



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 Marga Mikulecky

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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. Some states set instructional time in terms of days, some 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(a)(1) and (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	School Start/Finish
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) ; 005 19 CARR § 3-5.00]	178 days (plus minimum 10 days [60 hrs] professional development/in-service)	N/A	6 hours/day or 30 hours/week	Start No earlier than 8/14 and no later than 8/26²
California [CAL. EDUC. CODE § 46200(c) 41420(b),46200,4 6112,46113,46114, 46117,46141, 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	4 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 ~ 1060 hours ³ Grades 1-11 ~ 1060 hours Grade 12 ~ 1032 hours	3.5 hours	District option
District of Columbia [D.C. MUN. REGS. tit. 5, § 305] A-2100.4, A-2100.5	180 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	School Start/Finish
Florida [FLA. STAT. ch. 1003.02(1)(g), 1001.42,, 1003.02(g), 1011.61]	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	District option; Florida's local school districts have authority to adopt policies for the opening and closing of schools and to fix uniform dates. However, <u>Section 1001.42(4)(f), Florida Statutes</u> , restricts districts from setting opening dates earlier than 14 days before Labor Day each year.
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	District option Grades K-3 ~ 4.5 hours Grades 4-5 ~ 5 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 5.5 hours
Hawaii [HAW. REV. STAT. § 302A-251]	180 days (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 Grades 7-12 ~ 990 hours (for 2014-16 school years) Grades K-12~1080 (for 2016-18 school years) Grades K-12~1140 (for 2018-19 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)	District option N/A
Illinois [105 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/10-19, 5/18-8.05]	176 days	N/A	District option Grades K-1 ~ 4 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 5 hours
Indiana [IND. CODE § 20-30-2-2, 3]	180 days	N/A	District option Grades 1-6 ~ 5 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 6 hours

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		Minimum time for any day to count as	School Start/Finish
Iowa [IOWA CODE § 256.7(19), 279.10]	180 days	N/A	Grades 1-12 ~ 5.5 hours/day or 27.5 hours/week	Start No earlier than day of the week in which 9/1 falls. If 9/1 falls on Sunday, school may begin the week immediately preceding 9/1.
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; 702 Ky. Admin. Regs. 7:140]	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 pt.,CXV §333, 1103]	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; Md. Admin. Code tit. 13A.05.11.04]	180 days	1080 hours	Grades 1-12 ~ 6 hours	District option
Massachusetts [MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 69, § 1G; MASS. REGS. CODE tit. 603, § 27.02, 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)]	170 days	1098 hours	N/A	Start 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	Start 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	School Start/Finish
Mississippi [MISS. CODE ANN. §§ 37-13-61, 63,67]	180 days	N/A	5.5 hours (mandatory total of 27.5 hours/week)
Missouri [MO. REV. STAT. § 160.041, 171.031]	5-day week ~ 174 days 4-day week ~ 142 days	1044 hours	5-day week ~ 3 hours 4-day week ~ 4 hours
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
Nebraska [NEB. REV. STAT. §§ 79-211, 212]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 400 hours Grades 1-8 ~ 1032 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 1080 hours	N/A
Nevada [NEV. REV. STAT. 385.080, 388.090 Nev. Admin. Code ch.387.131]	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)
New Hampshire [N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 189:1, 24; N.H. CODE ADMIN. R. ANN. EDUC. 306.18(b)(1),(2)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-5 ~ 945 hours Grades 6-12 ~ 990 hours	3.5 hours
New Jersey [N.J. STAT. ANN. § 18A:7F-9; N.J. Admin. Code tit. 6A:14-7.6]	180 days	N/A	4 hours (excluding lunch and recess)
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

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		Minimum time for any day to count as	School Start/Finish
New York [N.Y. EDUC. LAW § 3204(4), 3604(7)]	190 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)]	185 days	1025 hours	5.5 hours	Start District option but no earlier than Monday closest to 8/19 with approval, otherwise Monday closest to 8/26 Finish 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; 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, 481]	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, 111]	180 days (includes up to 5 days used for professional meetings)	Grades 1-6 ~ 900 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1080 hours (includes 6 hours per semester for parent- teacher conferences)	6 hours	District option
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, 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

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)		Minimum time for any day to count as	School Start/Finish
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)	Start District option but no earlier than third Monday in August
South Dakota [S.D. CODIFIED LAWS §§ 13-26-1,9; S.D. ADMIN. R. 24:43:09:05]	N/A	Kindergarten ~ 437.5 hours ⁹ Grades 1-3 ~ 875 hours Grades 4-12 ~ 962.5 hours ¹⁰	N/A	Start No earlier than the first Tuesday following the first Monday in September¹¹
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	Start District option but no earlier than August 1
Texas [TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. §§ 25.081, 0811, §§ 29.0822]	180 days	N/A	7 hours (including recess and break hours)	Start No earlier than the fourth Monday in August (unless a waiver is granted)
Utah [UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-419-3(A),4(C)]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grade 1 ~ 810 hours Grades 2-12 ~ 990 hours	Kindergarten ~ 2.00 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 4.0 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 (including recess, excluding lunch) Grades 3-12 ~ 5.5 hours/day (including recess, excluding lunch) or 27.5 hours/week ¹²	Determined regionally
Virgin Islands [17 V.I. CODE § 61]	N/A	1080 hours	N/A	Start No later than second Tuesday after second Monday in August Finish No later than 1st Friday in June

State [citation]	Minimum Amount of Instructional Time/Year* (by grade, if applicable)	Minimum time for any day to count as	School Start/Finish
Virginia [VA. CODE ANN. §§ 22.1-79.1, 98; VA. ADMIN. CODE 20-131]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 540 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 990 hours	Kindergarten ~ 3 hours Grades 1-12 ~ 5.5 hours (excluding recess and lunch)
Washington [WASH. REV. CODE §§ 28A.150.220]	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 450 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 1000 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1080 hours	N/A
West Virginia [W. VA. CODE § 18-5-45(c),(e)]	180 days	N/A	Kindergarten-4 ~ 5.25 hours Grades 5-8 ~ 5.5 hours Grades 9-12 ~ 5.75 ¹³
Wisconsin [WIS. STAT. § 121.02(1)(f)] WIS. STAT. § 118.045	180 days	Kindergarten ~ 437 hours Grades 1-6 ~ 1050 hours Grades 7-12 ~ 1137 hours	N/A
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 Secondary ~ 1100 hours	N/A

Other ECS Resources on Instructional Time

- 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](#).

This ECS StateNote was updated by Marga Mikulecky, ECS, (mmikulecky@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 1060-hour requirement for kindergarten waived if district shows inability to implement full-day program.

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 nine 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 1 through 5 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.

¹² Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices 2312.

¹³ West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 2510 §26-42-5.1.

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