

Richards ISD 4-Day Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What day will we be out?**
 - a. Fridays are the preferred days off for several reasons:
 - i. A large majority of our students participate in UIL activities, with many events taking place on Fridays.
 - ii. Attendance rates are generally lower on Fridays due to students leaving early for extracurricular activities.
 - b. While Fridays are typically the designated day off, there may be exceptions due to national holidays or STAAR testing preparation. In these cases, some Mondays may be designated as days off, or school may be in session on Fridays.
2. **Will this lower the pay of teachers or other staff?**
 - a. No, this will not impact the pay of teachers or staff. Teachers will continue to teach, plan, and grade as they have previously. The district will still operate for the same 75,600 minutes as before, with the minutes now distributed differently.
3. **Will this make the school year longer?**
 - a. This adjustment will move the beginning of the school year to earlier in August, but the district still expects students to finish before the end of May.
4. **Will school days be longer?**
 - a. Yes, school days will be slightly longer. The school day is anticipated to be from 7:40 AM to 3:50 PM, adding 40 minutes to the day compared to the 2024-2025 school year.
5. **Will a 4-day school week shorten holidays during the year?**
 - a. No, all traditional holidays with extended breaks will remain the same:
 - i. Thanksgiving Break and Spring Break will continue as full weeks.
 - ii. Christmas Break will remain approximately two weeks long.
 - iii. Holidays such as Labor Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Good Friday will remain unchanged.
6. **How will this affect extracurricular activities on Fridays?**
 - a. Extracurricular activities, including games and competitions, will continue as scheduled on Fridays. The benefit of the 4-day week is that junior high students who travel for away games on Thursdays will not have to wake up early for school on Friday morning. Coaches and staff who travel with teams will also not be required to report to work at 7:30 a.m. on Fridays. However, coaches and other staff will still work on Fridays for game days, as they do now. Additionally, extracurricular activities may hold practices on Fridays if needed.
7. **What are the reasons for this change?**
 - a. This change is designed to make the district more competitive in the job market by offering a schedule that attracts and retains high-quality teachers and staff. Many larger districts in our region offer higher salaries, and while we cannot match those salaries, we believe this change will help improve recruitment and retention. Research indicates that districts with 4-day instructional weeks:
 - i. Are able to fill positions with highly qualified teachers, aides, bus drivers, and other staff.
 - ii. See increased morale for both students and staff.
 - iii. Experience higher attendance rates.
 - iv. Report fewer discipline issues.