g. continual data cycles);
- Bolster the capacity of the state education agency to monitor and support the efforts of LEAs and schools to convert to expanded-time models, including furnishing quality technical assistance and documenting and disseminating lessons learned from high-performing expanded-time schools in the state;
- Collect operational and instructional time data from districts as a means to monitor and study the ways in which school time is used at the local level;
- Consider establishing a statewide task force to explore "time reform" policy options for the state;
- As competency-based education systems are developed and implemented in states (thus allowing students to progress based on mastery, not seat time), implement strategies to ensure that those students most behind have the support and resources to progress (including more time for students to master content) and that the achievement gaps are not exacerbated; and
- In states that are considering changes to the school funding formula, learning time should be one of the factors considered when calculating the costs of educating high-poverty students. For example, in Massachusetts, "half-day" kindergarten districts receive a lower formula amount than districts implementing "full-day" kindergarten. This same approach could be applied in funding differentials in school time for grades 1–12.[c]

For District Policymakers

Districts, working in partnership with schools, can:

- Drive newly flexible federal resources (e.g. Title I/ SES and CCLC) to schools with the capacity to expand learning time effectively;
- Explore and take advantage of already proven cost-effective models of building more time into schools, including staggering teacher schedules, using technology as a tool to support learning, and building partnerships with institutions that can bring resources to schools (e.g., higher-education institutions, cultural agencies, community-based organizations, and businesses);
- Blend federal, state, district, and philanthropic funds to support sustainable models to create expanded-time schools; and
- Document in-district successes in order to help peer schools overcome the all-too-common hurdle of thinking that redesigning a school on an expanded schedule is too challenging.

[c] States might even consider mandates for districts (or schools) meeting certain demographic or achievement thresholds to link funding specifically to providing more learning time for all students.

Notes

[1] On the impact of a longer day and/or year on student outcomes at a school level, see Will Dobbie and Roland G. Fryer, Jr, "Getting Beneath the Veil of Effective Schools: Evidence from New York City," NBER Working Paper, No. 17632, December 2011, and Caroline Hoxby and Sonali Murarka, "New York City Charter Schools: How Well are They Teaching Their Students?" *Education Next*, Summer 2008, pp. 54-61. For a full summary of relevant research, see D. Farbman, *The Case for Improving and Expanding Time in School* (Boston, MA: National Center on Time & Learning, 2012), available at http://www.timeandlearning.org/caseformoretime.

[2] See, for example, Greg Duncan and Richard Murnane, *Whither Opportunity? Rising Inequality, Schools, and Children's Life Chances* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2011).

[3] Survey commissioned by NCTL and and administered by KRC Research, Feb. 10–14, 2013.

[4] Funding for this program peaked in SY 2009–2010 at $3.5 billion, which included a bolus of dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). In 2012, total funding was $535 million.

[5] For information on SIG grantees, see Steven Hurlburt, et al, *Baseline Analyses of SIG Applications and SIG-Eligible and SIG-Awarded Schools* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, May 2011)

and Hurlburt, Susan Bowles Therriault, Kerstin Carlson Le Floch, *School Improvement Grants: Analyses of State Applications and Eligible and Awarded Schools* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, October 2012). Also, for a complete list of all eligible schools and awardees, see http://www.ed.gov/oese-news/sig-baseline-report-database-and-map-now-available.

[6] United States Government Accountability Office, *School Improvement Grants: Education Should Take Additional Steps to Enhance Accountability for Schools and Contractors* (Washington, D.C.: Author, April 2012), p. 12.

[7] Andrew Ujifusa, "K-12 May Not Benefit from Brighter Fiscal Outlook," *Education Week*, 12 December 2012.

[8] Motoko Rich, "Enrollment in Charter Schools Is Increasing," *New York Times*, 14 November 2012. For information on KIPP schools, see www.kipp.org.

[9] Leslie Postal, "7 Orange Schools Must Extend Days an Hour to Teach More Reading," *Orlando Sentinel*, 17 July 2012. For more information, see Sen. David Simmons letter to Gov. Rick Scott, 14 September 2011.

[10] Joy Resmovits and Will Guzzardi, "Illinois Education Reform: Gov. Pat Quinn Signs Bill into Law," *Huffington Post*, 13 June 2011; and Mark Zinni, "Plan to Overhaul Cleveland Metropolitan School District Signed Into Law," *Fox8.com*, 2 July 2012 at http://fox8.com/2012/07/02/plan-to-overhaul-cleveland-metropolitan-school-district-signed-into-law/ .

[11] Instructional Time Task Force, *Final Report, Senate File 2284* (Des Moines, IA: Iowa Department of Education, October 2012).

[12] Office of the Governor of New York, "Governor Cuomo and Legislative Leaders Announce Early Passage of 2013-14 Budget," Press Release, 29 March 2012 (available at http://www.governor.ny.gov/press/03292013-2013-14-budget), and James Vaznis and Akilah Johnson, "$2.5B School Aid Plan Outlined by Governor Patrick," *Boston Globe*, 16 January 2013.

[13] New NY Education Reform Commission, *Putting Students First: Education Action Plan* (New York: Author, January 2013).

[14] Jamar Younger, "AZ Kids Could Get 20 More Class Days," *Arizona Daily Star*, 27 January 2013.

[15] Minnesota has approved adoption of the English/reading standards, but not math.

[16] Sheila Byrd Carmichael, Gabrielle Martino, Kathleen Porter-Magee, and W. Stephen Wilson, *The State of State Standards—and the Common Core—2010* (Washington, DC: Fordham Institute, 2010).

[17] Andrew Ujifusa, "Scores Drop on Ky.'s Common Core-Aligned Tests," *Education Week*, 7 November 2012.

[18] Achieve, Inc., "Comparing the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics and the NAEP Framework," Policy Brief and "Comparing the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects and the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) Frameworks in Reading for 2009 and Writing for 2011" (Washington, DC: Author, 2010).

[19] Katie Ash, "Common Core Raises PD Opportunities, Questions," *Education Week*, 12 February 2012.

[20] See, for example, New York (http://engageny.org/common-core-curriculum-assessments), and Tennessee (http://www.tncore.org/)and the following report from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), *Common Core State Standards: Implementation Tools and Resources* (http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2012/Common_Core_Resources.pdf)

[21] *Primary Sources: America's Teachers on the Teaching Profession* (New York: Scholastic, 2012), p. 132.

[22] Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, *Findings from a National Survey of Teacher Perspectives on the Common Core* (Bethesda, MD: Author, February 2013), p. 20.

[23] According to the latest Census data available (2008), about 70 percent of students attend full-day kindergarten, up from fewer than 30 percent in 1978. See Jessica W. Davis and Kurt Bauman, "School Enrollment in the United States: 2008," *Current Population Reports* (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

[24] For more information on kindergarten requirements and policies, see the database compiled by Education Commission of the States at http://www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/Kindergarten/KDB_intro_SF.asp.

[25] WestEd, *Full-Day Kindergarten: Expanding Learning Opportunities* (San Francisco, CA: Author, April 2005). Also see Amy Rathburn, " Making the Most of Extra Time: Relationships between Full-Day Kindergarten Instructional Environments and Reading Achievement," Research Brief (Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, June 2010), available at http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED511350.pdf.

[26] A report from the Center on Reinventing Public Education details the financial costs of moving to more of a proficiency-based system, see Lawrence J. Miller, Betheny Gross, and Monica Ouijdani, *Getting Down to Dollars and Cents: What Do School Districts Spend to Deliver Student-Centered Learning?* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, November 2012).

[27] Nora Priest, et al, *Making Mastery Work: A Close-Up View of Competency Education* (Quincy, MA: Nellie Mae Education Foundation, 2012), p. 30.

[28] For information on various state innovation schools, see the following: (a) Colorado—http://www.cde.state.co.us/choice/innovationschools.asp; (b) West Virginia—http://wvde.state.wv.us/innovationzones/; (c) Washington—http://www.k12.wa.us/InnovativeSchools/DesignatedSchools.aspx#list; (d) Tennessee—http://www.achievementschooldistrict.org/campuses/; and (e) Massachusetts—http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/innovation-schools/20120827-approved-innovation-schools.pdf.

[29] Tim Martin "Michigan House Narrowly Approves Bill that Would Expand Education Achievement Authority," *Michigan Live*, 21 March 2013.

[30] Eric Zorn, "Chicago's Longer School Day—Facts, Figures and a Q & A," *Chicago Tribune*, 9 August 2012.

[31] "Elizabeth Students Will Have A Longer Day When They Head Back To Class," *NJToday.net*, 3 September 2011; "New Bell Schedules Begin as School Year Opens," *South Charlotte Weekly*, 25 August 2011; and Ovetta Wiggins, "Longer Days for Middle School Students in Prince George's County," *Washington Post*, 23 April 2012.

[32] The four core areas of focus for RTTT—District are: (a) adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; (b) building data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction; (c) recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and (d) turning around the nation's lowest-achieving schools. See U.S. Department of Education, *Applications for New Awards; Race to the Top—District*, Federal Register, 77:159, 16 August 2012 (http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-district/index.html.

Education Commission of the States

The mission of the Education Commission of the States is to help states develop effective policy and practice for public education by providing data, research, analysis and leadership, as well as by facilitating collaboration, the exchange of ideas among the states, and long-range strategic thinking.

National Center on Time & Learning

The National Center on Time & Learning is dedicated to expanding learning time to improve student achievement and enable a well-rounded education. Through research, public policy, and technical assistance, we support national, state, and local initiatives that add significantly more school time to help children meet the demands of the 21st century.

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APPENDIX

Number of Instructional Days/Hours

in the School Year

Updated by Marga Mikulecky (March 2013)

The following was prepared by Education Commission of the States and is available online at ECS's state policy database. This table lists the minimum number of instructional days/hours in a school year and the start dates prescribed by law, where specified. Forty states allow local districts or regions to determine when the school year begins.

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		Minimum time for any day to count as instructional day	School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours		
Alabama [Ala. Code § 16-13-231(a)(1) and (b)(1)(c)] Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02	180 days	N/A	6 hours	**District Option**
Alaska [Alaska Stat. § 14.03.030, 14.03.040]	170 days (plus up to 10 in-service days)	Grades K-3 ~ 740 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 900 hours	Grades 1-3 ~ 4 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 5 hours	**District Option**
Arizona [Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 15-341.01]	180 days[1]	Kindergarten ~ 356 hours Grades 1-3 ~ 712 hours Grades 4-6 ~ 890 hours Grades 7-8 ~ 1000 hours 9-12 students must enroll in at least 4 subjects that meet at least 720 hours	4 hours, excluding lunch and recess	**District option**
Arkansas [Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106; 005 19 CARR§ 007(10.01); 005 19 CARR § 3-5.00	178 days (Plus minimum 10 days [60 hours] professional development/in-service)	N/A	6 hours/day or 30 hours/week	**Start** **No earlier than 8/14 and no later than 8/26[2]**
California [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 46200(c)] 41420(b),46200,46112,46113,46114, 46117,46141, 46201(a)	180/175 days Through 2014–2015 charter schools and districts are allowed to shorten instructional year by 5 days without fiscal penalty.	Kindergarten ~ 600 hours Grades 1-3 ~ 840 hours Grades 4-8 ~ 900 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 1080 hours	Kindergarten ~ 3 hours Grades 1-3 ~ 3.83 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 4 hours	**District Option**
Colorado [COLO. REV. STAT. § 22-32-109(1)(n)]	160 days	Half-day K ~ 435 hours Full-day K ~ 870 hours Grades 1-5 ~ 968 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 1056 hours	N/A	**District option**

*The minimum number of instructional days refers to the actual number of days that pupils have contact with a teacher. Teacher in-service and professional development days are specified when available.

Connecticut [CONN. GEN. STAT. § 10-16]	180 days	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Full-day K ~ 900 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 900 hours	4 hours Districts may count up to 7 hours per school day towards the total required for the year.	**District option**
Delaware [DEL. CODE ANN. tit. 14, § 1049(a)(1)]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 1060 hours[3] Grades 1-11 ~ 1060 hours Grade 12 ~ 1032 hours	3.5 hours	**District option**
District of Columbia [D.C. MUN. REGS. tit. 5, § 305] A-2100.4, A-2100.5	180 days	N/A	Grades 1-12 ~ 6 hours (including lunch and recess)	**District option (single district)**
Florida [FLA. STAT. ch. 1003.02(1)(g)] 1001.42,, 1003.02(g), 1011.61	180 days	Grades K-3 ~ 720 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 900 hours For schools on double-session or approved experimental calendar: Grades K-3 ~ 630 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 810 hours		**District option**
Georgia [GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-168(c); GA. COMP. R. & REGS. r. 160-5-1-.01] 160-5-1-.02(2)(d)	180 days	Grades K-3 ~ 810 hours Grades 4-5 ~ 900 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 990 hours	Grades K-3 ~ 4.5 hours Grades 4-5 ~ 5 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 5.5 hours	**District option**
Hawaii [HAW. REV. STAT. § 302A-251]	180 days (Does not apply to charter and multi-track schools) Prior to the 2015 session, dept. of education must submit plan to increase to 190 days, not including charter schools and multi-track public schools	Grades K-6 ~ 915 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 990 hours (for 2014-16 school years) Grades K-12~1080 (for 2016-18 school years) Grades K-12~1140 (for 2018-19 school years) (Does not apply to charter or multi-track schools)		**District option (single district)**
Idaho [IDAHO CODE § 33-512(1)]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-3 ~ 810 hours Grades 4-8 ~ 900 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 990 hours[4] (includes 22 hours for staff development)	N/A	**District option**
Illinois [105 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/10-19, 5/18-8.05]	176 days	N/A	Grades K-1 ~ 4 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 5 hours	**District Options**
Indiana [IND. CODE § 20-30-2-2, 3]	180 days	N/A	Grades 1-6 ~ 5 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 6 hours	**District option**

Iowa [IOWA CODE § 256.7(19), 279.10]	180 days	N/A	Grades 1-12 ~ 5.5 hours/day or 27.5 hours/week	**Start** **No earlier than day of the week in which 9/1 falls. If 9/1 falls on Sunday, school may begin the week immediately preceding 9/1.**
Kansas [KAN. STAT. ANN. § 72-1106(a),(b)]	Grades K-11 ~ 186 days Grade 12 ~ 181 days	Kindergarten ~ 465 hours Grades 1-11 ~ 1116 hours Grade 12 ~ 1086 hours	N/A	**District option**
Kentucky [KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 158.070; 702 Ky. Admin. Regs. 7:140]	175 days (185-day calendar that includes 175 instructional plus 4 days for professional development & other such as non-pupil contact, holidays, etc.)	1062 hours	6 hours	**District option**
Louisiana [LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:154.1; LA. ADMIN. CODE tit. 28 pt.,CXV §333, 1103]	177 days (Plus 2 days for staff development)	1062 hours	6 hours (360 minutes) (excluding recess)	**District option**
Maine [ME. REV. STAT. ANN. tit. 20-A, § 4801]	175 days (Plus no more than 5 days for in-service education)	N/A	N/A	**District option**[5]
Maryland [MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. § 7-103; Md. Admin. Code tit. 13A.05.11.04]	180 days	1080 hours	Grades 1-12 ~ 6 hours	**District option**
Massachusetts [MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 69, § 1G; MASS. REGS. CODE tit. 603, § 27.02, 27.03, 27.04]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 425 hours Grades 1-5 ~ 900 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 990 hours	N/A	**District option**
Michigan [MICH. COMP. LAWS §§ 388.1701 (3)(a)	N/A	1098 hours	N/A	**Start** **No earlier than Labor Day**
Minnesota [MINN. STAT. §§ 120A.40, 41]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 425 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 935 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1,020 hours	N/A	**Start** **No earlier than Labor Day (although there are exceptions to the requirement)**

Mississippi [MISS. CODE ANN. §§ 37-13-61, 63,67]	180 days	N/A	5.5 hours (mandatory total of 27.5 hours/ week)	**District option (Beg. 2014–2015 school year, school shall begin on/after third Monday in August)**
Missouri [MO. REV. STAT. § 160.041, 171.031]	5-day week ~ 174 days 4-day week ~ 142 days	1044 hours	5-day week ~ 3 hours 4-day week ~ 4 hours	**<u>Start</u> District option but not earlier than 10 days prior to first Monday in September**
Montana [MONT. CODE ANN. § 20-1-301; MONT. ADMIN. R. 10.65.101	N/A	Half-day K ~ 360 hours Grades K-3 ~ 720 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 1080 hours[6] (Plus an additional 3 days for instructional and professional development)	N/A	**District option**
Nebraska [NEB. REV. STAT. §§ 79-211, 212]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 400 hours Grades 1-8 ~ 1032 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 1080 hours	N/A	**District option**
Nevada [NEV. REV. STAT. 385.080, 388.090 Nev. Admin. Code ch.387.131]	180 days	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 2 hours Grades 1-2 ~ 4 hours Grades 3-6 ~ 5 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 5.5 hours (All, including recess and time between lessons, excluding lunch)	**District option**
New Hampshire [N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 189:1, 24; N.H. CODE ADMIN. R. ANN. EDUC. 306.18(b)(1),(2)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-5 ~ 945 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 990 hours	3.5 hours	**District option**
New Jersey [N.J. STAT. ANN. § 18A:7F-9; N.J. Admin. Code tit. 6A:14-7.6]	180 days	N/A	4 hours (excluding lunch and recess)	**District option**
New Mexico [N.M. STAT. ANN. §§ 22-8-9(A)(1), 22-2-8.1]	180 days	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Full-day K ~ 990 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 990 hours[7] Grades 7-12 ~ 1080 hours	Half-day K ~ 2.5 hours Full-day K ~ 5.5 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 5.5 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 6 hours	**District option**
New York [N.Y. EDUC. LAW § 3204(4), 3604(7)]	190 days	N/A	Half-day K ~ 2.5 hours Full-day K ~ 5 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 5 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 5.5 hours	**District option**

North Carolina [N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-84.2(a)(1),(d)]	185 days	1025 hours	5.5 hours	**<u>Start</u>** **District option but no earlier than Monday closest to 8/19 with approval, otherwise Monday closest to 8/26** **<u>Finish</u>** **No later than Friday closest to June 11**
North Dakota [N.D. CENT CODE § 15.1-06-04, 05]	175 (182-day calendar, with 175 days required for instruction; 2 days must be used for professional development and up to 2 days must be used for parent-teacher conferences)	Any reconfigured school year must include at least: Grades K-8 ~ 951.5 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 1038 hours	Grades K-6 ~ 5.5 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 6 hours	**District option**
Ohio [OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.48, 481]	182 days (Including up to two days professional development and up to 4 days for parent conferences and reporting)	910 hours	Grades K-6 ~ 5 hours (including 2 15-minute recesses) Grades 7-12 ~ 5 hours (excluding lunch and recess)	**District option**
Oklahoma [OKLA. STAT. tit. 70, § 1-109, 111]	180 days (Includes up to 5 days used for professional meetings)	Grades 1-6 ~ 900 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1080 hours (Includes 6 hours per semester for parent-teacher conferences)	6 hours	**District option**
Oregon [OR. ADMIN. R. 581-022-1620]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 405 hours Grades 1-3 ~ 810 hours Grades 4-8 ~ 900 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 990 hours[8]	N/A	**District Option**
Pennsylvania [22 PA. CODE § 11.1, 3; 22 PA. CODE § 51.61]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-8 ~ 900 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 990 hours	Kindergarten ~ 2.5 hours Grades 1-8 ~ 5 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 5.5 hours	**District Option**
Rhode Island [R.I. GEN. LAWS § 16-2-2]	180 days	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 2.75 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 5.5 hours (excluding recess and lunch)	**District Option**

South Carolina [S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-1-425]	180 days (Plus 3 days for mandatory professional development, up to 2 for prof. dev. and up to 5 for planning, parent conf., etc. to total 190 days)	N/A	6 hours (Elementary: including lunch; secondary: excluding lunch)	**<u>Start</u>** **District option but no earlier than third Monday in August**
South Dakota [S.D. CODIFIED LAWS §§ 13-26-1,9; S.D. ADMIN. R. 24:43:09:05]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 437.5 hours[9] Grades 1-3 ~ 875 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 962.5 hours[10]	N/A	**<u>Start</u>** **No earlier than the first Tuesday following the first Monday in September[11]**
Tennessee [TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-6-3004]	180 days (Plus 5 days for in-service and one day for parent-teacher conferences)	N/A	6.5 hours	**<u>Start</u>** **District option but no earlier than August 1**
Texas [TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. §§ 25.081, 0811, §§ 29.0822]	180 days	N/A	7 hours (including recess and break hours)	**<u>Start</u>** **No earlier than the fourth Monday in August (unless a waiver is granted)**
Utah [UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-419-3(A),4(C)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grade 1 ~ 810 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 990 hours	Kindergarten ~ 2.00 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 4.0 hours	**District option**
Vermont [VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 16, § 1071]	175 days	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 2 hours/day or 10 hours/week Grades 1-2 ~ 4 hours/day or 20 hours/week (including recess, excluding lunch) Grades 3-12 ~ 5.5 hours/day (including recess, excluding lunch) or 27.5 hours/week[12]	**Determined regionally**
Virgin Islands [17 V.I. CODE § 61]	N/A	1080 hours	N/A	**<u>Start</u>** **No later than second Tuesday after second Monday in August** **<u>Finish</u>** **No later than 1st Friday in June**
Virginia [VA. CODE ANN. §§ 22.1-79.1, 98; VA. ADMIN. CODE 20-131]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 540 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 990 hours	Kindergarten ~ 3 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 5.5 hours (excluding recess and lunch)	**<u>Start</u>** **District option but after Labor Day (unless waiver granted)**

Washington [WASH. REV. CODE §§ 28A.150.220]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 1000 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1080 hours	N/A	**District option**
West Virginia [W. VA. CODE § 18-5-45(c),(e)]	180 days	N/A	K-4 ~ 5.25 hours Grades 5-8 ~ 5.5 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 5.75[13]	**Start** **No earlier than 8/26** **Finish** **No later than 6/8**
Wisconsin [WIS. STAT. § 121.02(1)(f)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 437 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 1050 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1137 hours	N/A	**District option**
Wyoming [WYO. STAT. ANN. § 21-4-301]	175 days	N/A	N/A	**District option**

Other ECS Resources on Instructional Time

For information on what cannot count toward official instructional time, please see the *ECS State Note: What Cannot Count Toward Official Instructional Time?* or follow this link.

[1] Or equivalent number of minutes of instruction per year

[2] School year may begin on 8/18 only if it falls on a Monday; otherwise, the school year may begin no earlier than 8/19.

[3] 1060-hour requirement for kindergarten waived if district shows inability to implement full-day program.

[4] Instructional time for grade 12 may be reduced by up to 11 hours.

[5] Districts must work within regional units to coordinate with their career and technical center units to ensure that, among other requirements, there are not more than nine dissimilar instructional days within each regional calendar.

[6] For graduating seniors, 1050 aggregate hours is sufficient.

[7] Thirty-three hours of the full-day kindergarten program may be used for home visits by the teacher or for parent-teacher conferences. Twenty-two hours of grades one 1 through five 5 programs may be used for home visits by the teacher or for parent-teacher conferences.

[8] If approved by the local school board, instructional time for seniors may be reduced by up to 30 hours.

[9] Effective July 1, 2010

[10] School boards may release graduating seniors prior to the end of the school year.

[11] Schools may start before this date if referred to voters of the district by petition.

[12] Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices 2312

[13] West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 2510 §26-42-5.1