

School Week Schedule Amendments

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Christine F. Watkins

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This bill amends provisions relating to requesting a waiver to implement a four-day school week.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- amends the process for a local education agency or individual public school to obtain a waiver from the State Board of Education to implement a four-day school week; and
- makes technical changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

53F-2-102, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 17

53G-7-202, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2019, Chapter 293

ENACTS:

53G-7-202.5, Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **53F-2-102** is amended to read:

53F-2-102 . Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

- (1) "Basic state-supported school program," "basic program," or "basic school program" means public education programs for kindergarten, elementary, and secondary school students that are operated and maintained for the amount derived by multiplying the number of weighted pupil units for each school district or charter school by the value established each year in the enacted public education budget, except as otherwise

provided in this chapter.

(2) "LEA governing board" means a local school board or charter school governing board.

(3) "Pupil in average daily membership" or "ADM" means a full-day equivalent pupil.

(4)(a) "Minimum School Program" means the state-supported public school programs for kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schools as described in this Subsection (4).

(b) The Minimum School Program established in school districts and charter schools shall include the equivalent of a school term of nine months as determined by the state board.

(c)(i) The state board shall establish the number of days or equivalent instructional hours that school is held for an academic school year.

(ii) Education, enhanced by utilization of technologically enriched delivery systems, when approved by an LEA governing board, shall receive full support by the state board as it pertains to fulfilling the attendance requirements, excluding time spent viewing commercial advertising.

(d)(i) An LEA governing board may reallocate up to 32 instructional hours or four school days established under Subsection (4)(c) for teacher preparation time or teacher professional development.

(ii) A reallocation of instructional hours or school days under Subsection (4)(d)(i) is subject to the approval of two-thirds of the members of an LEA governing board voting in a regularly scheduled meeting:

(A) at which a quorum of the LEA governing board is present; and

(B) held in compliance with Title 52, Chapter 4, Open and Public Meetings Act.

(iii) If an LEA governing board reallocates instructional hours or school days as provided by this Subsection (4)(d), the school district or charter school shall notify students' parents of the school calendar at least[:]

[(A)] 90 days before the beginning of the school year[; or] .

[(B)] for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years, due to circumstances within the LEA or a given school due to the COVID-19 pandemic, at least 14 calendar days before the reallocated instructional hours or school days.]

(iv) Instructional hours or school days reallocated for teacher preparation time or teacher professional development pursuant to this Subsection (4)(d) is considered part of a school term referred to in Subsection (4)(b).

(e) The Minimum School Program includes a program or allocation funded by a line

item appropriation or other appropriation designated as follows:

- (i) Basic School Program;
- (ii) Related to Basic Programs;
- (iii) Voted and Board Levy Programs; or
- (iv) Minimum School Program.

- (5) "Weighted pupil unit or units or WPU or WPUs" means the unit of measure of factors that is computed in accordance with this chapter for the purpose of determining the costs of a program on a uniform basis for each school district or charter school.

Section 2. Section 53G-7-202 is amended to read:

53G-7-202 . Waivers from state board rules.

- (1) A charter school or any other public school or school district may apply to the state board for a waiver of any state board rule that inhibits or hinders the school or the school district from accomplishing [its] the mission of the school or school district or the educational goals set out in [its] the relevant strategic plan or charter agreement.
- (2) The state board may grant the waiver if the school or school district states a clear reason for the waiver and includes supporting data, unless:
- (a) the waiver would cause the school district or the school to be in violation of state or federal law; or
 - (b) the waiver would threaten the health, safety, or welfare of students in the district or at the school.
- (3) If the state board denies the waiver, the state board shall provide the reason for the denial [~~shall be provided~~] in writing to the waiver applicant.

Section 3. Section 53G-7-202.5 is enacted to read:

53G-7-202.5 . Four-day school week -- Waiver process.

- (1) In accordance with Section 53G-7-202, an LEA or individual public school may apply to the state board for a waiver of the state board's rule on minimum school days to implement a four-day school week.
- (2) The state board shall:
- (a) establish an application process for a waiver described in Subsection (1) that requires an LEA or public school to provide the state board with:
 - (i) a clear rationale that explains how the waiver will address specific issues faced by the LEA or public school;
 - (ii) data that supports the requested waiver, including:
 - (A) student achievement data, with an analysis of how the waiver is expected to

- 100 affect student achievement; and
- 101 (B) survey data assessing the community's support for the waiver;
- 102 (iii) plans to maximize instructional time and address other concerns associated with
- 103 a four-day school week;
- 104 (iv) documentation of at least two open meetings, held separately from regular board
- 105 meetings, to engage with stakeholders regarding the waiver request; and
- 106 (v) certification that the LEA or public school notified affected school community
- 107 councils and principals about the potential waiver before holding a vote to apply
- 108 for the waiver;
- 109 (b) set a deadline by which an LEA or public school that receives a waiver under this
- 110 section shall apply for a waiver renewal; and
- 111 (c) establish a process to renew a waiver under this section that requires an LEA or
- 112 public school to provide the state board with:
- 113 (i) a clear rationale for the renewal request;
- 114 (ii) data that supports the rationale for the renewal request, including student
- 115 achievement data;
- 116 (iii) a summary of how the existing waiver has affected the issues that prompted the
- 117 waiver; and
- 118 (iv) certification that the LEA or school shared student achievement data and other
- 119 data related to the waiver with stakeholders.
- 120 (3) A waiver application for a school that shares a bus schedule with another school or
- 121 schools shall explain how the waiver will affect all schools on the shared bus schedule.
- 122 (4) The state board shall establish standards for the survey described in Subsection
- 123 (2)(a)(ii)(B) to ensure that survey data adequately assesses community support.
- 124 (5) The open meetings described in Subsection (2)(a)(iv) shall include:
- 125 (a) a meeting held before a vote is taken to apply for the waiver, during which the LEA
- 126 or public school shall:
- 127 (i) explain the rationale for seeking the waiver; and
- 128 (ii) listen to stakeholder concerns; and
- 129 (b) a meeting held after the decision to apply for the waiver but before the submission of
- 130 the application, during which the LEA or public school shall:
- 131 (i) explain the waiver process; and
- 132 (ii) describe plans to address stakeholder concerns.
- 133 (6) An LEA or public school that receives a waiver under this section shall track data

134 related to the rationale presented in the waiver application.

135 Section 4. **Effective Date.**

136 This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.