



School Calendar

Length of School Year

Education Commission of the States

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Number of Instructional Days/Hours in the School Year

Updated by Julie Rowland

October 2014

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. Some states set instructional time in terms of days, some specify hours, and some provide specifications for both and may require districts to meet either or both. Two states, Ohio and Wisconsin, recently changed the unit of measurement for an instructional year from days to hours.

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 Julie Rowland at jrowland@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. Thirty-six states and the District of Columbia 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(a)(1) and (b)(1)(c)] Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02	180 days Or the hourly equivalent	N/A	6 hours (Excludes lunch and recess)	District option
Alaska [ALASKA STAT. § 14.03.030, 14.03.040]	180 days (Includes up to 10 in-service days)	Grades K-3 ~ 740 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 900 hours ¹	Grades 1-3 ~ 4 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 5 hours (Excludes intermissions)	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; § 15- 901(A)(1), (5)]	180 days ²	Kindergarten ~ 356 hours Grades 1-3 ~ 712 hours Grades 4-6 ~ 890 hours Grades 7-8 ~ 1000 hours Grades 9-12 ~ students must enroll in at least four subjects that meet at least 720 hours	N/A	District option
Arkansas [ARK. CODE ANN. § 6-16-102; 6-10- 106]	178 days (Includes a minimum of 10 days [60 hrs] professional development/in-service) ³	N/A	6 hours/day or 30 hours/week	<i>Start</i> On or after the Monday of the week in which 8/19 falls; no earlier than 8/14 and no later than 8/26 ⁴
California [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 46200] 41420(a), 46201.2(b), 46112,46113,461 14, 46117,46141, 46201(b)	180/175 days ⁵	Kindergarten ~ 600 hours (36,000 minutes) Grades 1-3 ~ 840 hours (50,400 minutes) Grades 4-8 ~ 900 hours (54,000 minutes) Grades 9-12 ~ 1080 hours (64,800 minutes)	Kindergarten ~ 3 hours (180 minutes) Grades 1-3 ~ 3.83 hours (230 minutes) Grades 4-12 ~ 4 hours (240 minutes)	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 (Excludes parent-teacher conferences and staff in- service programs)	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	N/A ⁶	District option
Delaware [DEL. CODE ANN. tit. 14, § 1049(a)(1)]	N/A	Grades K-11 ~ 1060 hours Grade 12 ~ 1032 hours	3.5 hours (Excludes lunch)	District option
District of Columbia [D.C. MUN. REGS. Subt. 5-A, § A2100.3 Subt. 5-E 305]	180 days	N/A	Grades 1-12 ~ 6 hours (Includes lunch and recess)	District option (single district)
Florida [FLA. STAT. ch. 1003.02(1)(g); 1001.42; 1011.61]	180 days	Grades K-3 ~ 720 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 900 hours ⁷	N/A	District option, but: <i>Start</i> no earlier than 14 days before Labor Day

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		
Georgia [GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-168(c); GA. COMP. R. & REGS. r. 160-5-1-.02(2)]	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 [HAW. REV. STAT. § 302A-251]	180 days (Does not apply to charter and multi-track schools) (Excludes professional development)	Grades K-6 ~ 915 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 990 hours (for 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years) Grades K-12 ~ 1080 hours (for 2016-18 school years) Grades K-12~1146 hours (for 2018-19 school years) ⁸ (All of the above do not apply to charter or multi- track schools)	N/A	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 ⁹ (Includes 22 hours for staff development)	N/A	District option
Illinois [105 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/10-19, 5/18-8.05 (F)]	180 days (Includes not more than four professional development days)	N/A	Half-day K ~ 2 hours Full-day K-1 ~ 4 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 5 hours	District option
Indiana [IND. CODE § 20- 30-2-2, 3]	180 days	N/A	Grades 1-6 ~ 5 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 6 hours	District option
Iowa [IOWA CODE § 256.7(19), 279.10]	180 days	1080 hours	Grades 1-12 ~ 6 hours/day or 30 hours/week (Includes parent- teacher conferences)	<i>Start</i> No earlier than a day of the week in which 9/1 falls. If 9/1 falls on Sunday, school may begin on a day of the week immediately preceding 9/1.
Kansas [KAN. STAT. ANN. § 72-1106(a),(b), 72-1111(h)(3)]	Grades K-11 ~ 186 days Grade 12 ~ 181 days	Kindergarten ~ 465 hours Grades 1-11 ~ 1116 hours Grade 12 ~ 1086 hours	5 hours/day	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		
Kentucky [KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 158.070; 702 Ky. Admin. Regs. 7:140]	170 days (185-day calendar that includes 170 instructional plus four days for professional development)	1062 hours	N/A	District option
Louisiana [LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:154; LA. ADMIN. CODE tit. 28 pt., CXV §333, 1103]	177 days ¹⁰ (Includes two days for staff development)	1062 hours	6 hours (360 minutes) (Excludes recess)	District option
Maine [ME. REV. STAT. ANN. tit. 20-A, § 4801]	175 days (Plus no more than five days for in-service education, parent- teacher conferences, similar activities)	N/A	N/A	District option ¹¹
Maryland [MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. § 7-103; Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.03.02.12A]	180 days	1080 hours Grades 8-12 ~ 1170	N/A	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); 380.1284b]	175 days ¹² (Beginning 2016-17, minimum ~ 180 days)	K-12 ~ 1098 hours	N/A	<i>Start</i> No earlier than Labor Day
Minnesota [MINN. STAT. §§ 120A.40, 41]	Grades 1-11 ~ 165 days ¹³	Kindergarten ~ 425 hours All-day kindergarten ~ 850 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 935 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1,020 hours	N/A	<i>Start</i> No earlier than Labor Day (although there are exceptions to the requirement)
Mississippi [MISS. CODE ANN. §§ 37-13-61, 63,67]	180 days	N/A	5.5 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		
Missouri [MO. REV. STAT. § 160.041, 171.031]	Five-day week ~ 174 days Four-day week ~ 142 days	1044 hours	5-day week ~ 3 hours 4-day week ~ 4 hours	District option, but: <i>Start</i> no earlier than 10 days prior to first Monday in September
Montana [MONT. CODE ANN. § 20-1-301, 302; MONT. ADMIN. R. 10.65.101]	N/A	Half-day K ~ 360 hours Grades K-3 ~ 720 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 1080 hours ¹⁴ (Includes an additional three 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. 385.080, 388.090 Nev. Admin. Code ch.387.120, .131]	180 days (May include up to five days for professional development with approval of Superintendent of Public Instruction)	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 2 hours Grades 1-2 ~ 4 hours Grades 3-6 ~ 5 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 5.5 hours (All include recess and time between lessons, exclude lunch)	District option
New Hampshire [N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 189:1, 24; N.H. CODE ADMIN. R. ANN. EDUC. 306.18(a)(1-3), (b), & (c)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-5 ~ 945 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 990 hours ¹⁵	Grades 1-5 ~ 5.75 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 6 hours (K-6 hours include recess)	District option
New Jersey [N.J. STAT. ANN. § 18A:7F-9, 18A:36- 1, -2; N.J. Admin. Code tit. 6A:32- 8.3]	180 days	N/A	Full-day K ~ 2.5 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 4 hours	District option
New Mexico [N.M. STAT. ANN. §§ 22-8-9(A)(1), 22-2-8.1]	N/A	Half-day K ~ 450 hours Full-day K ~ 990 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 990 hours ¹⁶ 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

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 York [N.Y. EDUC. LAW § 3204(9), 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 ¹⁷	District option
North Carolina [N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C- 84.2(a)(1),(d)]	185 days	1025 hours	N/A	District option, but: <i>Start</i> no earlier than Monday closest to 8/19 with approval, otherwise Monday closest to 8/26 <i>Finish</i> No later than Friday closest to June 11
North Dakota [N.D. CENT CODE § 15.1-06-04, 05]	175 (182-day calendar, with 175 days required for instruction; two days must be used for professional development and up to two 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, 481]	N/A (Changed from minimum days to minimum hours in 2014)	Half-day K ~ 455 hours Full-day K ~ 910 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 910 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1001 hours (K-6 includes two 15- minute recesses) (All grades: include up to two days professional development and up to two days for parent conferences and reporting)	N/A	District option
Oklahoma [OKLA. STAT. tit. 70, § 1-109, 111]	180 days	1080 hours (Includes up to 30 hours used for professional meetings and 6 hours per 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 ¹⁸ (May be reduced by up to 30 hours for staff development, pupil transportation schedules, or other local program scheduling arrangements)	N/A ¹⁹	District option, but no fewer than 265 consecutive calendar days between first and last instructional day
Pennsylvania [22 PA. CODE § 11.1, 3; 22 PA. CODE § 51.61]	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	1080 hours (May total less than 180 days using longer school day as long as minimum hours are met)	Kindergarten ~ 2.75 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 5.5 hours (Excludes recess and lunch) ²⁰	District option
South Carolina [S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-1-425]	180 days (Plus three days for mandatory professional development, up to two days for professional development and up to five days for planning, parent conf., etc. to total 190 days)	N/A	6 hours (Elementary includes lunch; secondary excludes lunch)	District option, but: <i>Start</i> no earlier than third Monday in August
South Dakota [S.D. CODIFIED LAWS §§ 13-26-1, 2, 9; S.D. ADMIN. R. 24:43:09:05]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 437.5 hours Grades 1-5 ~ 875 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 962.5 hours ²¹	N/A	District Option
Tennessee [TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-6-3004]	180 days (Plus five days for in- service and one day for parent-teacher conferences)	N/A	6.5 hours	District option, but: <i>Start</i> no earlier than August 1
Texas [TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. §§ 25.081, 0811, .082 §§ 29.0822]	180 days	N/A	7 hours (Includes recess and break hours)	<i>Start</i> 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 R277-419-1, 4, 5]	180 days or 990 hours	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grade 1 ~ 810 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 990 hours	Kindergarten ~ 2 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 4 hours	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 (includes recess, excludes lunch) Grades 3-8 ~ 5.5 hours/day (includes recess, excludes lunch) or 27.5 hours/week Grades 9-12 ~ 5.5 hours/day (excludes recess and lunch) or 27.5 hours/week ²³	Determined regionally
Virginia [VA. CODE ANN. §§ 22.1-79.1, 98; VA. ADMIN. CODE 20- 131-150]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 540 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 990 hours	Kindergarten ~ 3 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 5.5 hours (excludes recess and lunch)	District option, but: <i>Start</i> after Labor Day (unless waiver granted)
Washington [WASH. REV. CODE §§ 28A.150.220]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 1000 hours ²⁴ Grades 1-9 ~ 1000 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 1080 hours ²⁵	N/A	District option
West Virginia [W. VA. CODE § 18- 5-45(b)]	180 days	N/A	Kindergarten-4 ~ 5.25 hours Grades 5-8 ~ 5.5 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 5.75 ²⁶	District Option
Wisconsin [WIS. STAT. § 121.02(1)(f)] Wis. STAT. § 118.045] [WIS. STAT. § 121.004(7), 121.02(1)(f), WIS. STAT. § 118.045]	N/A (Changed from minimum days to minimum hours in 2014)	Half-Day K ~ 437 hours Full-Day K ~ 1050 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 1050 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1137 hours (Includes recess and passing time but not lunch, excludes professional develop- ment and parent-teacher conferences)	N/A	<i>Start</i> No earlier than 9/1

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; WYO. RULES CHAP. 22, SEC. 5]	175 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Elementary ~ 900 hours Middle/Jr. High ~ 1050 hours Secondary ~ 1100 hours	N/A	District option
TERRITORIES: Virgin Islands [17 V.I. CODE § 61]	N/A	1080 hours	N/A	<i>Start</i> No later than second Tuesday after second Monday in August <i>Finish</i> No later than the first Friday in June

Other ECS Resources on Instructional Time

- For information on what cannot count toward official instructional time, please see the ECS report, *What Cannot Count Toward Official Instructional Time?*, or follow this [link](#).

This ECS report was updated by Julie Rowland, researcher. Contact her at jrowland@ecs.org.

¹ For all grades, hours only apply if board submits an acceptable plan under which students will receive the educational equivalent of 180 days.

² Or equivalent number of minutes of instruction per year.

³ 2009 Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation, accessed at:

http://www.arkansased.org/public/userfiles/Public_School_Accountability/Standards_Assurance/ADE_Rules_Governing_Standards_for_Accreditation_July_2009.pdf

⁴ 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.

⁵ Through 2014-15, districts are allowed to shorten instructional year by five days without fiscal penalty.

⁶ Districts may count up to 7 hours/day towards the total required for the year.

⁷ For schools on double-session or approved experimental calendar: Grades K-3 ~ 630 hours; Grades 4-12 ~ 810 hours

⁸ 2014 Legislative Report of the Department of Education of the State of Hawaii

http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/State%20Reports/302A-251_report.pdf

⁹ Instructional time for grade 12 may be reduced by up to 11 hours.

¹⁰ Early dismissal of seniors allowed up to 10 instructional days

¹¹ 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 five dissimilar instructional days within each regional calendar.

¹² Unless a collective bargaining agreement that includes a different and complete school calendar was in effect as of 7/1/2013

¹³ Unless a four-day week schedule has been approved by the commissioner

¹⁴ For graduating seniors, 1050 aggregate hours is sufficient.

¹⁵ High school seniors' school year may be reduced by up to 5 days or 30 hours

¹⁶ Thirty-three hours of the full-day kindergarten program and twenty-two hours of grades 1 through 5 may be used for home visits by the teacher or for parent-teacher conferences. Twelve hours of grades 7-12 may be used to consult with parents or for parent-teacher conferences.

¹⁷ Rules of the Regents and Regulations of the Commissioner of Education 175.5 (unofficial)

¹⁸ If approved by the local school board, instructional time for seniors may be reduced by up to 30 hours.

¹⁹ Oregon sets maximum, rather than minimum, hours/day: K-3 ~ 6 hours, Grades 4-8 ~ 6.5, Grades 9-12 ~ 7 hours.

²⁰ Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary & Secondary Education – Regulations Governing the School Calendar and School Day, accessed at: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/BoardofEducation/BoardRegulations.aspx>

²¹ School boards may release graduating seniors prior to the end of the school year.

²² If a district sets the start date before Labor Day, the decision may be referred to voters.

²³ Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices 2312.

²⁴ To be statewide by 2017-18 school year. Currently transitioning from 450 hours to statewide full-day kindergarten

²⁵ Starting in 2015-16 school year. Currently: Kindergarten ~ 450 hours; Grades 1-12 ~ 1000 hours

²⁶ West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 2510 §26-42-7.2.d.3.