

Four-Day School Week FAQs

Q Will this make the school day longer?

A Yes. We are looking at a school day from 8am-4pm. However, to address concerns with a longer school day, the District is also considering a school day from 8:05am-3:43pm. The current school day begins at 8:25am and ends at 3:24pm.

Q Will this make the school year longer?

A Depends. If the school day starts at 8am and ends at 4pm, the school year will be shorter. If the school day starts at 8:05am and ends at 3:43pm, the school year will likely be the same. The Board will approve a final calendar in February.

Q Why is the District considering moving to a four-day school week?

A The primary reason for considering a four-day school week is teacher recruitment and retention. This request came from the union. The idea was brought up in the Spring of 2022 during negotiations between the board and the union, and again in October between union reps and the superintendent. The union has shared its concerns with the turnover of teachers in recent years and believes a four-day week would be a benefit that may entice teachers to remain in Manhattan. The union has also cited the lack of competitive pay for teachers as a reason for the turnover. You can find more information in the document titled, “**Teacher Presentation to the Board and Teacher Committee Letter.**”

Q Will there be cost savings for the District if we move to a four-day school week?

A No. There is no significant cost savings to the District. 86% of the District’s general fund operating expenses are dedicated to salaries, wages, and benefits. The anticipated savings would be in the cost of fuel saved by not running routes on Friday and the lack of any need for substitutes on Friday.

Q Will teachers be ready to adjust their curriculums from a five-day model to a four-day model if this is implemented in the 2023-2024 school year; should this decision wait to be made for the 2024-2025 school year?

A A representative from each building addressed this question at the January Board meeting. For various reasons 95% of elementary staff, 89% of the middle school staff, and 90% of the high school staff believe they can modify their curriculum for the 2023-2024 school year and that an extra year for preparation was unnecessary. The information that was presented to the Board and a letter written by the 4-Day teacher committee can be found in the document titled, “**Teacher Presentation to the Board and Teacher Committee Letter.**”

Q Does the District have any concern regarding the length of the school day, especially for younger students?

A Yes, the District does have concerns regarding the impact of a longer day on our students and staff. Superintendent Ayers has interviewed multiple superintendents and principals across the state regarding a four-day school week. In a nutshell, students and staff adjust to the longer day. Some administrators stated that the younger students made the adjustment quicker than the older students and the staff. To address this concern, the District has already considered adjusting the school day from 8-4 to 8:05-3:43.