



Instructional Time Compliance, Funding, and Best Practices

Gregory Frostad, Executive Manager
denise terrazas andrade, Senior Manager

Sara Cordova, Senior Manager
Sarah Rivera-Benavidez, Financial Analysis Specialist

Presentation for New Mexico school Board Association – Leadership Retreat

July 17, 2026

Calendar Development

- Requirements
- Funding considerations
- Research and best practices



Instructional Hour Requirements

Grade Level	Minimum instructional hours with students	Professional work hours counting for minimum	Total minimum hours per year
K-6	1,080	60	1,140
7-12	1,110	30	1,140

Important

- Professional work hours may exceed caps, but hours above the cap do not count toward 1,140 or toward K-12+.
- There is no requirement to include professional work hours.
- There is no legislative requirement to maintain hours from a prior year.

Calendar Design

Four-day week calendars

- A four-day week calendar has weeks with at most four instructional days for every instructional week.
- Professional work hours may occur on a fifth day.

Five-day week calendars

- There is no requirement to maintain a five-day week.

Tip

Do not include planned **make-up days** in the calendar submitted to PED.

Instructional Day and Schedule Rules

Daily Requirements

- Full day: at least 5.5 hours and no more than 7.5 hours
- Half day: at least 3.5 hours
- Lunch: at least 30 minutes (lunch, lunch passing period, and lunch recess do not count toward instructional hours)
- General + regular local election days are school holidays for students and staff
- Out-of-school activities (before/after school, spring breaks, summer school, etc.) do not count toward instructional hours

K-12 Plus (K-12+) Program

Calendar Days	Tier	Qualifying Day Range	Program Units (per day)
5-day week	Tier I	181-190	MEM* x 0.012 x (days >180)
5-day week	Tier II	191-205	MEM x 0.016 x (days >190)
4-day week	Tier I	156-165	MEM x 0.012 x (days >155)
4-day week	Tier II	166-175	MEM x 0.016 x (days >165)

**MEM is enrollment*

Note

- No application is required.

K-12 Plus Examples

Calendar Type	Enrollment	Days	Program Units (per day)	Program Funding
5-day week	100	185	$100 \times 0.012 \times 5 = 6 \text{ units}$	$6 \times \$7,117.10 = \textbf{\$42,702}$
4-day week	100	170	$100 \times 0.012 \times 10 = 12 \text{ units}$ $100 \times 0.016 \times 5 = 8 \text{ units}$ $= 20 \text{ units}$	$20 \times \$7,117.10 = \textbf{\$142,354}$

Calendar Reviews During the Year

- The PED School Budget Bureau compares the public calendar to the submitted calendar
- If there is a mismatch, the budget analyst will work with your team to determine why
- Site visits will take place for the first time in 2026-2027 school year

Remote Learning

Annual caps

- No more than 4 remote learning days per year
- No more than 32 total remote hours
- Does not count toward transportation days

Each remote day must...

- Meet daily minimum hours (full day ≥ 5.5 ; half day ≥ 3.5).
- Be at least 50% synchronous (live instruction in real time).
- Use remaining time as synchronous or asynchronous.

Note

Remote learning limits apply whether planned or used for emergencies

Inclement Weather / Emergencies: Options and Impacts

When weather or emergencies disrupt a school day, choose an option and update PED promptly.


Delay / early release




Full cancellation




Convert to remote




Make-up day /
add minutes



Considerations

- If disruptions drop the calendar below 1,140 hours, the calendar must be revised to meet the minimum
- If days are cancelled / shortened and not made up, K-12+ funding (if applicable) is reduced accordingly
- Remote conversions must stay within remote caps and meet synchronous and daily hour requirements
- Update calendar for any changes
- Ensure board or governing body approval before implementing changes

Hardship Waivers

May be waived (**hardship**)

- Length-of-day limits
- Remote learning requirements when exceeding caps (e.g., >4 remote days, >32 hours, or <50% synchronous).

Cannot be waived

- K-12+ qualifying days and associated funding impacts.
 - If K-12+ days are not made up, SEG funding is adjusted accordingly.
- 1,140 annual instructional hours.

Varying Calendars

Separate calendars must be submitted when schedules differ by grade or by school. Examples include:

- Kindergarten starts later than grades 1–5.
- Grade 12 graduates earlier than grades 9–11.
- Two schools have different conference days or schedules

Instructional Days

Learning time with students

- All students are expected to attend
- Transportation is provided as usual
- Attendance is taken for each class
- Meals are provided as usual
- Students are participating in standards-based instruction

Professional work time

- Staff are working on challenging academic content and performance standards

Common Misconceptions

- Parent-teacher / student-led conferences count as instructional time with students (no)
- K-12+ days should match contract days or transportation days (they may not due to half days)
- Registration/orientation/meet-the-teacher/pick-up material days are instructional hours with students or professional work hours (no)
- Out-of-school activities may be counted toward instructional time with students (no)

Trends across the State

- 5-day to 4-day trend:
 - From FY25 to FY27 58 to 85 entities
- Stable instructional hours or days
- K-12+ funding increases
- The average instructional day is ~6.9 hours including lunch and roughly 42% students attend schools with instructional days of ≥ 7 hours.

Effective Use of Instructional Time

Practice	Research
Bell-to-bell instruction	15 percent of time can be lost to transitions , even more in poorly managed classrooms. This can be two or three weeks of instructional time lost over a year.
More learning opportunities	For deeper and lasting learning, spread out learning with multiple learning opportunities.
Length of school day	The human brain has a limited capacity for sustained attention and cognitive processing.
Start times	Later school start times are associated with more sleep and better performance in high school students .
Scheduling of core content	Morning math and English classes are linked to higher GPAs and morning math classes are linked to better standardized test scores
Special education considerations	Ensure that all students have access to honors and AP classes, including those who need special education services

Questions



For More Information

For Questions

Gregory Frostad, Executive Manager
Policy and Finance and Operations

Gregory.Frostad@ped.nm.gov

(505) 470-5752

Sara Cordova, Senior Manager
School Budget Bureau

Sara.Cordova@ped.nm.gov

(505) 469-3717

denise terrazas andrade, Senior Manager
Policy and Legislative Affairs Division

Denise.Terrazas@ped.nm.gov

(505) 470-5303

Sarah Rivera-Benavidez, Financial Analysis Specialist
School Budget Bureau

Sarah.Benavidez@ped.nm.gov

(505) 699-7464