

As we continue to look for ways to reduce costs, we are considering a potential modification to our school week schedule to either a 4-day school week, an alternating 5-day/4-day schedule, or perhaps some other version of that approach. We are also considering revenue-generating options including offering half-day kindergarten if families are interested.

Before making any decisions about changing our school schedule or adding programs, we wanted to know the opinions of our school community members so we sent an opinion survey to our staff, families, and secondary students.

I presented the survey results at [yesterday's board workshop](#). You can review the survey results on our website at this [link](#). Importantly, we have not made any decisions about whether to change the school week, and won't for a while yet. We need more definitive information about state funding and other requirements before we can do that.

The benefits of a condensed school schedule.

As the largest school district north of the Salmon River, the Coeur d'Alene School District is a leader in academic achievement and innovation. We are the second highest performing district in the state - behind only West Ada which is more than twice our size and has many more resources - and the performance of our students speaks for itself. There is nothing more important to us than providing the best possible education for each and every one of our students. This condensed week concept is well-established across Idaho with [94 school districts and charter schools](#) already operating within 4-day school weeks. Why? Because condensed weeks offer numerous benefits for students, families, and schools.

Student achievement is our highest priority.

Despite recent rhetoric to the contrary, maintaining and enhancing student achievement is possible under an alternative school week schedule. By condensing instructional time into fewer days, students are often more focused and engaged in the classroom. Studies have shown that students retain information more effectively when they have longer periods of uninterrupted learning, which can lead to improved academic outcomes.

Time for teachers to get better at their craft.

Condensed weeks also provide valuable additional time for teachers to collaborate with colleagues, engage in professional learning communities, and attend training sessions. This ongoing professional development enables educators to refine their profession, stay current on the latest educational best practices, and ultimately deliver high quality instruction to our students.

Yes, condensed weeks save money.

Moving to a 4-day weekly schedule would save our district \$1 million per year, while a change to an alternative 5-day/4-day schedule would save \$500,000 per year. By operating on a compressed schedule, we can reduce expenses associated with utilities, transportation, and facility maintenance. A streamlined schedule also simplifies administrative processes and improves resource use efficiencies, benefiting taxpayers and our school community stakeholders.

More time for families.

With an additional day out of school each week, parents/guardians have more flexibility to spend time with their children. This improved work-life balance can enhance family relationships, reduce stress levels, and contribute to overall well-being.

Finding new ways to deliver education is a good thing.

Condensed school weeks present a compelling opportunity to reimagine the traditional educational model and foster positive outcomes for students, families, and educators alike. By maintaining student achievement, making more time for teachers to improve their skills, saving money, and promoting efficiencies, this approach holds promise for creating a more effective and sustainable educational system.