



### Number of Instructional Days/Hours in the School Year

Updated June 2008

#### Introduction

Instructional days and hours refer to the amount of time students are expected to attend in a school year. Since the 1980s, the trend has been to increase the minimum number of instructional days (or hours) that students are in school: Fifteen states have increased the minimum number of instructional days while only nine states have reduced that minimum.

While state requirements vary on the number of instructional days and hours in the year, the majority of states set the school year at 180 days (30 states). Eleven states set the minimum number of instructional days between 160 and 179 days, and two states set the minimum above 180 days (Kansas and Ohio). Finally, eight states currently do not set a minimum number of instructional days. Instead, the school year in these states is measured in numbers of hours.

The following table provides the minimum number of instructional days/hours in a school year and the start and finish dates, prescribed by law, where available (36 states allow the local district to set the start and finish dates).

#### Other ECS Resources on Instructional Time

- For information on the minimum number of instructional minutes/hours in each school day, please see the ECS StateNote titled *Minimum Number of Minutes/Hours in a High School Day*, or follow this [link](#).
- For information on what cannot count toward official instructional time, please see the ECS StateNote titled *What Cannot Count Toward Official Instructional Time?*, or follow this [link](#).
- For information on the costs of extending the school year, please see the ECS StateNote titled *Cost Per-Day for Extended School Year*, or follow this [link](#).

#### State Policies Related to the School Year

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
Alabama [ALA. CODE § 16-13-231(b)(1)(c)]	180 days	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 included when available.

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
<b>Alaska</b> [ALASKA STAT. § 14.03.030]	180 days  (includes up to 10 in-service days)	Grades K-3 ~ 740 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 900 hours	District option
<b>Arizona</b> [ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-341.01]	180 days <sup>1</sup>	N/A	District option
<b>Arkansas</b> [ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-10-106; 005 19 CARR § 007(10.01)]	178 days  (plus minimum 10 days (60 hrs) professional development/in-service)	N/A	<u>Start</u> No earlier than 8/18 and no later than 8/26 <sup>2</sup>  <u>Finish</u> Not after Memorial Day
<b>California</b> [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 46200(c)]	180 days	N/A	District option
<b>Colorado</b> [COLO. REV. STAT. § 22-32-109(1)(n)]	160 days	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Full-day K ~ 900 hours Grades 1-5 ~ 990 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 1080 hours	District option
<b>Connecticut</b> [CONN. GEN. STAT. § 10-16]	180 days	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Grades K-12 ~ 900 hours	District option
<b>Delaware</b> [DEL. CODE ANN. tit. 14, § 1049(a)(1)]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 440 hours Grades 1-11 ~ 1060 hours Grade 12 ~ 1032 hours	District option
<b>District of Columbia</b> [D.C. MUN. REGS. tit. 5, § 305]	180 days	N/A	Single district

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
<b>Florida</b> [FLA. STAT. ch. 1003.02(1)(g)]; [FLA. STAT. ch. 1001.42(3)(f)]	180 days	N/A	The district school board may adopt policies for the opening and closing of schools and fix uniform dates; however, beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, the opening date for schools in the district may not be earlier than 14 days before Labor Day each year.
<b>Georgia</b> [GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-168(c); GA. COMP. R. & REGS. r. 160-5-1-.01]	180 days	N/A	District option
<b>Hawaii<sup>3</sup></b>	180 days	N/A	Single district
<b>Idaho</b> [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 <sup>4</sup>  (includes 22 hours for staff development)	District option
<b>Illinois</b> [105 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/10-19]	176 days	N/A	District option
<b>Indiana</b> [IND. CODE § 20-30-2-3]	180 days	N/A	District option
<b>Iowa</b> [IOWA CODE § 279.10]	180 days	N/A	<u>Start</u> No earlier than 9/1 and no later than first Monday in Dec.
<b>Kansas</b> [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	District option
<b>Kentucky</b> [KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 158.070]	175 days  (includes up to four days for professional development)	N/A	District option

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
<b>Louisiana</b>  [LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:154.1; LA. ADMIN. CODE tit. 28, § CXV:333]	177 days  (plus two days for staff development)	N/A	District option
<b>Maine</b>  [ME. REV. STAT. ANN. tit. 20-A, § 4801]	175 days  (plus no more than five days for in-service education)	N/A	District option <sup>5</sup>
<b>Maryland</b>  [MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. § 7-103]	180 days	1080 hours	District option
<b>Massachusetts</b>  [MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 69, § 1G; MASS. REGS. CODE tit. 603, § 27.03]	180 days	N/A	District option
<b>Michigan</b>  [MICH. COMP. LAWS §§ 380.1284, 1284b, 388.1701(3)(a)]	165 days  (170 days effective 2012-13)	1098 hours	<u>Start</u> No earlier than Labor Day
<b>Minnesota</b>  [MINN. STAT. §§ 120A.40, 41]			<u>Start</u> No earlier than Labor Day
<b>Mississippi</b>  [MISS. CODE ANN. §§ 37-13-61, 63]	180 days	N/A	District option
<b>Missouri</b>  [MO. REV. STAT. § 171.031]	174 days	1044 hours	<u>Start</u> No earlier than 10 days prior to first Monday in September

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
<b>Montana</b> [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 <sup>6</sup>  (plus an additional three days for instructional and professional development)	District option
<b>Nebraska</b> [NEB. REV. STAT. §§ 79-211, 212]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 400 hours Grades 1-8 ~ 1032 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 1080 hours	District option
<b>Nevada</b> [NEV. REV. STAT. 388.090]	180 days	N/A	District option
<b>New Hampshire</b> [N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 189:1; N.H. CODE ADMIN. R. ANN. EDUC. 306.18(b)(1),(2)]	180 days	Grades 1-8 ~ 945 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 990 hours	District option
<b>New Jersey</b> [N.J. STAT. ANN. § 18A:7F-9]	180 days	N/A	District option
<b>New Mexico</b> [N.M. STAT. ANN. §§ 22-8-9(A)(1), 22-2-8.1]	180 days	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Grades K-6 ~ 990 hours <sup>7</sup> Grades 7-12 ~ 1080 hours	District option
<b>New York</b> [N.Y. EDUC. LAW § 3604(7)]	180 days	N/A	District option
<b>North Carolina</b> [N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-84.2(a)(1),(d)]	180 days	1000 hours	<u>Start</u> No earlier than 8/25  <u>Finish</u> Not after June 10

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
<b>North Dakota</b> [N.D. CENT CODE § 15.1-06-04]	173 days  (plus two days for professional development and two for parent-teacher conferences)	N/A	District option
<b>Ohio</b> [OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3313.48]	182 days  (including up to two days professional development)	N/A	District option
<b>Oklahoma</b> [OKLA. STAT. tit. 70, § 1-109]	175 days  (plus up to 5 days used for professional meetings)	N/A	District option
<b>Oregon</b> [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 <sup>8</sup>	District option
<b>Pennsylvania</b> [22 PA. CODE § 11.1]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-8 ~ 900 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 990 hours	District option
<b>Rhode Island</b> [R.I. GEN. LAWS § 16-2-2]	180 days	N/A	District option
<b>South Carolina</b> [S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-1-425]	180 days  (plus three days for mandatory professional development)	N/A	<u>Start</u> No earlier than third Monday in August
<b>South Dakota</b> [S.D. CODIFIED LAWS §§ 13-26- 1,9]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 437.5 hours <sup>9</sup> Grades 4-12 ~ 962.5 hours <sup>10</sup>	<u>Start</u> No earlier than the first Tuesday following the first Monday in September <sup>11</sup>
<b>Tennessee</b> [TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-6-3004]	180 days  (plus five days for in-service and one day for parent- teacher conferences)	N/A	<u>Start</u> No earlier than Tuesday after Labor Day unless changed by majority vote of school board

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year (by grade, if applicable)		School Start/Finish
	In Days	In Hours	
<b>Texas</b> [TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. §§ 25.081, 0811]	180 days	N/A	<u>Start</u> No earlier than the fourth Monday in August
<b>Utah</b> [UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-419- 3(A),4(C)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grade 1 ~ 810 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 990 hours	District option
<b>Vermont</b> [VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 16, § 1071]	175 days	N/A	Determined regionally
<b>Virgin Islands</b> [17 V.I. CODE § 61]	N/A	1080 hours	<u>Start</u> No earlier than first Tuesday after first Monday in August  <u>Finish</u> No later than second Friday in June
<b>Virginia</b> [VA. CODE ANN. §§ 22.1-79.1, 98]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 540 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 990 hours	<u>Start</u> After Labor Day
<b>Washington</b> [WASH. REV. CODE §§ 28A.150.220]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 1000 hours	District option
<b>West Virginia</b> [W. VA. CODE § 18- 5-45(c),(e)]	180 days	N/A	<u>Start</u> No earlier than 8/26  <u>Finish</u> No later than 6/8
<b>Wisconsin</b> [WIS. STAT. § 121.02(f)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 437 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 1050 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1137 hours	District option
<b>Wyoming</b> [WYO. STAT. ANN. § 21-4-301]	175 days	N/A	District option

This ECS StateNote was updated by Ashley Zaleski and Michael Colasanti, ECS researchers.

## ***Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas***

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<sup>1</sup> Or equivalent number of minutes of instruction per year

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> According to Hawaii teachers' contracts, the teacher work year is no more than 190 days, 10 of which are non-instructional- Sandra Goya, Acting Communications Director, Hawaii Department of Education.

<sup>4</sup> Instructional time for grade 12 may be reduced by up to 11 hours.

<sup>5</sup> Districts must work within regional units to coordinate with its career and technical center units to ensure that, among other requirements, there are not more than 9 dissimilar instructional days within each regional calendar.

<sup>6</sup> For graduating seniors, 1050 aggregate hours is sufficient.

<sup>7</sup> 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 through five programs may be used for home visits by the teacher or for parent-teacher conferences.

<sup>8</sup> If approved by the local school board, instructional time for seniors may be reduced by up to 30 hours.

<sup>9</sup> Effective July 1, 2010

<sup>10</sup> School boards may release graduating seniors prior to the end of the school year.

<sup>11</sup> Schools may start before this date if referred to voters of the district by petition.