

Descriptor Term:  
USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Descriptor Code:  
3.5400

Legal References: 36 U.S.C. 106(d); G.S. 115C-12(33), -36, -47, -84.2, -105.21(b)(2),  
-238.31, -288; State Board of Education Policy GCS-G

Cross References:

The board believes that time is a variable in the educational process and that students may need different amounts of instructional time in order to fulfill the educational goals and objectives of the board. The board also recognizes that the school day and school year should be planned in a manner to facilitate student learning and to permit an accurate assessment of student achievement in scheduled testing periods.

A. Instructional Time

Interruptions of instructional time and time off task are to be kept to a minimum. The principal is responsible for ensuring that instructional time is maintained and protected in the school schedule. Each teacher is responsible for ensuring optimal use of instructional time in his/her classes. School personnel are encouraged to seek creative means of reducing transitional time and scheduling non-instructional activities. A proposal for alternative scheduling classes or other such strategies may be a part of a school improvement plan.

B. School Day

The length of the school day may vary from school to school and student to student, if approved by the board.

C. Opening and Closing Dates

Except for year-round schools or schools under a modified calendar, the opening date for students will not be before August 25 and the closing date for students will not be after June 10.

The school board may offer supplemental or additional educational programs or activities outside the adopted school calendar.

When allowed by law, the board will seek a waiver of the opening and/or closing dates from the State Board of Education if the board determines that a waiver is in the best interest of the students and the school system.

D. School Year

The school calendar in all schools shall be for 215 days and shall provide a minimum of 180 days and 1000 hours of instruction covering at least nine months. As funding permits, the board may pursue increasing the number of instructional hours or days, at least for those students who need more time to learn the curriculum.

Any calendar adopted by the board will be consistent with the following requirements.

1. Ten of the days on the calendar will be designated as annual vacation leave days.

2. Ten of the days on the calendar will be designated as holidays, including Veteran's Day if it falls on a weekday.
3. The remaining 195 days are to be workdays for teachers. The total number of workdays for teachers employed for a 10-month term will not exceed 195 days. Those 195 days will be scheduled as follows:
  - a. One hundred and eighty days will be instructional days when students are present. These will be designated as "instructional" teacher workdays.
  - b. Five days will be designated as "administrative" workdays for teachers. One of these days will be at the beginning of the school year and one at the end of each academic quarter. Such days will be protected to allow teachers to complete instructional and classroom administrative duties. No additional tasks will be assigned on those days.
  - c. The remaining 10 days will be "flexible" teacher workdays and may be used by the board, superintendent or school principals to schedule additional teacher workdays or additional instructional days or used for other lawful purposes. Each principal may schedule those days on the school calendar that have not been reserved by the board for other purposes. Before scheduling these days, each principal shall work with the school improvement team to determine the days to be scheduled and the purposes for which they should be scheduled.
  - d. Of the 15 "administrative" and "flexible" teacher workdays described in subsections D.3.b and c, the board will designate at least seven days as days on which teachers may take accumulated vacation leave.
  - e. Further, the board may, due to school closings because of inclement weather or other reasons, use any of the "flexible" 10 days designated in subsection D.3.c above as make-up days for those instructional days that were missed. The board will give teachers at least 14 days' notice before requiring a teacher to work instead of taking vacation leave on any of these days. A teacher may elect to waive this notice requirement for one or more of these days.
  - f. Further, if it is unable to schedule student makeup days until after the scheduled end of the school year, the school board may designate some of the "flexible" workdays described in subsection D.3.c above as additional make-up days after the last day of student attendance.
4. If the school calendar requires students to attend on Memorial Day, each principal shall ensure that the significance of Memorial Day is recognized in the school on that day. If students are not scheduled to attend school on Memorial Day, recognition of the significance of Memorial Day will be provided at another time as part of the citizenship curriculum (see policy 3.4750, Citizenship and Character Education).
5. If the school calendar requires students to attend school on September 17, which is Constitution and Citizenship Day, each principal shall ensure that the signing of the United States Constitution is commemorated in the school on that day. If students are not required to attend school on September 17, the principal shall ensure that Constitution and Citizenship Day is commemorated during the preceding or following week (see policy 3.4750, Citizenship and Character Education).