

# Harlem Public Schools 4 Day School Week Information Pack



## Index

**P3 Problems with the 4 day School Week**

**P5 Benefits of the 4 Day School Week**

**P12 Research on the 4 Day School Week**

## Concerns about the 4 Day School Week

### Answered by Mr. Condon, Assistant Principal Harlem JH/SH

This section is much smaller than the benefits section, because the benefits far outweigh the negatives.

I have summarized the main concerns about the 4 day school week below. There are more resources you can search online if this feels too scant.

I was working in Gardiner School, MT, around 2010 when the 4 day school week was introduced. I was against it initially as I felt our lower ability students would suffer. I left Gardiner for Hays in 2018. Hays/Lodge Pole School is operating under a 4 day schedule this year. By the time I left Gardiner I was a proponent for it. I will explain what happened.

The biggest concern was child care. We opened the school for Elementary students on Friday morning for 4 hours where they were taken through activities by two paraprofessionals. After 6 months no students were turning up and parents worked it out. In Hays we felt it wasn't needed, and when I left in October 2022, we had no complaints from the community about child care as people in Hays just worked it out, as the people in Gardiner did.

Students missing school supplied breakfast and lunch. In Gardiner it was supplied if they were in the morning program. In Hays we offered no food and no one complained about it. If it was an issue I can guarantee people would have spoken up.

Does it affect our struggling students more? I found that if they struggled over 5 days, they struggled over the 4 days. Basically their grades were the same. I felt ultimately it made no difference to the students' performances.

In the JH and HS in Gardiner and Hays, we operated Friday School. It ran from 8-12am and was specifically for ineligible students (students with and F). In Gardiner and Hays the Principal ran it. Any student with an F had the opportunity to turn up. Students in Activities had to turn up to be eligible. Eligibility in both schools ran Friday to Friday. As long as a student turned up to all 4 hours of tutoring and worked they would be eligible for sport from 12pm Friday. If they finished the necessary work, they could leave. If they were not finished, they had to go to after school tutoring each day until it was finished, or they would become ineligible again. Snacks (granola bars, fruit) were supplied.

It will also be important for the activities director to schedule as few activities as possible during the week.

The questions I have been asked in Harlem which require answering:

1. What about food insecurity?

It would be up to parents to supply breakfast and lunch on Friday for students. If this is a problem with some families I believe the school should attempt to accommodate them. Once again we had no problem in Gardiner or Hays with no parents requesting breakfast and lunch on Fridays.

2. What about Classified staff hours?

Classified staff were offered the same hours.

3. Aren't the days too long for the students?

Students adjusted to the longer days as did staff. Days will start 5 minutes earlier and finish 30 minutes later at about 4pm.

4. How many schools are on the 4 day school week?

In Montana, over 150, such as Cut Bank, Sidney, Dodson, Turner, Hays/Lodge Pole.

5. Has any school returned to the 5 day school week?

Rocky Boy is the only school I know of, which happened this school year. Mainly due to teachers taking too much time off during the school week.

Any other questions or concerns please email me at [paulc@harlem-hs.k12.mt.us](mailto:paulc@harlem-hs.k12.mt.us) or call me at Harlem School (406) 353-2339.

## **Benefits of the Four Day School Week**

A four-day school week is a relatively new and innovative idea gaining popularity with students and teacher across the United States. The advantages of attending school only four days per week far outweigh the potential disadvantages. Here are the benefits that serve as motivation for adopting this new educational structure.

### Better Teacher and Student Morale

Some students feel the four-day school week provides an opportunity for extra rest and a less stressful environment. Being out of school one extra day per week allows students to relax or to be more productive. The four-day format provides opportunities for an extra workday at an after-school job, engaging in volunteer activities or pursuing additional educational goals. Also, students who are athletes don't miss as much class and have less work to make up when events occur on a day off.

### Reduced Discipline Referral Frequency

Fewer days spent in class might mean fewer discipline referrals for students. Jimmy Linderman, superintendent of the Chattooga County School District in Georgia, reported that during one year the discipline referral frequency of students attending school only four days per week fell 73 percent. Students are more rested and focused and therefore less likely to disrupt class, be off task or engage in other behaviors requiring discipline. Fewer class disruptions result in more engaged teaching and learning.

### Improvement of Attendance

Some district representatives that have implemented four-day school weeks report that attendance has improved for teachers and students. The Melstone School District in Melstone, Mont., has reported statistics indicating that their attendance improved as much as 20 percent over a two-year period after moving to a four-day school week. Chattogga County School District also reported an improvement in attendance since implementing its four-day school week.

### Academic Improvement

An increase in academic achievement also has been associated with a four-day school week. In one system, the impact of only two years of a four-day school week caused test scores to improve. Oakridge School District Superintendent Don Kordosky reported that test scores improved after his system in Oregon implemented the four-day school week. Also, Peach County in Fort Valley, Ga., has seen a gradual increase in its graduation rate since adopting the new school week.

### Reduction in Financial Cost

A reduction in system spending may be a significant factor considered when moving to a four-day school week. Transportation costs including fuel, bus maintenance and driver salaries are reduced. Also, if facilities are used only four days per week instead of five, there is a significant reduction in utility costs to the system.

### Easier to recruit employees.

4-day school weeks add flexibility to teachers' schedules and as a result, makes their jobs more manageable in a myriad of ways. Because of this, school districts don't have a hard time attracting qualified applicants.

Reference: <https://education.seattlepi.com/advantages-four-day-school-week-1548.html>

## List of the Advantages of the 4-Day School Week

### 1. There are fewer moments of wasted time.

A 2006 research study from Yarbrough and Gilman discovered that teachers during a 5-day school week are wasting precious time during their core classes. The structure of school makes it so that it is up to the students to learn instead of having the teachers provide instruction. In 2015, Coastal Conservatory reported that during the average 7-hour school day, over 2 hours of lost educational opportunities exist every day. Moving to the 4-day schedule shifts student movement patterns, reducing the number of lost transition minutes.

### 2. Students can adjust to the new schedule.

An understandable concern for parents, teachers, and students about the 4-day school week is the extended time required to be at school during the day. Two hours must be added to each day to make up for the added weekend day that is given. That means students are at school for 10-hour day instead of an 8-hour day. Five states in the U.S. have pushed for the 4-day week: New Mexico, Montana, Oregon, Colorado, and Oklahoma. Their research has found that young students adapt to the new schedule just as well as the older students.

### 3. It allows students to create an extracurricular schedule that works.

Children who attend schools that have implemented the 4-day schedule are found to be happier about their extra day off. They stay happier than 5-day schedule students throughout the entire academic year. Many of the kids even say they look forward to going to school because it feels productive to them. The issue of student exhaustion tends to be tied to the constant transitions that happen during a compressed schedule, which is reduced during the 4-day week. Then students have more energy to create an extracurricular schedule outside of school for athletics, scouting programs, spiritual activities, and family-oriented options because they have time and energy to do it.

### 4. The 4-day school week follows the working schedule of many parents.

Outside of the extra day off which students have, the 4-day week at school fits into the working schedule of most parents. The school districts, which have implemented the 4-day week typically, hold class from 7:30 am to 5 pm each day, or from 8 am to 5:30 pm. That makes it possible for parents to drop off their children on the way to work, then pick them up on the way home. That reduces child care costs throughout the week, especially if parents can shift their own schedule to a 4-day, 40-hour week with their employer.

### 5. School districts can plan after-school events with greater ease.

Under the standard 5-day schedule that schools use, most practices for athletics occur in the afternoon. Then you'll have games in the evening and on the weekend. Depending on the location of the school and the size of the conference or division, schools are often forced to travel during school hours to meet their obligations. By adding an additional day off, more athletic events can be scheduled during non-school hours, which means fewer lessons are missed or passed on as a "self-learning opportunity."

### 6. Teacher recruitment is easier with a 4-day school week.

The popularity of the 4-day school week became so popular in New Mexico that the state government had to set a moratorium on the practice to determine how beneficial it would be for their students. It is a schedule, which is popular with teachers because they get more time with their families as well. Most teachers work outside of their usual 8-hour day anyway, so their schedule isn't really that different – except for the added day where they can work from home if they wish. Schools with a 4-day week in New Mexico found recruiting to be 20% easier when compared to their 5-day counterparts.

7. It is cheaper to run a 4-day school week for some school districts.

Rural school districts often look at the 4-day school week as an option because they are trying to meet tight budgetary constraints. By shifting to this new schedule, districts are able to immediately cut 20% from their transportation budget. That expense is often the largest line-item for a district behind labor costs. If every school district in the United States were to shift to the 4-day schedule, taxpayers would save over \$4 billion. At the local level, districts save between \$700 to \$1,200 per student each year.

8. Students perform better when compared to the 5-day week.

Many teachers have discovered that the added daily time for each subject they teach allows for the adoption of different teaching styles. Under the 5-day format, most teachers use a lecture-based teaching style that incorporates self-study from textbooks. Videos are watched, and other media is incorporated to create varied content. The average student retains about 10% of this information. Under the 4-day format, teachers are using small-group discussions and practical practice as teaching tools, which improves the retention rate to over 90%. When students remember the information better, they're able to score higher grades throughout the year and on their standardized tests.

9. The 4-day schedule reduces discipline issues for schools.

According to reporting from the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, having fewer days in classes results in some students receiving fewer referrals for disciplinary issues. In Georgia, the Chattooga County School District implemented a 4-day school week and saw discipline referrals decline by more than 70% in their first year on this schedule. That effort resulted in fewer disruptions during classroom time, which created engaged learning opportunities. With the added rest, students were more likely to stay on-task, feel rested, and be focused on the work, which was required.

10. It improves the overall attendance rate for students.

In the United States, there were 84 school districts, which had implemented a 4-day school week in 1995. Most were small, rural districts where students lived on farms and worked agricultural jobs. By shifting away from the traditional 5-day schedule, student attendance rose by more than 20% on the average day. It is a trend that these districts are still seeing today, more than 20 years after they implemented this schedule change.

11. Teachers take fewer sick days with a 4-day school week.

Teachers take fewer days off during the school year when they're working the 4-day school week as well. The extra day off gives teachers more flexibility to engage in volunteer activities, hold down a second job if required, or rest after a difficult week. In Melstone, Montana, administrative attendance went up 20% in the first two years of their 4-day school week plan.

(Ayres, 2018) Retrieved March 2019 at <https://connectusfund.org/19-big-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-the-4-day-school-week>

**NOTE:** This is by no means an exhaust list of research findings and reports on the four-day school week. Rather, a representation of common findings among researchers. Most notable among them in terms of academic achievement. There are also a number of studies pertaining to potential cost savings. For the purpose of this summary, these are not included as it is not the primary goal of Stoutland R-II to implement a four-day week to save money. While some savings can be expected, the primary goal of Stoutland R-II is to implement a four-day week to improve teacher recruitment and retention, a critical component of improved teaching and learning.

## Havre High School 4 Day School Week Document

### Student Academic Performance

**Submitted by: Jessica Jones, Jane Leinwand, Lindsey Ratliff**

**Four-day school week increases instruction time due to decreased behavior issues, fewer absences for students and faculty, and increased concentrated learning time due to fewer transitions.**

Secondary level principals at Havre Public Schools have attested to the fact that most discipline issues occur on Friday as a result of multiple subs in the building and classroom teachers out of the building. Disruptive behaviors in the classroom cause all students to suffer academically. Four-day school weeks lead to less absenteeism among staff which leads to more teacher-student instruction time, as stated by the panel that spoke at HHS on December 8, 2021. For teachers who are also extra-curricular coaches/advisers, not missing Fridays would greatly benefit students. Fridays have been notoriously difficult to teach new material or have meaningful class time due to multiple students out of the building for extra-curricular activities. While these students do follow weekly eligibility checks, the amount of material to catch up on can be daunting and cause stress on both student and teacher. Students who are present on Fridays with multiple subs throughout the day often end up not being able to learn new material or resort to class as a “review day” A four-day school week would allow for more meaningful instruction without “busy work” left for Fridays if staff or large groups of students are absent.

Teachers’ mental and emotional resources (patience, sense of humor, energy level, clarity) are low by Friday, especially if the week has been busy or stressful. As a result, teachers are left in a frustrating position of balancing their own mental health and dealing with behaviors.

Referrals generally leave students, teachers and administrators with a sense of failure and frustration. In other words, no one really wins when behavior escalates to the point of a referral. Over time, these incidents erode student and staff morale and can lead to an overall negative school climate. A four-day week and higher quality instruction time could lead to more positive interactions between students and staff (and fewer negative ones), leading to a more positive school climate.

**Four-day school week increases recruitment and retention, thereby mitigating learning gaps due to teacher turnover and/or unfilled positions.**

Like many districts across the country, Havre Public Schools started the year with unfilled positions. Over 130 students at HHS had to take Geometry online through Edgenuity due to lack of math teachers. This left over 130 students without an in person certified math teacher to help facilitate their learning. For numerous reasons our Class A district schools have seen multiple teacher departures yet failed to recruit new people for those positions. Many of the four day school week communities (Glasgow, Sidney) had very few or no open positions at the start of the school year. If Havre had a four-day school week, coupled with our competitive salary schedule, we would be a destination employer for many teaching professionals across the state as well as those graduating from MSU-Northern who wish to stay in the area. A four-day school week would also incentivize master teachers to stay in the profession instead of taking early retirement, a sentiment made by multiple veteran teachers in our district.

The following is just one example of a common sentiment among teachers in our district:

I am a teacher with 22 years of experience who thought I would teach for at least 30 years or beyond. The last two years have been so stressful and exhausting I am now planning to retire after year 25. If I were eligible to retire after this year, I would. I am hoping a four day school week will help me rest better and rejuvenate my joy for teaching.

**Students and staff are emotionally and physically rested and prepared for the week ahead after a three day break.**

During the second semester of 2020-2021, students were in person learning four days a week. Teachers noticed that students appeared much more motivated to learn during the week given they didn't have a fifth day of in-person instruction. Panelists at the December 8, 2021 forum also mentioned that it was a motivating factor for some of their special needs students to "only have to make it through four days instead of five days".

During the 2020-2021 school year teachers at HPS taught two separate schedules of students during the week with Fridays left as virtual days to catch up with online virtual students and prep for the upcoming week. Teachers at every level prized their Fridays as productive work days where they could collaborate and rejuvenate lessons without the pressure to work with students all day (with the exception of the elementary during the last few months of school). Fridays were incredibly productive and left staff feeling ready to relax on Saturday and Sunday with their own families and ready to start the week on Monday. If HPS went to a four-day week, Fridays would become an extra day to rest and unwind from the pressures and stressors of education during these trying times as well as have more time to plan ahead for lessons.

**Students benefit from teachers having more planning time. Increased planning time increases teacher morale.**

Since 2020, teachers have been faced with unprecedented expectations both in and out of the classroom. Although we are compensated for covering classes during our preps, we still have to find time to prepare for our own classes. At one point at Havre High, most teachers were assigned a duty (such as study hall) and received one professional planning period. This allowed teachers to teach five periods a day with a prep and study hall to adequately carry out their duties as educators. Today at Havre High, only 7/39 teachers have both a study hall and a prep. While we understand the value of more classes and less study halls, we also believe time to plan and provide student feedback is an important component to a student's education. Teachers receive 45 minutes per day of contracted time to prepare lessons, grade, answer emails, attend meetings, etc. The only way teachers are successful is by using personal time to plan engaging content. Having an additional day over the weekend to prep would ensure that every minute of Monday-Thursday counts.

**Students benefit by having more time in hands-on classes, especially in the science, art, and vocational arts departments. Longer class periods also allow for more time to check for understanding and supervised practice.**

Science, Art and Vocational Arts classes require multiple supplies and a variety of materials. By the time students in the secondary level get instructions for the day plus cleanup, they only have 35-40 minutes to complete the activity. By adding an extra 10 minutes to every class period, these hands-on classes would be better served with longer class time. Wood Shop, Automotive, Chemistry, Art, and Cooking all require lengthy set up and take down as well as cleaning.

Even in the traditional core classroom, a longer class period could be beneficial. Research supports "chunking" of material in accordance with age-appropriate attention spans. Students can attend to academic material for about one minute per year of age. Therefore, 15-year-olds have about 15 minutes before their brains take a break. With a 60 minute class period, English students, for example, could spend 10 minutes on a bell ringer to review and reinforce skills, 10-15 minutes reading material of their choice, which increases vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency, and 25-30 minutes for a lesson on new material. In a streamlined four day school week model, teachers can focus on teaching primary skills instead of finding enrichment activities to support their content. With the readily available opportunities the internet provides, teachers no longer need to be the only source for enrichment, therefore focusing more on the core skills students need to learn.

### **Staff Physical and Mental Health**

**Submitted by: Pax Haslem, Candy Chagnon**

The feedback from paraprofessionals has been positive with the concerns being losing hours that may affect the benefits, such as insurance. The hours will even out over time. We need to ensure any employee currently eligible for insurance benefits would still receive them. The CBA's with the district may have to be adjusted to reflect these changes. Transportation and food service will be losing a day of hours. The compensation may change to reflect this, but we need to make sure they don't lose the insurance benefits based on hours.

The survey results reflected that the morale of the teaching staff is in need of change. Most are very favorable to a 4-day week, giving them time for paperwork and catching up. Teachers love teaching. The duties put upon them beyond that is what is overwhelming. A lot of our Paras are working the job to have the hours of work coincide with their own children being in school. A 4-day week would ensure that they can continue to work and have the same employment hours as their children. The paras that I have visited with do not have a problem with the extended hours in a day. Most favor the extra day off a week. The 4-day week also allows employees to make appointments with medical and dental providers without having to take off work. It will create an environment to be more physically fit.

The following was Prepared by P. Haslem, Principal - Sunnyside Intermediate School:

*"The most recent data show people quitting jobs across the board: 4.4% of all positions in education are open, over 6% in retail, and more than 8% in health care. Open jobs in hotels and restaurants are nearly 9%. That's almost a million-and-a-half vacant positions."*

(The Great Resignation, 60 minutes, Whitaker, Bill. S54 E17. January 9, 2022.)

As the country is wading through "the great resignation", it is necessary for Havre Public Schools to consider options that would address the physical and mental well being of its current and future staff. One of those options is the consideration of a 4-day work week.

### **CONCLUSION**

An article in Education Week (May 4, 2021) titled "**Why Teachers Leave—or Don't: A Look at the Numbers**" stated the following:

*"When asked about the likelihood that they'll leave teaching in the next two years, 54 percent of teachers said they are "somewhat" or "very likely" to do so. That's compared to just 34 percent of teachers who said they would have answered that question with "somewhat" or "very likely" if they'd been asked in the fall of 2019 (before the pandemic began).*

*That's not too surprising, given that 84 percent of teachers also said teaching is more stressful than it was before coronavirus closures."*

As the committee continued their discussion, the emphasis was on student achievement and what was best for students. That continues to be the primary goal for all students in public education. How a school ensures student achievement was the main topic for discussion.

The way we taught students 20 years ago is not the way we teach students today and with the onset of a worldwide pandemic has forced schools around the world to look at education in a new way. As we continue to increase our technology in school systems, online classes and remote learning are becoming the norm. More emphasis is being placed on personalized and transformational learning. Even the way schools are funded has continued to evolve. These changes, combined with a teacher shortage that shows no signs of getting better any time soon, makes it very difficult to educate students effectively.

One can continue to argue the advantages and disadvantages of a 4 day week and whether or not it is a benefit for students. There are dozens of studies that show statistics that go either way. It all depends what one is looking for.

OPI's list of 4 day week schools in Montana, dated 2/23/21, shows 170 schools in Montana operate under a 4 day week schedule. That number continues to increase yearly which would lead one to believe that if schools continue to move to a 4 day week concept there must be some validity to it.

Schools have to continue to evolve to be successful. Is there any guarantee that a 4 day week schedule would make Havre Schools more successful? Of course not, but how will we know unless we try it?

King Whitney Jr. said, "Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better."

Philosopher Jon Madonna says "Nothing stops an organization faster than people who believe that the way you worked yesterday is the best way to work tomorrow."

In closing, remember what Norman Vincent Peale said, "No matter how dark things seem to be or actually are, raise your sights and see the possibilities – always see them, for they're always there."

## Research on the 4 Day School Week

### The Perceived Impact of the Four-Day School Week on Teacher Recruitment, Teacher Retention, and Job Satisfaction

This collective case study was undertaken to examine the perceptions of administrators, school counselors, and teachers on the four-day school week and the impact of the new calendar format on teacher recruitment, teacher retention, and job satisfaction. Three school districts were studied; each began implementation of the four-day school week during the 2015-2016 academic year. A total of 21 school personnel were interviewed, including three superintendents, three building administrators, three school counselors, and 12 teachers. Participants overwhelmingly identified the four-day school week as a benefit to them personally, citing the ability to balance work and family as positive. Employees of two of the three school districts reported improved ability to recruit potential candidates for teaching positions. Educators from all three districts reported an improvement in teacher retention, as the four-day schedule is very popular with teachers. Also noted as valuable and important to the teaching staff is the additional time for professional development and collaboration built into the school calendar. Given the difficulties small rural school districts frequently face when securing and retaining a highly qualified teaching staff, the findings of this study point to an unintended, yet powerful outcome of implementation of the four-day school week—the ability to recruit and retain teachers. (Marion, 2018) Retrieved March 2019, at <https://search.proquest.com/openview/706999966802bf911cc73d48e9419924/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

### Staff Perspectives of the Four-Day School Week: A New Analysis of Compressed School Schedules

This study collects data from 136 faculty and staff members in three rural Missouri school districts that have transitioned to the four-day school week within the last year. Quantitative statistical analysis identifies strong support of the four-day school week model from both certified educational staff and classified support staff perspectives. All staff responded that the calendar change had improved staff morale, and certified staff responded that the four-day week had a positive impact on what is taught in classrooms and had increased academic quality. Qualitative analysis identifies staff suggestions for schools implementing the four-day school week including the importance of community outreach prior to implementation. No significant differences were identified between certified and classified staff perspectives. Strong staff support for the four-day school week was identified in all demographic areas investigated. Findings support conclusions made in research in business and government sectors that identify strong employee support of a compressed workweek across all work categories. (Turner, Finch, Ximena, 2017) Retrieved March 2019, at <http://redfame.com/journal/index.php/jets/article/view/2769>

### Does Shortening the School Week Impact Student Performance? Evidence from the Four-Day School Week

In this study, we use school-level longitudinal data from the state of Colorado to investigate the relationship between the four-day school week and academic performance among elementary school students. We exploit the temporal and spatial variation in the four-day school week using a difference-in-differences empirical strategy. Our results suggest that student academic achievement has not been hurt by the change in schedule. Instead, the evidence indicates that the adoption a four-day school week shares a positive and often statistically significant relationship with performance in both reading and mathematics; the math results in particular are generally robust to a range of specification checks. These findings have policy relevance to the current U.S. education system, where many school districts must cut costs. The

four-day school week is a strategy currently under debate. (Anderson, 2012)  
 Retrieved March 2019, at [https://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/full/10.1162/EDFP\\_a\\_00165](https://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/full/10.1162/EDFP_a_00165)

### **The Economics of a Four-Day School Week: Community and Business Leaders' Perspectives**

In many rural communities, the school district is the largest regional employer, which provides a region with permanent, high paying jobs that support the local economy. This study collects data from 71 community and business leaders in three rural school districts that have transitioned to the four-day school week within the last year. Quantitative statistical analysis is used to investigate the perceptions of community and business leaders related to the economic impact upon their businesses and the community and the impact the four-day school week has had upon perception of quality of the school district. Significant differences were identified between community/business leaders that currently have no children in school as compared to community/business leaders with children currently enrolled in four-day school week schools. Overall, community/business leaders were evenly divided concerning the economic impact on their businesses and the community. Community/business leaders' perceptions of the impact the four-day school week was also evenly divided concerning the impact on the quality of the school district. Slightly more negative opinions were identified related to the economic impact on the profitability of their personal businesses which may impact considerations by school leaders. Overall, community/business leaders were evenly divided when asked if they would prefer their school district return to the traditional five-day week school calendar. (Turner, Finch, Uribe-Zarain, 2018)  
 Retrieved March 2019, at <https://doi.org/10.11114/aef.v5i2.2947>

### **The Four-Day School Week: Nine Years Later**

Existing literature on the topic indicates that there are a number of advantages and disadvantages to the shortened week. For example, while the four-day week allows for an additional free day for students and teachers each week, it means longer days at school, which can be a challenge for some students (Donnis-Keller & Silvernail, 2009; Fager, 1997). Additionally, though districts tend to experience savings by going to a four-day week, it is often less than originally anticipated (Beesley & Anderson, 2007; Donnis-Keller & Silvernail, 2009; Gaines, 2008; Hewitt & Denny, 2010; Juneau, 2009). Finally, there is no strong evidence that the four-day week has either a positive or negative effect on student achievement. Rather, the majority of evidence suggests that the schedule does not strongly impact student achievement (Beesley & Anderson, 2007; Donnis-Keller & Silvernail, 2009; Hewitt & Denny, 2010; Ryan, 2009). (Plucker, Cierniak, Chamberlin, 2012) Retrieved March 2019, at [http://ceep.indiana.edu/pdf/PB\\_V10N6\\_2012\\_EPB.pdf](http://ceep.indiana.edu/pdf/PB_V10N6_2012_EPB.pdf)

### **Three Midwest Rural School Districts' First Year Transition to the Four Day School Week: Parents' Perspectives**

The four-day school week is a concept that has been utilized in rural schools for decades to respond to budgetary shortfalls. There has been little peer-reviewed research on the four-day school week that has focused on the perception of parents who live in school districts that have recently switched to the four-day model. This study collected data from 584 parents in three rural Missouri school districts that have transitioned to the four-day school week within the last year. Quantitative statistical analysis identifies significant differences in the perceptions of parents classified by the age of children, special education identification, and free and reduced lunch status. Strong parental support for the four-day school week was identified in all demographic areas investigated; however, families with only elementary aged children and families with students receiving special education services were less supportive than other groups. (Turner, Finch, Ximena, 2019)

### **Comparing Professional Learning Practices of Missouri's Four and Five Day Schools**

Teachers from 18 Missouri four-day schools and 21 comparable five-day schools based on size, RPDC region, and free and reduced lunch population were included in the study. The teachers responded via online survey distributed by email. Statistical analysis included independent sample two-tailed t-tests adjusted for unequal sample sizes at the  $p < 0.05$  level. Missouri four-day teachers rated the Learning Communities, Leadership, and Data standards significantly higher than their five-day counterparts did. The findings of this study add to the sparse body of literature related to the four-day school week and professional learning practices. The study concluded that the four-day school week may help schools improve professional learning practices due to the unique availability of professional development time on the off-day. (Lewis, 2018)

Retrieved March 2019, at <https://search.proquest.com/openview/6fb8d8f9984e83b66e07d3a69f4a735d/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&dis>

