



# Italy Independent School District

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## 4-Day Instructional Week School Calendar 2023-2024 Frequently Asked Questions

### ***Why consider a four-day school week?***

- The primary reasons are:
  - To retain and attract quality teachers and staff
  - Provide stability and quality instruction for students
  - Boost student and staff well-being
  - Maintain strong student attendance
  - Give time back to students and staff to improve overall performance and quality of life.
- Italy ISD is unable to pay our employees the same salaries as the larger school districts that are in our area. We feel this would help give Italy ISD a competitive edge in hiring employees.
- By being able to hire and retain the highest quality and experienced teachers and support staff, the quality of our instruction and student success should increase.
- The 4-Day Instructional week has the potential to attract more students to our district.
- Making this change will have a positive effect on student and staff morale.
- Having off one day a week will help with attendance rates of students and staff alike. Staff and families can use the day during the week to schedule appointments, take care of family obligations, etc... that often take them out of school.

### ***What day would we be out?***

- The students would go to school Monday thru Thursday and be off on Friday unless we are off for a Monday holiday (Labor Day, MLK Day, President's Day). During those weeks students will attend school on Friday.
- Teachers and Paraprofessionals would participate in professional development, planning and preparation on select Fridays:
  - 5 days before school starts
  - 1 day after the last day of school
  - 6 days during the school year
    - The end of every 6-weeks grading period is followed by a Professional Development/Planning day except for the 3rd 6-weeks when the Professional Development/Planning day comes the day before we return from Winter Holiday.
- The days during the week when we do not have school will allow Italy ISD employees and students time to spend with family, schedule appointments, rest, and take care of personal business.

***Would students lose instructional time? Will our students' day be longer?***

- The State of Texas measures instructional time by minutes rather than days. They require a minimum of 75,600 minutes per year.
- 50 minutes will be added to each instructional day split between coming earlier and staying later.
  - 2022-2023 hours:

	Stafford Elementary	7:50-3:30 (460 minutes)
	JH/HS	8:00-3:40 (460 minutes)
  - Proposed:

	Stafford Elementary	7:45-4:15 (510 minutes)
	JH/HS	7:35-4:05 (510 minutes)
- Students would have 77,010 minutes of instruction for the year, which exceeds the required instructional minutes.

## ***What are Intervention & Support Days?***

- Intervention and Support Days can be used as determined by the administration/staff with principal approval for:
  - Fulfilling the 30-hours of Accelerated Instruction for each STAAR assessment grades 3-8 or EOC that students who do not pass that is not completed summer school or within the regular school day
  - Students who are falling behind or failing classes to make-up work
  - Attendance credit recovery for absences and/or tardies
  - Other reasons as designated by the campus principal
- Teachers and/or paraprofessionals will have the opportunity to earn extra duty pay for working these sessions.

***Would we start school earlier in the year?***

- Students would start on August 9th (one day sooner than last year).
- Teachers report to work on August 2nd with new teachers also coming July 31st - August 1st.

***Would this cause us to go to school later in the year?***

- Student's last day would be May 23rd
- Teacher's last day would be May 24th
- Everyone would be out before Memorial Day.

***Will a 4-day week shorten our holidays/breaks during the year?***

- Thanksgiving Break will still be a week.
- Christmas Break will be 2 days shorter.
- The Friday during Easter weekend will already be off. We will not take the Monday following Easter off.
- Spring Break will still be a week.
- Labor Day, MLK Day and Presidents' Day will still be school holidays, however, school will be held on Friday those weeks.
- Fair Day will not be designated as there will be several Fridays off families can choose from to attend the fair.

**Will this lower the pay of teachers? *Will they be working less and being paid the same?***

- This will not lower the pay of teachers.
- Our District of Innovation plan says teachers work 182 days (8 hours per day) This includes both Instructional Days and Professional Development days. That equals 1,456 hours of work.
- On the 4-Day Calendar:
  - 151 Instructional Days @ 9 hours per day: 1,359 hours

- 12 days Professional Development @ 8 hours per day: 96 hours
- Total 1,455 hours
- 1 hour less than the current calendar year, which will be more than made up when they stay later than required after school and occasionally on days off and weekends.

***Will this lower the pay of support staff (bus drivers, maintenance, custodians, cafeteria, secretaries, and aides)?***

- This will not lower the pay of support staff.
- It may, however, reduce extra duty pay for some employees.

***How will this affect state and local leave for staff?***

- State leave days will remain the same. However, with a reduction in work days, the number of local leave days would be evaluated.

***How will this affect Extracurricular Activities on Fridays (ball games, etc.)?***

- We will play games and participate in other competitions that are on Fridays just as we always have.
- The upside to this is that a Junior High student that travels to ballgames on Thursdays to play, and gets home very late, will not have to wake up early to attend school on Friday morning.
- In addition, coaches that travel on these same trips will not have to be at work early Friday, either.
- Coaches/directors will have more flexibility on when they schedule to practice with students on Friday.

***Is this change being made to save money?***

- No. Minimal savings, if any, are expected.

***What about days missed for unexpected bad weather or other unexpected events?***

- Between instructional minutes and professional development waiver minutes, there are enough extra minutes built into the calendar to account for 6 1/2 days of unexpected missed school for weather or another unscheduled incident.

***Will there be meals available on Fridays for students on free or reduced lunch?***

- Families with students on free or reduced lunch will be provided the opportunity to sign-up to pick up a sack lunch during the regular school year on Fridays during a designated time.
- A minimum of 20 families will need to sign-up for the Friday lunch program to be provided.
- If families picking up lunches drop below 20 families for 3 consecutive weeks, a notice to discontinue the service will be sent to all that signed up.

***What do families do about childcare on Friday when there is no school?***

- Families will need to arrange for care of their children like they do during other breaks from school such as Thanksgiving, Christmas/New Years, Spring Break and the summer.
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***How will the school know if this is successful?***

- The 4-Day Instructional Week calendar would be a 3-year Pilot Program.
- We would look at the following data to determine if it is successful or not:
  - Student academic success (STAAR Assessments & Growth, MAP data, Reading levels, completing Dual Credit college hours before graduation, earning an industry based certification before graduation, ASVAB scores, ACT scores, graduation rates).
  - Student enrollment numbers
  - Student attendance rates
  - Employee attendance rates

- Percentage of students participating in extracurricular activities
- Employee retention rate
- Numbers of certified and highly qualified applicants for each open position
- Climate surveys (staff, students and parents)
- Discipline data