



School Calendar

Length of School Year

Education Commission of the States

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Number of Instructional Days/Hours in the School Year

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Introduction

While state requirements vary on the number of instructional days and/or hours in the school year, the majority of states require 180 days of student instruction. Most also specify the minimum length of time that constitutes an instructional day. Please note that some states set instructional time in days, others specify hours and some provide specifications for both.

Because staff development and parent conference days are handled differently across the states and often are included in the overall “school calendar” requirements, we have attempted to separate those from the minimum instructional time. However, in some cases, statute is unclear. Please send any corrections (with supporting state policy) to kchristie@ecs.org.

The following 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 Policies Related to the School Year

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(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

* 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.

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		
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)]	178 days (plus minimum 10 days [60 hrs] professional development/in-service)	N/A	6 hours/day or 30 hours/week	<u>Start</u> No earlier than 8/14 and no later than 8/26 ²
California [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 46200(c)] 41420(b),46200,4 6112,46113,4611 7,46141, 46201(a)	180/175 days Through 2014-15 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
Connecticut [CONN. GEN. STAT. § 10-16]	180 days	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Full-day K ~ 900 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 900 hours	5 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 ~ 440 hours Grades 1-11 ~ 1060 hours Grade 12 ~ 1032 hours	District option, must be at least 31.5 hours/week	District option
District of Columbia [D.C. MUN. REGS. tit. 5, § 305] A-2100.4, A-2100.5	178 days	N/A	Grades 1-12 ~ 6 hours (including lunch and recess)	District option (single district)

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		
Florida [FLA. STAT. ch. 1003.02(1)(g)] 1001.42,, 1003.02(g)	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	5 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 ³	180 days beginning w/2011-13 school years (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 (beg. In 2012-13) Grades 7-12 ~ 990 hours (for 2014-16 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]	176 days	N/A	Grades K-1 ~ 4 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 5 hours	District option
Indiana [IND. CODE § 20- 30-2-3]	180 days	N/A	Grades 1-6 ~ 5 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 6 hours	District option
Iowa [IOWA CODE § 279.10]	180 days	N/A	Grades 1-12 ~ 5.5 hours/day or 27.5 hours/week	<u>Start</u> No earlier than day of the week in which 9/1 falls and no later than first Monday in Dec.

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		
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]	175 (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, § CXV:333]	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]	180 days	1080 hours	Grades 1-12 ~ 6 hours	District option
Massachusetts [MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 69, § 1G; MASS. REGS. CODE tit. 603, § 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)]	165 days (170 days effective 2012- 13)	1098 hours	N/A	<u>Start</u> 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	<u>Start</u> No earlier than Labor Day (although there are exceptions to the requirement)

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		
Mississippi [MISS. CODE ANN. §§ 37-13-61, 63]	180 days	N/A	5.5 hours (mandatory total of 27.5 hours/week)	District option
Missouri [MO. REV. STAT. § 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> No 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. 388.090]	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; N.H. CODE ADMIN. R. ANN. EDUC. 306.18(b)(1),(2)]	180 days	Grades 1-5 ~ 945 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 990 hours	Grades K-5 ~ 5.25 hours Grades 6-8 ~ 5.5 hours	District option
New Jersey [N.J. STAT. ANN. § 18A:7F-9]	180 days	N/A	4 hours (excluding lunch and recess)	District option

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		
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 § 3604(7)]	180 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)]	180 days	1000 hours	5.5 hours	<i>Start</i> No earlier than 8/25 <i>Finish</i> Not after June 10
North Dakota [N.D. CENT CODE § 15.1-06-04]	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]	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]	180 days (includes up to 5 days used for professional meetings)	Grades 1-6 ~ 900 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1080 hours (includes 6 hours/semester for parent-teacher conferences)	6 hours	District option

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		
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]	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> No earlier than third Monday in August
South Dakota [S.D. CODIFIED LAWS §§ 13-26-1,9]	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> No earlier than Tuesday after Labor Day unless changed by majority vote of school board
Texas [TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. §§ 25.081, 0811]	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)

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		
Utah [UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-419- 3(A),4(C)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grade 1 ~ 810 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 990 hours	N/A	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 Grades 3-12 ~ 5.5 hours/day or 27.5 hours/week	Determined regionally
Virgin Islands [17 V.I. CODE § 61]	N/A	1080 hours	N/A	<i>Start</i> No earlier than first Tuesday after first Monday in August <i>Finish</i> No later than second Friday in June
Virginia [VA. CODE ANN. §§ 22.1-79.1, 98]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 540 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 990 hours	5.5 hours	<i>Start</i> After Labor Day (unless a waiver is 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	5.5 hours (including extra-curriculars and co-curriculars)	<i>Start</i> No earlier than 8/26 <i>Finish</i> 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]	180 days	N/A	N/A	District option

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		
Wyoming [WYO. STAT. ANN. § 21-4-301]	180 days	N/A	N/A	District option

Other ECS Resources on Instructional Time

- For information on the minimum number of instructional minutes/hours specified for high schools, 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 more information on the four-day school week, click [here](#) and [here](#).
- For extending instructional time, see *Learning Time in America: Trends to Reform the American School Calendar*, a report from the National Center on Time and Learning and the Education Commission of the States.
 - Full report: <http://www.timeandlearning.org/images/lta.pdf>
 - Executive summary: <http://www.timeandlearning.org/learningtimeinamerica/ES%20Learning%20Time%20in%20America.pdf>
 - State Policymaker’s Guide (4-pager): <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/94/32/9432.pdf>

This ECS StateNote was updated by Melodye Bush (mbush@ecs.org), Molly Ryan (mryan@ecs.org) and Stephanie Rose (srose@ecs.org).

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 According to Hawaii teachers’ contracts, the teacher work year is no more than 190 days, 10 of which are non-instructional days - Sandra Goya, Communications Director, Hawaii Department of Education.

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 9 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 through five 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.

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