

From: [REDFROG AUTO](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cloudcroft School
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 4:39:46 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am a parent to two Cloudcroft Students. I have recently become aware of the proposed amendment to 6.10.5NMAC addressing the number of school days required for all NM. Currently Cloudcroft enjoys a 150 day school year and has for many years. This change would negatively impact our whole community. My children's attendance in school has dramatically increased since we moved from Texas where we had a 5 day week. We plan all our doctors appointments on Mondays and never need to miss school. My son is also able to participate in multiple extracurricular activities including two hour practices for basketball and 2 hours for science olympiad on Mondays. He is still able to help with the family in taking care of our livestock and gathering fire wood. We live in the mountains and these things are necessary for our survival as we live far from markets and need to make our own food and warmth at times of power outages. There is also a huge shortage of un-skilled labor in our area so my daughter is able to work weekends which helps the community and then have Mondays for homework. This is an economic, farming, and social issue of our small town that cannot and should not be regulated by people who don't live here and understand our communities needs and wants.

Furthermore our school is a spotlight school in New Mexico. It seems more places should follow our lead with a 4 day week to get such great test scores. Teachers and students are more motivated to succeed when their basic needs of rest and family cooperation are met.

Do not take this away from our community or you will devastate the town emotionally, financially, and academically.

Sincerely

Concerned Village Resident

From: [Erin Cook](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Instructional Time Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 4:59:06 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

New Mexico PED,

As a level 3 veteran teacher and a parent in the Los Alamos School district, I'm writing to express my concern about the proposed changes to the public school instructional time requirements. Please consider the following information from a teacher and student perspective before enacting these useless and dataless provisions on our teachers and students. With 20 years in education, through covid and post covid, let me assure you that what is failing the students isn't the time they spend in the classroom. Poverty, emotional and behavioral issues, lack of parental support, and a lack of qualified staff are the main issues facing students in New Mexico. Additional hours/days to an already long school year is not best practice for students or staff members. According to the NEA, "high-achieving nations such as Finland, Singapore, and China have chosen not to take this route, opting instead for maximizing learning and collaboration time during the traditional schedule. Indeed, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, U.S. teachers already spend more time in direct instruction with students than their peers in practically every other developed country." And although the extended school day has worked to raise test scores in a few locations across the US, the focus in those schools remains on the students who NEED the extra time, not all students. "The program works in Rochester... because the focus has always been not just on more time, but better time - and on the students who need it the most." Extending time for students who need extra support could definitely be justified, but all students do not need more time in the classroom." "Some students need additional time, not all students. Those who benefit from it are usually those who don't have adequate conditions for continuing learning after school, whether at home or in the community," explains Urbanski, superintendent of Rochester school district. My suggestion would be to extend time for the most in need students, so that teachers could focus on those students' deficiencies rather than a classroom of 30 students at a time.

Another concern from the teacher perspective is that many quality and qualified teachers are leaving the profession in droves over the lack of support for us in the classroom. Instead of the increase in days, the increase should be in quality staffing, smaller class sizes, and additional teacher preparation time. PED wants teachers and staff to be everything from parents, to therapists, to referees, to councilors, and finally teachers, but with no incentive to recruit or retain staff. Adding hours/days to the calendar will only push more out of this profession that I love, hurting more students. We are now hiring anyone with a degree in anything to work with our students. A pulse and a bachelors do not make you even remotely qualified to be a teacher. My beloved profession that I have

dedicated half my life to has become a profession I steer my own children away from. We have subpar compensation for the education, time, and energy we spend making education successful. My suggestion would be in returning to incentivizing the profession to get quality educators. Maybe financial compensation can not be raised, but benefits like a better retirement plan, better health insurance (potentially fully covered by the state and offer the benefits given to state employees), and getting us the help we need to be successful in the classroom would attract quality and qualified teachers to the profession.

From the student perspective, additional time with subpar educators will not raise test scores. Both of my children completed elementary school in another state. When we came to NM, we enrolled them in the Los Alamos School district because of it's high academic standards, only to find that it has the same issues as so many other schools in NM. And while our district and specifically the school I teach in has high achievement, there is a lot missing from our time spent with students, and a disconnect between the qualified staff and who we have decided to employ as "teachers". Those with next to no teaching experience or training are being placed in classrooms across the state because of the teacher shortage. Fix the teacher shortage by incentivizing the profession and the scores will improve. Continuing to put unqualified people in front of an overpopulated classroom no matter how many hours you require will continue to get you the same results of failing education.

Additionally, students are over extended and over worked in our current system, and mandating more time for all students is not the solution. According to the NEA, "Many of our children are already stretched to unhealthy breaking points, loaded down with excessive homework, extracurricular activities and outside tutoring because they're led to believe high test scores, a slew of Advanced Placement classes and a packed résumé are their ticket to college and success. This has led to an epidemic of anxious, unhealthy, sleep-deprived, burned-out, disengaged, unprepared children -- and overwhelmed and discouraged teachers. The key is creating a healthier, more balanced, more engaging and effective school day, not a longer one."

In conclusion, addressing the real problems facing students and teacher cannot be fixed with additional time. It can however be fixed with a real dedication to providing teachers and staff with incentives to recruit and retain quality staff, smaller class sizes to focus on individual needs, and incentives to staff more time for students who need the help, not all students. This proposed extension to hours and days will only push more educators away, leaving unqualified people to fill the positions, and hurt students and their test scores.

Sincerely,

--

Erin Cook
(she, her, hers)
6th Grade ELA
Mountain Elementary
Los Alamos Public Schools

(505) 663-2325



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Jessica Allsup](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 5:10:57 PM
Attachments: [Cliff School Student Letters of Concern.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern,

Attached please find student letters from Cliff High School students voicing concerns about changes to rule *6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements*.

Students have taken the time to contemplate and consider the pros and cons of this proposed change and have shared their ideas with you.

Thank you for your time considering their opinions. Should you have any questions please feel free to reach out.

Sincerely,
Jessica Allsup
Cliff School Secondary ELA Educator

Brooklyn Bird
615 Broken Bow St.
Silver City, New Mexico, 88061
brooklynbiscool@icloud.com
1-575-956-3691
December 13, 2023

To Whom It May Concern.

Subject: *Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department*

I am writing this letter as a concerned student of Cliff Schools and I believe that a four day school week is more beneficial than a five day school week for multiple reasons.

- 1) We do almost the same amount of learning time throughout the week due to hours of school not, the days. So an extra day would not be necessary if a four and five day school week have the same learning hours..
- 2) Also a five day school week causes more burnout for students. When the students have after school activities, sports or just other activities in general, another day of school along with that can be a lot. On a four day week you get an extra weekend day for going places, spending time with friends and family, doing homework, recovering from sports activities and more time for weekend jobs.
- 3) Another thing that will be harder for students that go on a five day week is less time for jobs. Many high school students have after school or weekend jobs. If we go on a five day week those students will lose money and job experience. It may not seem like a big deal but depending on the job, you may lose a few hundred dollars from losing those days to school hours.
- 4) Most people may think that if there is a shorter time away from school there is less loss of learning, which in some cases is true but as a student with a three day weekend I usually have homework to remind me of what we were learning that week. Even if I don't have homework over the weekend I still remember that we were learning since we went over it mostly all week.
- 5) My school is very small and doesn't always have funding for certain things. If we went to a five day week it would be harder to run all the air, heating/cooling, lights and electrical utilities including ovens. The school would have to cut back on the sport and school supplies portions of money just to keep the school working. Especially in the winter when it's extremely cold.
- 6) In New Mexico there is already a teacher/subs shortage, and making every school go to a five day week would make the number of needed teachers and subs go through the roof. Teachers that go to a four day school week do that for a reason. If you changed the amount of days many teachers would retire or quit.
- 7) Also, there is a lack of evidence that a five day school week is better. There is no actual study showing which one is better mainly because every student has different levels of skill. I have ADHD and know that I already have a hard time focusing and am extremely

burnt out from all of the stress from the week and the sports and activities I have throughout the week. I know a lot of people with ADHD and other learning challenges that would feel the same way. Some students might benefit from a five day school week for more learning time but no one knows what's best for everyone since everyone learns differently.

- 8) Schools have attendance problems as it is, but if it was mandatory to go five days instead of four the attendance would drop even more. Students get used to a four day week and it would be hard to adjust. Also kids already don't want to go four days a week, so if you added another day a lot of kids would just ditch.

In conclusion, I urge that you reconsider the five day school week being mandatory, it would be easier for the students, teachers, staff and parents if it stayed the same. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Brooklyn Bird

Joseph Villegas
19 Fawn Court
Silver City, New Mexico, 88061
josephjvillegas2010@gmail.com
575-284-6540
Date: 12-13-23

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter as a concerned student attending Cliff Schools in the Silver Schools Community. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours. I strongly oppose these changes, as they pose a direct threat to the educational system that has proven successful for our community and, most importantly, for me

1. Most Cliff students live in Silver so they already spend so much money on gas driving back and forth, so adding another day to the school week will make the cost for gas money increase by even more.
2. Disruption of the Four-Day Week Model: Our community has thrived under the four-day school week model. The requirement that over 50% of school weeks be five days long undermines a system that has not only been successful but also favored by our community. This change seems to disregard the unique needs and preferences of our district, particularly of Cliff Schools.
3. Having school on Friday will make a lot of students just skip school because they're already so tired from just going to school 4 days a week and sometimes people who play sports might have games on Friday so school would just be in the way.
4. Neglect of Essential Professional Work Time: Excluding planning and training from instructional hours fails to recognize the comprehensive educational approach that is vital for the success of our educators and students alike. Teachers need this time for effective lesson planning, collaboration, and professional development.
5. Teachers will probably be even more tired going 5 days a week, and they will have less time to set up for the next week because they only have a two day weekend.

I echo the concerns of our legislators, who have pointed out the flaws in PED's rule-making process and the lack of effective communication and research backing these changes. The proposed rules not only bypass the legislative process but also ignore the voice and needs of our local community

In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and maintain the current educational structure that has served our community well. As a student, my primary concern is the well-being and academic success for me, and I believe that the proposed changes are a step backward in achieving these goals.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Joseph Villegas
Joseph Villegas

Easton Kopchick
21 Copper Ridge Drive
Silver City, New Mexico, 88061
29kopchickeaston@silverschools.org
575-956-3767
Date: 12/13/23

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter as a concerned student attending Cliff Schools in the Silver Schools Community. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours. I strongly oppose these changes, as they pose a direct threat to the educational system that has proven successful for our community and, most importantly, for us, our family members, and friends.

Cliff has been a four day school for many, many years. With us thriving and getting just as much learning time as all the other schools that may have five day school weeks. I strongly disagree with this change, and that we have been a four day school forever, and we are doing just as well, if not better than any other five day school systems.

I have been working very hard to get good grades and if I have any extra work I have enough time to finish it over the weekend. There is no reason to change the schools to a five day school week. We have enough learning time, maybe even more than schools with five day school weeks, and with a longer weekend you have more time to get homework done, that relieves stress.

In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and maintain the current educational structure that has served our community well. As a student, my primary concern is well-being and academic success, and I believe that the proposed changes are a step backward in achieving these goals.

I plan to attend the public hearing on December 18th to voice my concerns and I encourage other parents and community members to do the same. Our collective voices can make a difference in preserving the educational integrity of Cliff Schools and our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Easton Kopchick

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Easton Kopchick". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with the first and last names being more prominent than the middle name.

Dusty Waters
87 South Bear Creek Rd.
Gila, NM 88038
28watersdusty@silverschools.org
(520)-539-4412
Date: 12/13/23

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: ***Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department***

Hi, I wanna say thank you for reading this letter and hearing my voice. To start off, I am an 8th grade student from Cliff High School and I am going to explain why we should stay a 4 day school week.

1. Compensation for COVID-19

I know that a 5 day school week sounds good in terms of compensation for COVID-19 and the lack of education during that time but we must look at where we are now, I understand we missed a whole lot of education but we cannot start from the past and try to fix that, we now need to better our education by simply going to school. COVID-19 happened when I was in 4th-5th grade, I can't learn that now, I'm too old as I am now in 8th grade, and ever since we got back from COVID-19, I've improved by simply showing up to school. Plus, there is no evidence to prove to me that we are improving by adding more time. Speaking of improvement, let's talk about the improvement of our mental health.

Mental health has become one of the highest concerns not only for us, but every state and school across the nation. There is a lot being done for sure, like the Wellness Room, it is a nice place sure, but what would truly help is a 4 day school week. As we all know, a school day alone causes stress as we have 7 teachers and we all have work from them everyday, and for 7 hours. I'm aware that the 5 day school week may lessen the hours a little but that doesn't change the fact I'm showing up for 5 out of 7 days of the week. I'm constantly stressed about my grades and my work, and that is currently 4 out of 7 days of the week, 4 out of 7 is about 57%. I'm already stressed out for almost 60% of the week, and I can calm down sure, but let's take a look at this, 4 out of 7 is 57%, yet if we were to change that to 5 days, Can you take a guess on how often I'd be stressed? About 71%, and 71-57 is 14, that 14 is 14% is added stress. I'm surprised that we already have most kids going to school for that long being stressed just like I am. So changing our school week will not help our mental health, it will worsen it. Since mental health is a huge concern, we need to take that into account.

Now we all enjoy family right? I like family time too! A 5 day school week will take around 180 days. And that alone isn't aligned with the legislative 130, 180 days now? That's just excess, and Cliff already goes for 173 days, so we need to be able to have our time with our families, if

we went 181-205 days, guess what? We would lose anywhere from 9 to 21 days of that time, that's a week or two of my family time, and it's already limited. So it wouldn't make sense to make things worse, so to sum it up, if we changed to a 5 day school week, we would have excess time at school that wouldn't have value, worsened mental health of our students while it's already a big concern, and we need to keep the time we have with our families.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dusty Waters

Michael Myers
1 Hooker Loop
Gila, NM 88038
28myersmichael@silverschools.org
Date: December 13, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department

I am writing this letter as a student attending Cliff Schools in the Silver Schools Community. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours. I strongly oppose these changes, as they pose a direct threat to the educational system that has proven successful for our community and, most importantly, for us as students.

1. **Unwarranted Extension of Instructional Days:** The proposal to increase the school year to between 181 to 205 instructional days, requiring at least 1,140 instructional hours annually, is not in line with the legislative intent of House Bill 130. Our current calendar of 173 student days has been incredibly effective, and any extension threatens to disrupt not just our schedules, but the well-being and academic progress of our students.
2. **Disruption of the Four-Day Week Model:** Our community has thrived under the four-day school week model. The requirement that over 50% of school weeks being five days long undermines a system that has not only been successful but also favored by our community. This change seems to disregard the unique needs and preferences of our district, particularly of Cliff Schools.
3. **Bias in Funding and Accreditation:** The new funding criteria and accreditation rules that favor five-day weeks could severely disadvantage our successful four-day model. This bias could lead to unnecessary financial and administrative pressures on our schools, detracting from our primary focus on education.
4. **Neglect of Essential Professional Work Time:** Excluding planning and training from instructional hours fails to recognize the comprehensive educational approach that is vital for the success of our educators and students alike. Teachers need this time for effective lesson planning, collaboration, and professional development.
5. **Lack of Evidence for Improved Outcomes:** There is no conclusive research to suggest that merely increasing instructional time guarantees better student outcomes. The success of a school should be measured by a multitude of factors, including student engagement, class sizes, the quality of teaching, and community support - areas in which Cliff Schools excel.

6. Burning Out: In recent years our schools have had success in the four-day week system, scoring higher than the average schools do in our state and district. Adding an extra day every week may burn our students out and reduce our high testing scores. If you truly have to find a way to surpass our scores, due to jealousy, you will make this change.

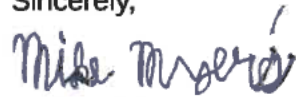
I echo the concerns of our legislators, who have pointed out the flaws in PED's rule-making process and the lack of effective communication and research backing these changes. The proposed rules not only bypass the legislative process but also ignore the voice and needs of our local community.

In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and maintain the current educational structure that has served our community well. As a student, my primary concern is my well-being and academic success as well as that of my peers, and I believe that the proposed changes are a step backward in achieving these goals.

I plan to attend the public hearing on December 18th to voice my concerns and I encourage other students, parents, and community members to do the same. Our collective voices can make a difference in preserving the educational integrity of Cliff Schools and our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Myers". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "M" and a cursive "Myers".

Michael Myers

Cambree Shock
Highway 180 west 8177
Cliff, New Mexico, 8802]
camshock15@gmail.com
575-574-8791
Date: 12-13-23

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: ***Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department***

I am writing this letter because I am a student of Cliff high school. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours. I strongly oppose these changes, as they pose a direct threat to the educational system that has proven successful for our community and, most importantly, for the students.

To make us go 5 days is stupid. Our test scores are very high already. They are most likely going to go down if we add an extra day. The kids already said they were not going to come to school on Friday so what's the point. Also some of the teachers said they were gonna retire. So we are going to lose students and teachers.

Make this change only the 4 week schools that need help, increase their school week to 5 day then go five days. Why change the 4 day schools that are doing well and that have high test scores? Don't punish all of the schools just because some aren't doing well!

In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and keep the current educational structure that has served our community well. As a student, my primary concern is the well-being and academic success of us, and I believe that the proposed changes are a step backward in achieving these goals.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely, *Cambree Shock*

Cambree Shock

—

Baron Bradberry
4280 Grandview Rd.
Silver City, New Mexico, 88061
29bradberrybaron@silverschools.org
Date: 12/13/2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I don't think that Cliff Schools should have a 5 day school week. I think this because my family and I have been used to going to school with a 4 day school week. Not having the ability to have an extra week day (Friday) would make it more difficult for my family to travel, go to appointments, and see other family members or friends. Having an extra day of school will increase stress rates, more bullying and school violence chances, and for me since I live in Silver City, my parents will have to pay more money for gas to go out there. They might just make me go to one of the schools in Silver making it to where I wont see my cousin and other friends much. I hope this shows why I think our school should stick with our 4 day school week.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Baron Bradberry

Jonathan Best
112 Chalcopryite Ct.
Tyrone, NM 88065
28bestjonathan@silverschools.org
575-313-5494
Date:12/12/23

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: *Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department*

I am writing this letter as a concerned student attending Cliff Schools in the Silver Schools Community. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours. I strongly oppose these changes, as they pose a direct threat to the educational system that has proven successful for our community.

As a student attending Cliff School, I find it unfit to extend our four day school week. My reason being, this will have an effect on the mental and physical well being of my teachers and peers.

1. **Unwarranted Extension of Instructional Days:** The proposal to increase the school year to between 181 to 205 instructional days, requiring at least 1,140 instructional hours annually, is not in line with the legislative intent of House Bill 130. Our current calendar of 173 student days has been effective, and any extension threatens to disrupt not just our schedules, but the well-being and academic progress of our students.
2. **Disruption of the Four-Day Week Model:** Our community has thrived under the four-day school week model. The requirement that over 50% of school weeks be five days long undermines a system that has not only been successful but also favored by our community. This change seems to disregard the unique needs and preferences of our district, particularly of Cliff Schools.
3. **Bias in Funding and Accreditation:** The new funding criteria and accreditation rules that favor five-day weeks could severely disadvantage our successful four-day model. This bias could lead to unnecessary financial and administrative pressures on our schools, detracting from their primary focus on education.
4. **Neglect of Essential Professional Work Time:** Excluding planning and training from instructional hours fails to recognize the comprehensive educational approach that is vital for the success of our educators and students alike. Teachers need this time for effective lesson planning, collaboration, and professional development.

5. Lack of Evidence for Improved Outcomes: There is no conclusive research to suggest that merely increasing instructional time guarantees better student outcomes. The success of a school should be measured by a multitude of factors, including student engagement, class sizes, the quality of teaching, and community support - areas in which Cliff Schools excel.

I echo the concerns of our legislators, who have pointed out the flaws in PED's rule-making process and the lack of effective communication and research backing these changes. The proposed rules not only bypass the legislative process but also ignore the voice and needs of our local community.

In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and maintain the current educational structure that has served our community well. As a student, my primary concern is the well-being and academic success of my peers, and I believe that the proposed changes are a step backward in achieving these goals.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Best

Jonathan Best

J

Hunter Kopchick
21 Copper Ridge Drive
Silver City NM 88061
hunterkopchick@gmail.com
575-313-2035
Date: 12/13/23

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: **Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department.**

I am writing this letter as a student attending Cliff Schools in the Silver Schools Community. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours. I strongly oppose these changes, as they pose a direct threat to the educational system that has proven successful for our community and, most importantly, for fellow students.

The proposal to increase the school year to between 181 to 205 instructional days, requiring at least 1,140 instructional hours annually, is not in line with the legislative intent of House Bill 130. Our current calendar of 173 student days has been effective, and any extension threatens to disrupt not just our schedules, but the well-being and academic progress of fellow students.

Our community has thrived under the four-day school week model. The requirement that over 50% of school weeks be five days long undermines a system that has not only been successful but also favored by our community. This change seems to disregard the unique needs and preferences of our district, particularly of Cliff Schools.

The new funding criteria and accreditation rules that favor five-day weeks could severely disadvantage our successful four-day model. This bias could lead to unnecessary financial and administrative pressures on our schools, detracting from their primary focus on education.

Excluding planning and training from instructional hours fails to recognize the comprehensive educational approach that is vital for the success of our educators and students alike. Teachers need this time for effective lesson planning, collaboration, and professional development.

There is no conclusive research to suggest that merely increasing instructional time guarantees better student outcomes. The success of a school should be measured by a multitude of factors, including student engagement, class sizes, the quality of teaching, and community support - areas in which Cliff Schools excel. I echo the concerns of our legislators, who have pointed out the flaws in PED's rule-making process and the lack of effective communication and research backing these changes. The proposed rules not only bypass the legislative process but also ignore the voice and needs of our local community. In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and maintain the current educational structure that has served our community well.

Sincerely,



Hunter Kopchick, Student of Cliff High School

Teigan Trevizo
622 NM-211
Cliff, New Mexico 88028
26trevizoteigan@silverschools.org
Date: December 12, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department

I am writing this letter as a concerned student attending Cliff Schools in the Silver Schools Community. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours. I strongly oppose these changes, as they pose a direct threat to the educational system that has proven successful for our community and, most importantly, for many students, parents, and teachers..

1. Unwarranted Extension of Instructional Days: The proposal to increase the school year to between 181 to 205 instructional days, requiring at least 1,140 instructional hours annually, is not in line with the legislative intent of House Bill 130. Our current calendar of 173 student days has been effective, and any extension threatens to disrupt not just our schedules, but the well-being and academic progress of our students and the teachers.

2. Disruption of the Four-Day Week Model: Our community has thrived under the four-day school week model. For many students, this four day week model gives us time to be productive outside of the school involments. These are but not limited to: doctor appointments, Jobs, and many more. This Four day week also allows players to rest after a basketball game and many more sports. This current model also would affect mental health, grades, teacher plans. As a student at Cliff I appericate this current model as it give me time focus on my mental health, allow me to get a break with the stresses of school, and most importantly which I think many will find in common is to spend time with family and friends. This would also disrupt any School organizations such as: FFA, BPA, FCCLA, TSA, NHS, and more. These organizations have conferences which would be a close to a week, this would not allow the stUdents to get to get caught up in time for the next school week.

3. Increased costs of a 5 day week to Students and the Districts: Most of the students who attend are driving to school. This change to a five day week results in more money out of the students pockets for gas, and budget increase of the schools for the busses to run. Anotehr way some students who attend Cliff Schools (that do not live in the Cliff area), these students either drive themselves and siblings to school or their parents drive them to either the bus stop or to the school. The affects of the "5 day week plan" would be a costly increase for the students, parents, and the schools.

4. Neglect of Essential Professional Work Time: Excluding planning and training from instructional hours fails to recognize the comprehensive educational approach that is vital for the success of our educators and students alike. Teachers need this time for effective lesson planning, collaboration, and professional development.

5. Lack of Evidence for Improved Outcomes: There is no conclusive research to suggest that merely increasing instructional time guarantees better student outcomes. The success of a school should be measured by a multitude of factors, including student engagement, class sizes, the quality of teaching, and community support - areas in which Cliff Schools excel.

I echo the concerns of our legislators, who have pointed out the flaws in PED's rule-making process and the lack of effective communication and research backing these changes. The proposed rules not only bypass the legislative process but also ignore the voice and needs of our local community.

In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and maintain the current educational structure that has served our community well. As a student, my primary concern is the well-being and academic success of the teachers, parents, and students whom will be affected drastically by this change, and I believe that the proposed changes are a step backward in achieving these set goals and future goals which both the parents and students want to achieve. I plan to attend the public hearing on December 18th to voice my concerns and I encourage other parents, students, teachers and community members to do the same. Our collective voices can make a difference in preserving the educational integrity of Cliff Schools and our community. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Teigan Trevizo

Neysa Gutierrez
12 Black Mountain Road
Cliff, New Mexico 88028
26gutierrezneysa@silverschools.org
Date:12/13/23

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department

I am writing this letter as a student at Cliff High School. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours. I oppose these changes because of the direct threat they pose to our educational system, which has been proven to work for me and the rest of the students.

1. Attendance: As of right now we have an exceptional attendance rate at Cliff. Because most absences are from sicknesses, I would strongly agree that we all want to be here most of the days. However, if we do change to 5 days a week it will not be the same. Most students that attend Cliff Schools come specifically because we get a three day weekend. There would be a major loss in numbers as far as the students because changing it would make us no different than Silver High School and other schools in range for the kids that live here or close.

2. Money: For kids that live in Silver, Mule Creek, Buckhorn, or farther gas money would be an issue adding an extra day to drive 60 minutes every week. This however does not affect kids that live close, but it has come to my attention that there are many kids that do not live close.

3. Bias in Funding and Accreditation: The new funding criteria and accreditation rules that favor five-day weeks could severely disadvantage our successful four-day model. This bias could lead to unnecessary financial and administrative pressures on our schools, detracting from their primary focus on education. This being said, we do not have a lot of perks coming with this school already because of money. If we add another day there will be even less money because running the bus an extra day, having to feed us another day of the week, and electricity all costs money. It could affect our sports or activities that we have been able to do with the four day school week.

4. Mental Effects: Having a four day school week has always been an advantage but not because of the extra time we have, but because of the effects it has mentally on the students. A lot of students nowadays have issues with friends, parents, relationships, etc. A break from all of this is really appreciated at the end of the week, especially if there is drama going on.


5. Lack of Evidence for Improved Outcomes: There is no conclusive research to suggest that merely increasing instructional time guarantees better student outcomes. The success of a school should be measured by a multitude of factors, including student engagement, class sizes, the quality of teaching, and community support - areas in which Cliff Schools excel.

I echo the concerns of our legislators, who have pointed out the flaws in PED's rule-making process and the lack of effective communication and research backing these changes. The proposed rules not only bypass the legislative process but also ignore the voice and needs of our local community and most importantly the students that attend Cliff High School.

In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and maintain the current educational structure that has served our community well. As a student, I worry about the attendance, financial problems, and the mental capacity of every one of my fellow students.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Neysa Gutierrez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "N" and "G".

Neysa Gutierrez

From: [Janscen Davis](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] rule 6.10.5
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 5:50:20 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To: NMPED
From: Janscen J. Davis
RE: rule 6.10.5

My name is Janscen J. Davis I graduated from Cloudcroft High School in 2001 and now have 2 children enrolled in Cloudcroft schools. My daughter is in the 5th grade and my son is in the 2nd grade both are academically thriving and love to go to school. Having went to school 5 days a week myself I know that by Thursday afternoon I was ready for the week to be over and wasn't really putting forth my best effort to pay attention or participate like I did at the beginning of the week. Then by Monday it felt like I was just at school and was hard to get motivated to get back to schoolwork. I believe that the 4-day school week that Cloudcroft is currently on and thriving doing so is the perfect balance between academics and home/family time. My children are eager to return to school when Monday night rolls around and they are thinking about the next day instead of dreading going back to school after only having a 2-day weekend. In addition to the current balanced school/home schedule the 4-day school week matches my work schedule of 4x 10hr workdays which allows me to have 3 days with my family instead of 2. Having a 4-day school/work week has allowed us to spend extra time together that we will lose by going to a 5-day school week in Cloudcroft. I believe this proposed rule change of 6.10.5 is unnecessary especially if Cloudcroft school is among the highest rated schools in the state and has proven that the 1,140 instructional hour requirement has our children's education on track and thriving. Also, I believe that there are much more pressing issues, subjects, and business to tend to than to spend our thoughts and time on than changing something that is already working and in place. NMPED simply does not need to waste anymore of the taxpayer's time trying to make requirements for the families of the Cloudcroft school districts or any district in New Mexico for that matter when NMPED doesn't even have authority to do so. Please think about the negative consequences that will come from this proposed change to a five-day week for Cloudcroft district school. All comments are referring to the 6.10.5 rule change of going from 4 to 5 day school week.

Thank you.

Janscen J. Davis

○ ○ ○ ○



JANSCEN DAVIS

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

- ☎ 575-682-2521
- ✉ janscend@ote-coop.com
- 📍 404 Burro Ave, Cloudcroft, NM 88317
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- 🌐 www.ocec-inc.com

○ ○ ○ ○

December 13, 2023

Dear PED Secretary of Education Mr. Aresenio Romero & PED Hearing Constituents.

My name is Jennifer Vialpando, NBCT and 23yr veteran teacher for Questa Independent School district.

The possibility of switching to a 5-day is such a detrimental move that will affect our school tremendously. A rule change like this is a true reflection of just how the education system works. Teachers see this broken system day in and day out, including our local school boards. Anytime an issue arises, those that are high up – those who create policy and bills such as House Bill 130 – are so quick to make change in those policies and rules that every single constituent is 9/10 disregarded in any of the decision-making process. You ask any teacher what the most difficult part of teaching is, and it will more than likely be “administration and politics.” How PED acts – is how our local boards act. For example, anytime a situation arises in our school, instead of meeting with all parties involved, our board assumes that everything must be in policy. They are quick to make those changes, instead of trying to fix the issue at its core. This proposed rule change is the same exact thing.

Questa Independent Schools started a 4-day week in 2017-18 school year, and we would be one of the small rural schools impacted by the increase of hours/days newly proposed rule number *NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements*.

Here is a bit of insight from QISD’s current 4-day week for you. Approximately 75% of our students participate in athletics plus other extracurricular activities. Our recent “off” Fridays offer assistance for students to catch up on missed schoolwork, extra time for dual credit courses, credit recovery kiddos, tutoring and enrichment (to those who want to learn an extra skill in certain courses, but no limited to, ceramics, agriculture, and mariachi to name a few) Saturdays are full of games, and Sunday’s most of our students have religiously based commitments with catechism, church, etc. This rule change would eliminate what we offer our students on Fridays. Having an additional workday would increase this workload for our students who already have a huge amount on their plates. How do you think this will affect their mental health? Please take the time to learn what schools like Questa are doing before making such an impactful decision.

Truth is, the decision to go to a 5 day will not affect students, because we all know students will still miss and attendance will still be an issue, but it will impact staff. I dare each of you PED rule makers, specifically those who do not come from a teaching background to try and keep your mental health up with 60+ kids a day for 5 days a week. Most jobs get to work with adults, but in this job, we build students – kids – who most days require so much attention. One adult to 20+ students. You will be lucky to keep those resolute teachers to this career because they will leave and you will be in dire need of teachers in those districts who rely on a 4-day week for sanity, their health, well-being, and mental state.

Regarding Mr. Romero’s comment about homework being a result of not having enough time in the school day. Homework is an extension to the classroom – your comment makes it sound like it is a lack of planning.

Rather, PED should be focusing on is providing schools the mental health support for students, lowering class sizes, providing additional aide to those schools who can benefit from having assistance in large

classrooms (or splitting them), more Special Education personnel to assist students, better meals for our students, and most importantly a **solid safety plan** for ALL schools across the state! Focus on schools whose data shows a decline and provide the necessary support services for those individual school's needs.

A 5-day schedule is not the answer (if increasing test scores is all that matters to you). We live in a different day and age where maybe math and ELA proficiency should not carry so much emphasis as much as the student's whole self should be. Put kids first as you claim them to be.

Respectfully,

Ms. Jennifer Vialpando, NBCT

From: [Keely Mackey](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC school calendar requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 6:30:36 PM

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To PED Staff,

Adding more instructional hours is not a researched based plan for student achievement or teacher performance.

I teach at Desert Willow Family School, which actually has less class time but highest test scores. Teachers have more time for creating student responsive and student led curriculum and assessments.

Through my 28 year career as a professional educator, including teaching in leading private and public schools, as well as teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels, I have learned that the best way to improve test scores and student achievement, is via meeting student needs. This includes: social, emotional and enrichment. When students first have basic needs met, and are happy then they can learn.

Teachers need to have fewer students in their classes, and/or have a teacher assistant in the classroom.

Being an educator in the current climate is especially draining. Teachers and students will perform better with more support and downtime, not increasing demands and over institutionalization.

Do not extend the school year and instructional hours further. Give students and teachers more support with additional staff.

Respectfully,
Keely Mackey-Gonzales, MA
Master Educator

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jack Rose](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 6:49:43 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To: Public Education Department

It has been brought to my attention that during this years hearings, the length of the school year and the number of classroom days per week will be discussed. Currently there are many schools which only attend 4 days per week. This includes Corona Public School. This school implemented the 4 day week in 1995. Since then Corona has, and continues to have, strong testing scores and high GPA's. Students benefit from the program as it allows them to pursue other activities on the off day, from fair projects and FFA to school sports, without missing needed educational activities. The additional school day requirement would force students miss school days, lowering attendance, causing students to be less engaged. Attendance and engagement are two primary indicators for improved outcomes.

The ability of a local school district to determine the number of classroom days per week should remain a district decision. If one district is forced to do the same as all other districts, it will not benefit the district. Some decisions are best made at a local level. Furthermore, the 1140 instructional hours required was put into law last year because of a bipartisan bill , HB 130, and signed by our Governor. Any additional language as to the number of days required would be exerting authority which NMPED does not have.

Do not institute 6.10.5.8 Requirements C, D, E, G, and H.

Jack Rose
concerned community member and parent

From: [Fabiola Torres Lopez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 School Calendar Proposal
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:11:41 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Greetings NMPED,

I am writing in opposition of the newly proposed rule for the 6.10.5 school calendar requirement. I am a fairly new Special Education teacher who is currently working through NMPED's licensure advancement program to move from a level I to a level II professional licensure as well as working on a doctoral degree in Educational Psychology. I work in a small, rural town located Southeast of NM. Our school district has been incorporating four instructional school days for nearly a decade and has experienced many improvements and success in performance among staff and students in utilizing this schedule. With a four day schedule, staff members are able to meet their personal needs without having to ask for time off during instructional days. As a staff member for our district, I can attest that having one day off from the work week allows for time in meeting medical care needs (especially out of town appointments), sufficient time to spend with children and family members, time to maintain the household, de-stress and focus on mental health (an essential component in teaching), and ample time to be able to complete college/university/professional advancement program assignments in a purposeful manner to better serve the public. Additionally, providing a four day week for students affords them time and opportunities to engage in more community service activities which are required for anticipated high school graduates, participation in non-academic clubs/organizations, participation in community events such as church or youth programs, and allows them to participate in dual sports.

Enforcing a 5 day schedule would not only take away time from everything listed above, but would also cause adverse effects throughout our school district and community. To begin, rural school districts favor a 4 school day work week because it provides incentive in hiring teachers and administrative staff. As you know, New Mexico is currently experiencing a shortage of educators. This is especially felt in rural communities who experience challenges in hiring and retaining teachers due to their locations. Many of our own district staff drive in from out of town, some as far as an hour away to teach. Adding another day would increase commuting expenditures as well as increase risks for automotive accidents (highway 285 is a perilous highway and many fatal accidents have occurred there recently). Further, many teachers and staff members rely on babysitters to care for their children while at work. Adding an additional day would also increase expenditures for child care services. Finally, a 5 day instructional schedule would interrupt students who are employed to help support their family's needs.

It is also important to note that, with enforcing a 5 day instructional schedule, it is anticipated NM school districts will experience an exodus of experienced and qualified educators. Many teachers already feel the pressures working in the public education sector. Increasing days will cause teacher burnout, especially for those who are working toward personal advancement. It is in my opinion that school districts should not be forced to modify and adhere to 5 instructional school days if the current 4 day schedules are providing positive outcomes. Our voice, as public service workers for NMPED, should be considered before developing performance measurement systems and enforcing rules that are not mindful of their agents and community members' perspectives.

Respectfully,

Fabiola Torres, M.Ed
Loving High School
Special Education Teacher/Case Manager
Office: (575) 745-2026
Google Voice: (575) 725-5361

"Any who may wish to profit himself alone from the knowledge given him, rather than serve others through the knowledge he has gained from learning, is betraying knowledge and rendering it worthless." -H. Selassie

"Knowledge paves the way to Love, and Love in its turn fosters understanding, and leads one along the path of great common achievements." -H. Selassie

From: [Sarah Goodson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Sarah Goodson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:20:40 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Texico school district, in Texico, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18th, 2023 so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of the local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing State Law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

Furthermore, as published by you, the NMPED, in the 2023 NM Vistas report on November 14th, 2023: 4-day school week districts consistently perform higher than 5-day school week on reading and math scores, both in overall percentiles and growth. In addition to this, high school graduation rates are higher in 4-day a week schools than 5, again, published by you, NMPED, in the most recent NM Vistas report.

Likewise, in the face of a critical teacher shortage that the NMPED itself has dubbed, “one of the worst in history,” removing the additional bargaining chip for rural New Mexico districts to acquire educators is a massive step backwards. These sensational educators are needed to ensure that New Mexico youth are educated and prepared to enter the world as adults.

Moreover, the freedoms allowed by the 4-day a week school for students to excel at extra-curricular activities such as 4H, FFA, NMAA sanctioned athletics, and a number of other extremely beneficial activities are simply unmatched.

Conclusively, the 4-day school week allows New Mexico educators to mold high school graduates that have proven to be more well rounded, higher achieving, and more emotionally competent adults. Adults that are more adequately prepared to take their place as functioning and contributing members of New Mexico’s society; and, to put it blatantly, is that not the goal?

Sincerely,
A concerned Parent and Staff Member

From: [Sarah Goodson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:38:39 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Texico school district, in Texico, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18th, 2023 so should it be chosen.

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Conclusively, the 4-day school week allows New Mexico educators to mold high school graduates that have proven to be more well rounded, higher achieving, and more emotionally competent adults. Adults that are more adequately prepared to take their place as functioning and contributing members of New Mexico's society; and, to put it blatantly, is that not the goal?

Sincerely,
A concerned Parent and Staff Member

From: [Shaun Espinoza](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:48:14 PM

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I disagree with the rule changes of 6.10.5 NMAC. My daughter goes to MVCS which has a 155 day calendar. This calendar affords our family to have a longer weekend which helps us with our busy schedule. She has also improved her GPA and enjoys the school week since changing to the 155 day calendar.

I also am disagreeing with the rule changes of 6.19.4.1. I believe it is extremely important for each school and locality to be in control of their own governance.

From: [Shaylee Edwards](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] monday school SUCKS
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:55:36 PM

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AND HERES WHY: i am a student working mondays and i go to a school with a four day week. if there are five day weeks then i wont be able to take care of my family on mondays, do out of school sports on mondays, go to my job and get the hours that i need for money to be able to take care of myself, my family, and my animals. plus its so draining to go to school for five days a week when we've all been used to four days a week for several years. it doesn't make sense to change the days now when it hasn't changed for so many years. on top of all of hating the amount of teacher that will quit would be crazy and then the school system would be all f[REDACTED] up because the school would be understaffed and the students mental health would go through the sewer down a s[REDACTED] and right down to h[REDACTED].

From: [JOSEPH DALE](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Bill
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:56:07 PM

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I have read the proposed changes to the calendar and I believe that these additions are not going to be helpful to student learning. I do not think that adding more learning time will help our students learn better. I believe that adding more of a failing system to a weak foundation will not make the structure stronger. I believe that in order to fix the structure we first need a stronger foundation. That foundation would include teachers who want and can live off of being a teacher. For the most important job in the United States we pay teachers less than 20% similar professions. If you look at states that are higher in education than New Mexico you notice that they don't all have more school days than New Mexico. They have engaged teachers who love to teach and can teach because they have a somewhat livable wage. Those states have a large foundation for their education. If New Mexico fixed its crumbling foundation in education before we continue to add more days to the calendar our numbers in education will rise. Los Alamos High School just got rewarded for having one of the best AP programs in the country. Why does Los Alamos have one of the best numbers in education in the country? It is because our school has money. Los Alamos can pay teachers a \$10,000 bonus to get a masters degree. By having all of this money and being able to pay such a large bonus we incentivize our teachers to go and get their master's degree which in turn makes them a better teacher which lets our students get a bigger opportunity to learn. In conclusion, paying teachers a living wage is worth the importance in our country's future, and fixing New Mexico education's crumbling foundation before adding days to the calendar.

Thank you for your time.
Joseph Dale
Los Alamos High School class of 2025



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Branden Willman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:10:49 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM PED,

As a teacher and parent, in Los Alamos Public Schools I am concerned about the sudden change in requirements that NMAC Rule 6.10.5 would bring about for schools and families in New Mexico. I am also deeply concerned that the rule would be at odds with the law. I believe that this rule has unintended consequences that will limit critical staff planning time and be disruptive to our primary and secondary schools. Please do not pass NMAC Rule 6.10.5.

--

Branden Willman
First Grade Teacher
Mountain Elementary
Los Alamos, NM

b.willman@laschools.net



This email has been sent from a verified [laschools.net](#) user.

From: [Alan Q](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Loving Municipal Schools
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:19:31 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello, I am a student in the Amorosas Municipal Schools district and after reading the letter that my school gave us. I have to say that the Amor Municipal Schools district is perfectly fine with four days of school from what I've seen at my school, it's already done with that. Only four days of school and many students are stressed and in my personal opinion I think that if we go to school on Fridays many students. They are also upset and I talked to some teachers and almost all of them supported me. What happens if they put Fridays in the week? They will withdraw from school or go to another school. Also, many of the students told me that they do have Fridays. This week of school they will go to another school or they will go to school online. My final opinion is that Loving Municipal Schools is very good with a four day school week. Sincerely: Alan Quiros This opinion comes to the hands of Loving Municipal Schools' superiors so my identity goes unsaid.

From: [Angela Martinez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:40:00 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello, I am Angela Martinez, a Los Alamos teacher and parent of three children who attend Los Alamos Elementary, Middle School, and High School. I am struggling with the proposed school calendar requirements and am considering not returning as an educator if it is passed. We have been through enough changes with adding school days to our calendar. If these changes are passed, It is not in the staff's or students' best interest. This new schedule change is already too much. We do not need more change when students and staff stress levels are high. Please reconsider before you lose more NM teachers. We may live and teach in Los Alamos County, but many of our students are from Espanola and the surrounding area, so they benefit from having a teacher rather than a long-term substitute. It is unfair that changes like these are made by people who do not teach or work in our school district. I hope the right decision is made. Thank you for your time.

--

Blessings, Angela Martinez



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Tracy L Embres Galligan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:55:42 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Obviously people in the PED haven't been in a classroom in quite a while. They told us this would happen...that our incomes would increase and then the state would want more days worked. This is an insult.

Tracy Embres Galligan, MA, MS, NBCT
CTE Coordinator and Business/Computer Science Teacher
Espanola Valley High School
PO Box 3039, Fairview, NM 87533
School: 505-753-7357 Class Ext. 51301
Cell: 505-927-9022



EAST MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL

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Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to strongly request that the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) rescind the instructional time proposal (6.10.5 NMAC). As one of the highest performing schools in the state, with the recent designation of “Excellence” in NM Vistas, elements of this proposal will directly harm our school’s ability to continue delivering high quality education experiences to our students and families.

Ignores student learning outcomes

In addition to the specific concerns listed below, it should be noted that none of the proposed calendar changes directly impact improved student learning outcomes. As a high school, we have been working with our school’s 11th grade SAT results to inform instruction and make improvements. The only interventions that will have an impact on learning outcomes are interventions that allow for staff and teachers the opportunity to implement effective adjustments to their assessment results. Calendar changes simply will not move the needle on any assessment results.

6.10.5.8. A Four class periods per day

For over twenty years, our school has implemented a 4x4 block schedule with 90 minute class periods to better model a college level schedule. Students have four classes in the Fall and four new classes in the Spring. This schedule has been one of the main reasons our students find success. It allows for better relationships with teachers and extensions of the learning. By Junior year, most students no longer need four classes on their schedule to graduate, additionally, it would not be appropriate for many of our students to be in all four classes at the same time. The way 6.10.5.8 is written would not allow for a key cornerstone of our school’s success to continue.

6.10.5.8. B Remote learning

Limiting our school to four remote learning days per year will also be highly detrimental to student learning. As a rural charter school located at 8,000 feet, snow frequently impacts our schedule. We are



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subject to the efficiency of county road maintenance. As a charter responsible for our own facility maintenance, we must rely on the availability of local plowing companies to make our school safe for students and staff. The frequency of snow days required by our school means a heavy reliance on remote learning. Every one of our students has a school-issued Chromebook, and wireless hot spot (if they need it). It allows for continuity of learning and keeps students engaged throughout the turbulent winter season.

6.10.5.8. C Exclusive of teacher professional work hours

Not allowing teacher professional work hours to be included in the determination of the entirety of a school calendar is demeaning to the profession and ignores the research on what truly leads to improved student outcomes. Time and time again, research has shown that increase teacher planning time is one of the most effective interventions a school can implement to increase student outcomes

(<https://kappanonline.org/time-teacher-learning-planning-critical-school-reform/>).

I urge the PED to reconsider the proposed rule and pursue calendar reform through the legislative process and focus on interventions that will improve student learning outcomes.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Trey Smith

Trey Smith, Executive Director
East Mountain High School
tsmith@eastmountainhigh.net
505-480-4481

From: [Tommye Allsup](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:58:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Tommye Allsup
PO Box 2
Cliff, NM 88028
tommyeallsup@gmail.com
575-313-5654
December 12, 2023

Subject: Strong Opposition to Proposed Changes to School Calendar under 6.10.5 NMAC

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes to our school calendar under Rule 6.10.5 NMAC - School Calendar Requirements. I believe that these changes, particularly the move towards universally mandating a 5-day school week, would have detrimental effects on both the quality of education and the well-being of educators and students in our state. I am writing this letter as both a concerned parent of three students attending Cliff Schools in the rural southwestern Silver Consolidated School District, and as the school counselor of this campus.

Firstly, it is crucial to note that New Mexico recently increased instructional hours from 1080 to 1140, making it the second-highest in the nation, only behind Texas with 1260 hours, according to "Instructional Time Policies 2023," (Education Commission, January 2023). New Mexico's requirement for the minimum number of hours in a school year is already among the highest in the country and given that this change is in its inaugural year, it is essential that we allow time to assess its impact on our students' learning before implementing further modifications. The proposal to increase days and restrict occurrence of 4-day weeks requires students to attend school more days (an additional 28 days for our 4-day week campus) but the required instructional time would remain the same. What is the reasoning and data to support that the 1140 instructional hours would be more impactful if stretched out over 180 days rather than the 152 days on our current 4-day week calendar? Should not decisions on education policy be data-driven, as we expect educational instruction to be? There is a vast lack of evidence supporting the idea that increasing the number of school days will lead to better educational outcomes. A focus on quality instruction, rather than simply quantity, is pivotal to academic success. Instead of focusing on the number of days, we should be investing in professional development and resources to enhance teaching methodologies and student attendance and engagement.

Another element that is recognized as instrumental to improving student achievement and decreasing teacher turnover in K-12 schools has been found to be collaborative school leadership, or when teachers, administrators, and school boards work together on all things rather than the traditional top-down decision-making process. Through a Cornell University study, "Supporting K-12 Student Success" (Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations, 2021) found that this initiative, "positively impacts student achievement, and it positively impacts teacher retention and commitment to the profession." (paragraph 7). Data from this study shows that by removing decision making power from local educators and districts and mandating changes from the top-down, we will indisputably *not* be moving education in New Mexico in a positive direction.

Additionally, our educational community has recently weathered the significant challenges brought

about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers, students, and staff have demonstrated resilience in adapting to changes in education that were imposed because of the pandemic and resulting New Mexico emergency health orders. Enforcing additional changes, especially when there is no researched benefit and against the expressed wishes of those most affected, could have detrimental effects on the mental health and well-being of our education professionals and students. Is it not reasonable to suggest that we've experienced our fair share? Have we not had enough change forced upon us with no voice?

I would also like to draw attention to the unique challenges faced by small rural schools, particularly those with singleton teachers at the secondary level. These educators are already stretched thin, covering multiple subjects for students in 7th-12th grade. Adding another day to the school week would only magnify the workload, requiring preparation for six additional classes each week. This could compromise the quality of instruction and place undue stress on already limited resources. New Mexico already has a significant teacher shortage with over 1,400 current educator vacancies (2023 New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report); forcing this change will certainly add to those numbers.

The majority of students on our Cliff Schools campus, which comprises students in Pre-K -12th grade, have never attended school in a 5-day week format. Imposing this change will undoubtedly negatively impact the school climate and student morale. We are primarily a rural agriculture and ranching community and most of our able-bodied students of age count on the long weekend to work for their families or community members. Our community and families have even molded their schedules around our 4-day week. Local dentists and doctors' offices have adapted to our calendar to better serve our population by taking Wednesday off and staying open on Fridays. Appointments that must be scheduled way out in advance are made for Fridays when students are free; also, our athletic and activity schedules are crafted in ways to take advantage of our calendar.

In conclusion, I urge the New Mexico Public Education Department to reconsider the proposed changes to the school calendar under 6.10.5 NMAC. It is crucial that any modifications to educational policies are based on solid evidence, prioritize the well-being of students and educators, and take into account the unique challenges faced by schools, especially those in rural areas.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these concerns. I trust that you will give due consideration to the feedback from those directly impacted by these proposed changes and make decisions that prioritize the best interests of our students and the educational community.

Sincerely,

Tommye Allsup, MS. Ed, LPSC

From: [alyssa.chacon- rodriguez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-day School days
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:01:16 AM

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Hello,

my name is Alyssa Rodriguez and my son currently attends Loving Elementary in Loving New Mexico. The four days a week has helped my son's learning immensely. I feel that taking away this schedule will show a decrease in his learning .

With the four day schedule . He is more excited to learn and give it his all for the 4 days because he knows he will have a three day break where we are able to do more as a family to create memories together to help him thrive. One day of fun and Saturday and Sunday are for church and catching up for the week ahead. I think it's important to not only look out for the child and the hard work they do at school, let's not forget how play is important in the livelihood of the our children. We want to support the child for all areas of their life to give them the best foundation to learn and grow. Home life is equally important.

Covid took a lot from my son. They are finally feeling normal again, finally able to have the same teacher for a full year. Stop making big changes for their young minds and hearts. Let's continue on this pace that I know is working because I see how hard he's had to work and the wonderful staff that is guiding him believe in the 4 days! It's working!! Why change it, teachers don't get paid enough so why not keep them happy so that if they feel fulfilled our kids learning will be too!

Isn't that the most important thing ! Our kids overall education and full development all around.

Thank you for your time!

From: [Marvin Estes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: mandatory 180 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 6:32:58 AM

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I'm surprised that the PED would mandate a 180 calendar for all schools in NM. I agree that we want to improve our children's education statewide. More important than the number of days is parental involvement and teacher quality! I wish I knew the answer to these key factors.

It's my belief that each school district should be in charge of its own school calendar. I am not opposed to the 1140 hour requirement for the state schools. It's important for each district to set their schedule with input from parents and teachers. Each district is unique in its community dynamics and requirements. I live in the Melrose school district and want the best possible education for our children. For many years Melrose was a traditional 5 day school. A few years ago the district went to a 4 day week(or whatever the correct name is for a modified schedule). This has been well received by the community. The pandemic closing down of our schools hurt student achievement. I realize we are trying to catch up. I don't believe the 180 day mandate is the way to do this.

I was a school board member for over 20 years at Melrose. I don't believe that the trend of more state control of our schools is in the best interest of our children. I was very fortunate. Our parents strongly supported the school and we were blessed with an excellent staff. I know that the PED is tasked with a very difficult task. I still don't believe the state should mandate a local school's calendar.

Thanks for your consideration,

Marvin Estes
575-760-9182
mestes@yucca.net

From: [Brandi Bowerman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 School Instructional Time Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 7:44:27 AM
Attachments: [6.10.5 Public Comment.docx](#)

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I have attached my public comment for 6.10.5.

Thank You,

Brandi Bowerman

6th Grade Science/Department Head

Artesia Intermediate School

Data, an important aspect of all successful endeavors. Show us the data!!!!!!

Most educators would agree with the fact that our education system is broken, unfortunately, extension of the school year does not address the root issues we are facing in our classrooms.

Root problems that I see need to be brought to the forefront to begin fixing our education crisis:

- **Student and parent apathy** A simple Google search on parent and student apathy in education will pull up numerous articles that support this as a current issue in education.
- **Absence of qualified educators in the classrooms** There is an abundance of research that supports qualified educators are more beneficial in the classroom.
- **Class size-** Data supports smaller student to teacher ratios.
- **Student attendance-** There is **no accountability** for students or parents-consistent absences makes it very difficult for students to learn, fixing this does not start with the teacher or adding more days.
- **Teacher burnout** -New Mexico currently has a teacher shortage. As an educator I am seeing more and more required of us. Overburdening those who have chosen to stay in the education field due to the passion to teach kids, is not the answer. I feel we are being pushed out of the profession we chose by individuals who lack the knowledge of what we do day in and day out in the classroom and beyond.
- **Teacher supports-** Although I would like to say we are superheroes and can do it all, we are human, and we do have breaking points. I am seeing an increased rate of stress induced illnesses within our school and district alone. I wish there was a study on how the overwhelming stress on educators is affecting our health. Student support is essential, **but teacher support is crucial.** Adding more to our workload is not supportive.

Not one of these aspects can or will be addressed through your policies to extend the school year, the number of days in the classroom is not the root cause of our issues. Educational decisions should be led by data, please show the research/data that supports an extended school year will address the above issues and will equal better student performance.

- <https://www.mackinac.org/V2009-24> Longer School Year Won't Improve Student Achievement (2009), an older article from the state of Michigan, but addresses the same topic we are currently facing, an extended school year was not the answer in 2009 and it is still not the answer today!!!

Further comments.

- Days and/or hours have been increased in the past, however, we have not seen an increase in educational outcomes.
- Extension of the school year will create hardship for rural schools and families that must travel hours to get their children to school. There is also an abundance of data that shows 4-day rural schools outperform 5-day schools. These schools do not show a need for more instructional time.
- New Mexico needs a governing Education Board elected by the people, with representatives from all parts of the state. Allowing the Governor to appoint an education secretary has proven

to be a disaster in New Mexico Education. Our education system is a political yo-yo, that rests in the hands of one elected official.

- Ignoring the voices of those who provide the foundation is not a good practice, if the foundation gives up, you are left with nothing!!!! The children of New Mexico deserve better.

Brandi B.

Artesia Public Schools

From: [Connie Pierett](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 7:46:31 AM

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To Whom it May Concern, The PED has gone too far in trying to take more control over local school districts. Making teachers work more hours as well as increasing student's time in school will not improve student scores on state tests. New Mexico has so many illegal people coming into our state and bringing their children who don't speak English. Let's try securing our borders and kick out the politicians who cannot see the real problem!

From: [Jacob Lucero](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Education Rule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 7:46:54 AM

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I disagree with the upcoming rule change presented in NM. This does not fix the problem we have in education, but it will compound it. There is a teacher shortage and these changes would require hiring additional teachers.

Teachers around the state don't have time to even use the bathroom between classes and these changes would shorten our planning time.

There was a time when teachers were cheered when the schools opened again. Now we are blamed for a year and a half of missing instruction. You cannot substitute a screen to face to face time. Especially with kids.

The additional days added this year was a stupid idea, but this is completely idiotic. I could go on, but I doubt that you made it this far in the email.

Jacob Lucero



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Sarah Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Do not force schools to 180 day calendar
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 7:57:17 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

With regards to 6.10.5 NMAC, I am writing to urge that you NOT force all NM schools to adhere to a 180 day calendar.

Local school districts and charter schools can best determine what calendar will work well for their communities.

It is an overreach of your authority to force this change through your Proposed Rulemaking.

Sincerely,
Sarah Smith

--

Sarah Smith
Las Cruces, NM
Free People of the Southwest (*local*)
New Mexico Freedoms Alliance (*statewide*)

From: [Coda Sanchez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Changes Rule 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:20:21 AM

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Good morning,

This letter is for comment and input in reference to 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. As a mother of children who attend a 4 day school and a child that attends a 5 day school in New Mexico, an employee of the state in education and a student earning a degree in early childhood education, I hope the state will re-examine some of the proposed rule changes and re-think the information they have used to get to the conclusion that is a mandatory 5 day school week for all schools in New Mexico.

My children have gone to both a 5 day and 4 day school in our state. There has been a major difference in those schools and my children's educations. The 5 day school week did not provide for a better education and, in fact, both schools that my children have attended that practice a 4 day school week, Capitan Municipal Schools and Cimarron Schools, have proven to have better education systems, teacher involvement and an overall better functioning system that that of the 5 day school week they attended at Ruidoso Schools. Not to mention, mental health is improved when students and teachers have more rest, time to do homework, attend school functions and sporting events without missing a day of school and schedule dr appointments on days of the week that they don't have to miss a day of work or a day of school in order to take care of those needs.

I also know that in both Cimarron and Capitan, teacher retention is higher and teachers are more willing to work in a school district with 4 day work weeks. If you've never worked in education, 5 day work weeks don't give a teacher a lot of extra time for preparation, grading papers or lesson planning. If they are working a second job, as most do, there is little time in the evenings and on weekends to get these things done. Not to mention the excessive amounts of trainings and continuing education requirements that teachers have on top of their duty as a teacher. Summertime vacation has become less of a perk of the job because of the lack of income for our teachers and the need for an extra income to meet their basic needs. Are teachers are tired and begging for this change to not be made in order to fully show up and be present for the children in their classrooms. An extra day in school does not mean that the teachers will be prepared or present in their classrooms. The issue needs to be addressed inside the classrooms that are struggling and not as a requirement for schools that aren't having problems in education and testing. This proposed rule change will do nothing but add more stress and pressure on school districts who are already struggling to hire staff and qualified teachers as well as take away their independence and choice to do what is best for their specific area and school system. Every situation is different and the school districts have a right to make those decisions, since they are the ones who know their communities best. This is not the

answer to the problem of education in New Mexico and I would encourage the state to visit every school district in New Mexico and see for themselves what is working or not working in our communities or go to the teachers who are working with our children every day and ask them what needs to be done, they are the professionals here.

If you look at the schools in the state that practice a 4 day week, you would see that these schools have high graduation rates and parent/teacher satisfaction rates, along with higher attendance rates, since children don't have to miss as much school for outside events. Again, teacher retention is also a lot higher.

Since Capitan has started implementing 5 day school weeks once a month in our area, lots of parents aren't even taking their children to school on those extra Fridays, creating lower attendance rates for our district. This is another issue that will affect us and children if these changes are made. I foresee a lot of parents pulling their children from public schools completely and turning to homeschooling (some who have already done so since COVID), which may not be the answer if children are left to teach themselves in front of a computer all day while their parents are at work all day. To prevent this, why not provide extra resources for teachers and parents to help their children be successful in their education, while having a school schedule that works for them? On top of a 5 day school week, teachers will still have to attend professional development and trainings, making their jobs more demanding than they already are.

Below, I have listed a couple of resources from the AASA, The School Superintendents Association, where you will find solid information about the way the 4 day school week has impacted schools who have adopted this practice. This article says that "In New Mexico, 18 of the state's 89 school districts are on the four-day school week. Even though the schedule was implemented as a fiscal last resort, school districts using the shorter week have realized unexpected educational benefits, McCoy says. Attendance for teachers and students has improved while student achievement on standardized tests has remained stable. And staff recruitment became easier because a four-day work week was more attractive to prospective teachers.

"The four-day school week was probably one of those few decisions made in education in the name of money that actually ended up having educational benefits in terms of the academic performance of kids," says Joyce Ley, director of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Ore. "Schools end up operating more efficiently and they can maintain their programs, even when their resources have been reduced. It's been a good choice." It also notes that "The four-day school week is most predominant in rural areas of New Mexico, Colorado, Utah and Oregon. Broad latitude in legislation and local autonomy has allowed the schedule to spread throughout Colorado, where 31 of the state's 176 school districts today operate on a four-day schedule. Most of the districts, situated in the most isolated regions, have fewer than 500 students." This means that the schools in New Mexico that are of the highest needs in education, like Albuquerque Schools or Espanola, won't likely be impacted at all by adding a requirement for a 5 day school week because they are already working at a 5 day school week and still missing the mark, proving that the schools that are not having these issues are the only ones being punished with this new rule. Many large school districts, like Las Cruces, are going to a year round school

schedule and seeing success. Is this something that has been looked at and considered?

I'll leave you with one last bit of information, the article on Education Week, written by Stephen Sawchuk, called *4 Day School Weeks: New Research Examines the Benefits and Drawbacks* states that "The [study, released Oct. 7](#), was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. A team of researchers used three main methods to study the complex phenomenon.

[More than 1,600](#) U.S. school districts have adopted the model as of 2019-20. In some states, it represents a significant, widespread restructuring of district operations, including 60 percent of Colorado's districts and around 40 percent of New Mexico's and Oregon's.

The researchers interviewed more than 400 parents, teachers, administrators, and students in three states with large numbers of districts using the four-day model: Idaho, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. They also administered thousands of surveys to secondary students and to the parents of elementary students in 36 districts across those states and in three others—half of them using the four-day schedule and half using a traditional schedule—and collected data on their school schedules.

Finally, they analyzed nearly a decade's worth of student test scores across four- and five-day districts in six different states, looking for patterns in how students performed.

Among some of the most important findings:

- When timing was added up, districts in the sample using the four-day schedule had longer days by about 50 minutes, but over the course of the year averaged 58 fewer hours of school.
- Students in the four-day weeks spent significantly more time on school sports and on chores than did those in five-day weeks. Four-day secondary students also spent more time on homework, at jobs, at school activities, and on hobbies than their counterparts.
- Most students in the four-day districts—80 percent of high school students and 90 percent of elementary students—spent their “off day” at home.
- The four-day week did not appear to affect student-absenteeism rates or result in more food insecurity for students.
- It did seem to change some sleep patterns, with four-day elementary students reporting that they got more sleep and four-day secondary students saying that they felt much less tired than their counterparts in five-day systems.
- Parents and students, given the choice, overwhelmingly said they favored the four-day model, with 69 percent of the former and 85 percent of the latter

preferring it over five-day schedules."
I've also provided a resource from Wallet Hub that shows an education ranking study based on student safety and funding to school districts. Neither of these things are going to be improved by requiring children to attend school 5 days a week.

The 4 day school and work week is a growing phenomena in the United States. It seems that since Covid, more and more people are finding that there is a need in our daily lives for more time for family and ourselves and improving ourselves. We have already raised decades of children and retired decades of teachers who have given all of their free time to school and pounding information into their brains and since Covid, we have implemented so many new changes in the school system for these children, such as more virtual learning, and they are already struggling to keep up physically and mentally. Please reconsider these proposed changes and consider giving our school districts more resources to improve math and reading levels within our classrooms and consider going to each individual school district before implementing these changes that will impact all the different communities that New Mexico has to offer with different needs and ideas.

Resources:

The Four Day School Week by Kimberly Reeves (2015):

<https://www.aasa.org/resources/resource/the-four-day-school-week>

4 Day School Week: New Research Examines the Benefits and Drawbacks by Stephen Sawchuk (2021):

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/4-day-school-weeks-new-research-examines-the-benefits-and-drawbacks/2021/10>

States With the Best School System by Adam McCan (2023):

<https://wallethub.com/edu/e/states-with-the-best-schools/5335>

Thank you for taking your time to look at all factors, opinions and needs before making this permanent decision.

Coda Sanchez
Region IX Home Visitor
2710 Sudderth Dr Ruidoso, NM

Cell 575-686-0842

From: [Arturo Munoz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:28:50 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Loving school district, in Loving New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18th, 2023 so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of the local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing State Law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

Furthermore, as published by you, the NMPED, in the 2023 NM Vistas report on November 14th, 2023: 4-day school week districts consistently perform higher than 5-day school week on reading and math scores, both in overall percentiles and growth. In addition to this, high school graduation rates are higher in 4-day a week schools than 5, again, published by you, NMPED, in the most recent NM Vistas report.

Likewise, in the face of a critical teacher shortage that the NMPED itself has dubbed, "one of the worst in history," removing the additional bargaining chip for rural New Mexico districts to acquire educators is a massive step backwards. These sensational educators are needed to ensure that New Mexico youth are educated and prepared to enter the world as adults.

Moreover, the freedoms allowed by the 4-day a week school for students to excel at extra-curricular activities such as 4H, FFA, NMAA sanctioned athletics, and a number of other extremely beneficial activities are simply unmatched.

Conclusively, the 4-day school week allows New Mexico educators to mold high school graduates that have proven to be more well rounded, higher achieving, and more emotionally competent adults. Adults that are more adequately prepared to take their place as functioning and contributing members of New Mexico's society; and, to put it blatantly, is that not the goal?
I truly believe this will hurt the whole district.

Sincerely,
A concerned parent.

From: [Curtis Clough](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:30:23 AM
Attachments: [doc00493720231214073611.pdf](#)

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See attached resolution from the Corona School Board. Passed by a 4-0 vote with one member absent.

--

Curtis M. Clough
Superintendent
Corona Public Schools
531 Franklin St / PO Box 258
Corona, NM 88318
Phone 575-849-1911
Fax 575-849-2026

CORONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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Phone: 575-849-1911 * **Fax:** 575-849-2026

Curtis M. Clough, Superintendent

Amanda Dunlap, Principal * Karen Seely, Business Manager

Resolution of the Corona Public Schools Board in Support of New Mexico Schools Superintendents' Efforts to Challenge the Public Education Department's Rule Hearing

Whereas, the Corona Public Schools Board (the Board) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of education and ensuring the well-being and academic success of all its students;

Whereas, the Public Education Department (PED) has proposed changes to the public school calendars and instructional hours which significantly impact the educational framework of our community and district that has been a 4-day week school calendar since 1995.

Whereas, the proposed changes necessitate over 50% of school weeks to consist of five days, thereby directly contravening the legislature's intended flexibility in implementing the required 1140 instructional hours annually, as mandated by House Bill 130, and this requirement fundamentally alters the established educational structure and undermines the legislative intent focused on increased instructional hours rather than mandating the structure of the school week;

Whereas, these changes threaten to disrupt our successfully established school calendar and the thriving educational system which has effectively operated a full-time 4-day per week schedule since 1995 and has become ingrained as part of our community and school culture that effectively educated our students to high achievement levels.

Whereas, there is a profound concern that these changes may lead to a loss of local control over educational decisions and undermine the unique needs and successful practices of our school district, especially in rural areas like ours;

Whereas, the Board acknowledges the concerted efforts and strong advocacy of New Mexico Schools Superintendents, including our own, who have lobbied against these changes and are preparing to present their objections at the upcoming public hearing;

Whereas, there is a need for solidarity and a unified voice from school districts across the state in response to these proposed changes by the PED;

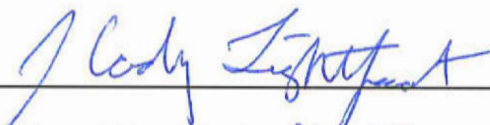
Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Corona Pubic School Board hereby declares its full and unequivocal support for the New Mexico Schools Superintendents in their efforts to challenge the PED's proposed changes to the school calendar and instructional hours.

Be It Further Resolved that the Board urges the PED to consider the significant impact of these changes on local communities, the importance of maintaining local control over educational practices, and the need to preserve the unique and successful educational models that have been established in districts like ours.


Be It Further Resolved that the Board encourages all members of our community, including parents, staff, and other stakeholders, to participate actively in the public comment process and to attend the public hearing to voice their concerns and opinions.

Be It Finally Resolved that this resolution be sent to the PED, the New Mexico Legislature, and relevant parties to express the Board's stance on this critical issue and to underscore the importance of collaborative decision-making in educational policy.

Adopted this **13th day of December 2023** by the Corona Public Schools Board.



Terri Racher, Board President Absent Vice President



Alena Brandenburger, Secretary

From: [Andres DeVargas](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] you guys cant just make us do 5 days a week that is bull shit
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:40:57 AM

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From: [Jeanne Johnston](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback on proposed changes to 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:51:35 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for allowing public comment on this topic. I am an educator in the Socorro Schools district, and we are currently on a 4 day week. I have 2 children currently in the Socorro School District. I am writing in opposition of the proposed changes to 6.10.5 NMAC.

I think many people can agree that after the pandemic, things have changed and we need to look at how we adapt to the outcomes. I do not believe that mandating all districts go to a 5-day school week, or making the school year 180 instructional days is the answer. Each school district is unique and should be able to make this decision as a community/ school board/ district.

I have the privilege of working with teachers across the state with my program. Statewide, there is an issue with teacher turnover. This year alone, with the 29 school sites I work with, we had 10 new teachers (in years past it was 3-4 new teachers yearly). A common issue I hear from all the 29 school sites I work with is student attendance and teacher burnout. The majority of these sites are all on a 5 day school week. It would appear that the problems we as a state are facing go deeper than how long our school day/week is.

Personally, I feel the shift to the 4 day school week here in Socorro has been a positive change. The 4 day school week allows for students and staff to miss less instructional time as they utilize Fridays to make their out of town drs appointments, participate in school sports games/meets, and use the day to catch up on any assignments they are working on. One of the biggest things is the additional extracurricular activities that are being able to be offered on Fridays. Socorro High School offers a 4 hour welding class (in collaboration with NM Tech) on Fridays at the HS. My son, a senior at the HS, is now certified as a 4G welder. This is huge for my son, and wouldn't have been possible if we had a 5 day school week.

If schools are mandated to go to a 5 day week, I fear we will lose more teachers. The teacher morale has increased here since going to a 4 day week. Getting certified teachers (and bus drivers) is an issue statewide and having the 4 day school week acts as an incentive to the staff and allows smaller districts to attract teachers and staff. They still have the same instructional hours as a 5 day week. Just like each student is different, and each classroom is diverse, so is each school district, and they should have the freedom to choose what works best for their district.

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns about the proposed changes to 6.10.5 NMAC.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Johnston

From: [Mikayla Roper](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re:State Laws 222-8.1 and 22-8-23.14
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:55:55 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I would respectfully like to explain why I am opposed to the idea of a 5 day week. As a 7th grade student-athlete at Quemado High School, I already get quite a few assignments from days that I have missed for games or tournaments. This can cause a burnout very quickly. A 5 day week will create higher absenteeism meaning I will miss more instructional time and will have more missing assignments.

Sincerely,
Mikayla Roper.

From: [Cherylyn Holliday](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re:State Lows22-2-8.1 and 22-8-23.14
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:04:09 AM

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To Whom It may concern

I would respectfully like to explain why I am opposed to a 5 day week it is because i am a athlete and most of the time we leave on a friday so that means catching up on work and I have experience with both 4 and 5 day weeks and I feel like my learning has improved since my move to a 4 day week. I am less tired and more active

Sincerely, Cherylyn, NiKol, Holliday

From: [Chancie Pergeson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] state Laws22-2-8.8 and 22-8-23.14
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:04:44 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern,

I would respectfully like to explain why I am opposed to a 5 day week. As a student-athlete, having a 5 day school week could create a big burden on athletes and their educational learning. This can cause many athletes to miss two days if we leave Thursday. It may also cause athletes to have a lot of makeup work. Each day I have to drive 1 hour to school and an hour back. Having a 5 day school week would make it so I have at least 10 hours of being in a vehicle each week. This would cause me to have no time with my family.

Sincerely,
Chancie Peregeson.

From: [Dalton Bennett](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] State Laws 22-2-8.1 and 22-8-23.14
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:05:23 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern,

I would respectfully like to explain why I am opposed to a 5 day week. As a student 7th grade at Quemado schools it would make it harder to have time to help my family on the weekends. Also 5 days at school would be too much work for a week. With 5 day weeks I would not get enough sleep to get through the week.

Sincerely,
Dalton Bennett

From: [Chance Stevens](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] State Laws 22-2-8.1 and 22-8-23.14
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:07:34 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

December 14, 2023

To whom It may concern,

I would respectfully like to explain why I am Opposed to A 5 day week. I wouldn't have very much time to get to school. This would also not have much time to spend with family. Sports as well are a big part of my life therefore I could have more abscess and less time to have games. It would also have more effect on teachers as well.

Sincerely,

Chance Stevens Quemado highschool 7th Grade

From: [Easton Merrell](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re:State Laws 22-2-8.1 and 22-8-23.14
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:08:47 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

December 14,2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I would respectfully like to explain why I am opposed to a five day week. It would take a lot more time out of my week and my family time. It would also affect our sports and times we play. We would also have to go 40 hours a week and everyone will be tired and have Increased absences. Some of our students here have to take the bus back and forth to school and back to their house which would also affect their family time.

Sincerely

Easton Hood

From: [Riley Sanders](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] State Laws 22-2-8.1 and 22-8-23.14
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:10:21 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I would respectfully like to explain why I am opposed to a five day school week. Here is my reasoning. I would like to keep a four day school week because it would limit the time that is valuable for family time and instructional time at home like practicing sports or other extracurricular activities. It would also have an impact on students like not having enough rest and it would cause the students to put less effort into things like tests and physical education. I ride the bus from datil to Quemado high school four days a week. It takes about an hour and fifteen minutes and four days a week that's nine hours and thirty minutes on a bus a week. So regarding that i would respectfully put the idea of keeping our four day week.

Sincerely, Riley Whitecliff Sanders

12-14-23

From: [Madelyn York](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE:StateLaws22-2-8.1and 22-8-23.14
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:10:46 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern

I would respectfully like to explain why I am opposed to a five day week.I am a 7th grader at Quemado high school and I live 1 hour away from my school. The law also states that it is up to the school to give a four or five day week.We need to keep our four day week for our sleep, health,and education.

Sincerely,
Madelyn York

From: [Rawlee Orona](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] State Laws 22-2-8.1 and 22-8-23.14
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:11:36 AM

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December 14, 2023

To Whom It May Concern, I would respectfully like to explain why I am opposed to a 5 day week. I am opposed because my school, Quemado High School, has achieved a 98% 4-year graduation rate and is ranked in the top 20% in reading, math and science. With a 5 day school week, there would be more absences because I and a lot of others live an hour out of town and sometimes could not make it out of the dirt road due to mud and snow. We would also not have enough time at home with family because of after school activities like practice for sports.

Sincerely,
Rawlee Orona

From: [Micah Corwin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NAY to Extending School Year
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:12:41 AM

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Good Morning,

My name is Micah Corwin. I'm a full-time school psychologist working for APS. I am forever opposed to extending the school year.

Extending the school year is foolhardy and short-sighted. Abandon all attempts to force educational institutions to become holding cells for children, as their overworked parents are forced to subsist on slave wages. The practices PED employs are reductionist, ignoring humanity to favor numbers and statistics. PED is part of the problem as you fail to protect the sanctity of the home.

- Changing the law through rule is unethical. PED must help to develop a better system, not simply more of the same.
- Educators must be well supported in all interactions with our stakeholders: our students, their families, our administration.
- Parents and Guardians must be fully involved and accountable in their child's learning for positive outcomes. No school year extension can make up for failure to engage our students' families.
- Our students are affected by chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. To address the shared trauma of our communities, implement specialized instruction support personnel (SISP) teams at every K-12 school - composed of licensed school social workers, licensed school psychologists, certified school counselors, licensed school nurses and other highly qualified personnel. Empower these teams to work directly with students and their families to address and heal from intergenerational trauma.

I am vehemently opposed to extending the days in the school year. Do not corrupt the spirit of education to support interest groups who are intent on taking more time away from families to spend at home. Pretending more time in a seat will improve student outcomes is a thin disguise for ulterior, self-serving motives.

Stop stealing the most precious resource our families have, the time they spend with each other,

--

~ Micah Corwin, MA, NIC
APS Bilingual School Psychologist
Northwest Diagnostic Center
6450 Western Trail NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120

Office Phone: 505-352-1513 ext. 38970

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All information in this Communication, including attachments, is strictly confidential and intended solely for delivery to and authorized use by the addressee(s) identified above, and may contain privileged, confidential, proprietary and/or trade secret information entitled to protection and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient, please take notice that any use, distribution or copying of this Communication, and/or any action taken or omitted to be taken in reliance upon it, is unauthorized and may be unlawful. If you have received this Communication in error, please notify the sender and delete this Communication from your computer.

From: [Greysen Stoner](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 days school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:15:18 AM

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I feel five day school weeks are not helpful towards our education nor our mental health. In fact, it probably declines our mental health, spiraling anxiety and depression. Four-day schools are statistically better when it comes to testing.

From: [Keith Durham](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:15:33 AM
Attachments: [Scanned from Grady Municipal Schools..pdf](#)

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Resolution from Grady School Board attached.

HOPE YOU HAVE A GREAT DAY!

Keith Durham

Superintendent



From: Grady Copier <gradycopier@gradyschool.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:52 AM
To: Keith Durham <kdurham@gradyschool.com>
Subject: Scanned from Grady Municipal Schools.

Please open the attached document.

Attachment File Type: pdf, Multi-Page

Multifunction Printer Name: Grady Municipal Schools



The Grady Municipal School District Board (GMSDB) has passed a resolution opposing the Public Education Department's (PED) proposed changes to public school calendars and instructional hours. The GMSDB specifically objects to the requirement that over 50% of school weeks consist of five days, arguing that this directly contradicts the legislature's intended flexibility and undermines the established educational structure.

The resolution emphasizes the following key points:

- Commitment to excellence: GMSDB prioritizes high-quality education and student success.
- Concerns about proposed changes: The PED's proposed changes threaten the established and successful 4-day school week at Grady Schools.
- Loss of local control: The changes may lead to less local control over educational decisions, which is particularly concerning for rural districts like Grady.
- Support for superintendents: GMSDB stands with New Mexico Schools Superintendents in their opposition to the proposed changes.
- Urgency for PED to reconsider: GMSDB urges the PED to consider the negative impacts of the changes and respect local control and diverse educational models.
- Call for community involvement: GMSDB encourages parents, staff, and community members to voice their concerns during the public comment process and at the public hearing.
- Dissemination of resolution: GMSDB will send this resolution to relevant parties to express its stance and advocate for collaborative decision-making.

Key Provisions of the Resolution:


- Full support for New Mexico Schools Superintendents in their challenge to the PED's proposed changes.
- Urging the PED to reconsider the changes and respect local control over educational decisions.
- Encouraging community participation in the public comment process and the public hearing.
- Disseminating the resolution to relevant parties.


Potential Implications:

- Increased pressure on the PED to reconsider its proposed changes.
- Stronger unified voice from school districts across New Mexico.
- Increased public awareness and engagement in the issue.
- Possible legal challenges to the PED's rule.

Conclusion:

The GMSDB's resolution demonstrates its strong opposition to the PED's proposed changes and highlights the importance of local control over educational decisions. The resolution's call for community involvement and collaboration sends a powerful message to the PED and may influence the outcome of the public hearing and subsequent decision-making process.


Phillip Borden
Board President


Jimmy Scheel
Board Secretary

From: [Mason Wallin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:16:08 AM

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I do not want the schools to switch to Friday school. I do not think there is a single person in the school that wants to switch. Our test scores are higher than some schools that do Friday school. I feel like that is why we get noticed our 4-day weeks. So, in all I think Friday school should not happen in Logan America.

From: [Christopher Lucero](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:18:02 AM

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The 4-day school week is essential for many reasons. For one it allows students to destress from all of the strenuous activities during the week. The weekend allows for optimal study time and quality family time. Studies also show that graduation rates of 4-day school weeks are much higher than 5-day school weeks. All in all, the 4-day school week allows for less stress, quality family time, and better graduation rates.

From: [Brian Culberson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); [Brian Culberson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:24:12 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern:

I teach in a small, rural school district a minimum of 6 hours away from Santa Fe. My school district currently uses a 4-day calendar. Our current calendar and schedule provide for more hours of instruction than is required.

Given our school's location, teachers and staff diligently attempt to do their shopping and have doctor visits on the day of the week school isn't in session. Most shopping and doctor facilities are a minimum of an hour away from our town.

This proposed rule change, rather than affecting real and substantial change on New Mexico Schools, simply feels as if it is politicians pandering to a political base, hoping that appearing to do "something" will appease voter sensibilities. A "one-size-fits-all" solution will not be successful.

I read the op-ed written by Secretary Arsenio Romero. To quote from the op-ed, "Change can be difficult, and what is familiar is comfortable." It is clear that, at least for Secretary Romero, real, substantial concerns over the changes PED is proposing will be viewed simply as coming from a lack of willingness to work for New Mexico students.

Teachers need more time to plan and implement quality lessons. Standards should be redone to focus on essential student learnings and eliminate items that are not necessary to the course content. Class sizes continue to grow unabated. Fewer and fewer new teachers are entering the profession and qualified, experienced teachers are choosing to leave teaching. Teachers and school staff are expected to move mountains with little to no support from those in power. Very little attention is paid to those of us in education except for when, like now, we have entered an election cycle.

Mr. Romero quoted proficiency numbers in reading and math. He didn't reference Governor Grisham and PED's decisions regarding education during the Coronavirus Pandemic, and how school districts were unable to hold students and parents accountable for poor attendance and lack of demonstrating any learning. Factor into that, the inability of schools to retain students who refused to attend or complete any work during that time simply made students and parents aware that there were no repercussions for their unwillingness to take education seriously.

Finally, as a teacher, no one understands better than I the results of New Mexico test scores. But as a teacher, very often, I am held accountable for things over which I have no control. Parents are not held accountable when their children miss school; behave poorly; come to school hungry; come to school tired; choose to be disruptive; refuse to do work and/or turn it in; and so on.

Education in New Mexico is facing many challenges and changes do need to be made. However, taking influence from local boards of education and schools is never the best decision.

From: [Jonathan Romero](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:24:26 AM

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I think that if we were to have a five-day school week test scores would go down with less participation. Students will feel tired because it is hard for them to spend time with family and friends, and we will get less rest as students. Some kids may want to work the weekend and with only two days on the weekend makes it even more difficult. Students are doing just fine with the four-day week, it's good for rest, education, and other things. So, in my opinion, we should not go on a five-day week.

From: [Mylee Stone](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:24:51 AM

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The four-day school week has worked for many years with no problem. Our testing proficiency is significantly higher than those of five-day school weeks. Four-day school weeks allow for at least one day to spend with family for those students who are in year-round sports and activities. A five-day school week would take away our family time, and because of that many schools enrollment numbers are expected to drop. New Mexico has many blue ribbon and spotlight schools and most of them run off of 4-day school weeks. It makes sense that if you have more days, you are able to learn more but that's true for anything, We as a state take on enough going on as 4-day school week, 5 days would be overwhelming, harder on our teachers and students and the numbers being likely to drop is something the state shouldn't risk.

From: [Aydin Kotara](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:25:49 AM

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I personally think that the state is biased towards the schools that go only four-day school days. Students that only have to go to school four-days a week have increased mental health. Students are more likely to go all four days of the week, because it is only four days. Four-day school weeks help teachers' morale. Reading proficiency is a lot higher in schools that go only four days a week than that of schools that go five days a week.

From: [Jennifer Hathaway](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] House Bill 130 and Increased Instructional Time
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:26:27 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am writing in opposition to the proposed rule changes to House Bill 130 and seemingly arbitrary increase to 180 days and the elimination of 4 day school weeks

I have been part of the Alice King Community Charter School GOverning Council since 2015 and both my children have attended this school. The 4 day school week is a central piece off the charter and culture of the school. We have been successfully educating students with our unique model of multi-age project based learning since 2006. The students have a longer school day and a longer school year already based on this model. The day off allows students time to work in depth on projects which are central to the model of education.

The legislature just 9 months ago increased the instructional hours, and we haven't had a full year to evaluate the outcome of that change. Charter schools need the autonomy to decide what is best for their community and this top down approach does not allow for such autonomy. We need the flexibility to adapt to the needs of our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter

Best Regards,
Jennifer Hathaway
Alice King Community School Governing Council Member

From: [Braeden Lightfoot](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The five day week bill
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:32:57 AM

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Hello, my name is Braeden Lightfoot. I am a sophomore at Logan high school. You may know my mother Bonnie Lightfoot who is the president of the New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders. Also was named superintendent of the year at this year's NMCEL conference. I'm telling you this because you are trying to pass a bill that makes no sense and is taking the rights away from the local level. This five-day week bill is not needed nor wanted by many rural areas that still run on a four-day week. You say that this bill will help students learn and be prepared more for life. But really four-day weeks are higher test schools and are ahead of a five-week school. So I'm glad something is being done to try to help students, but this is not the way. Multiple classmates and I will be going online next year if these passes.

From: [Rylan Montoya](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] message about 5 day school weeks
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:34:08 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I do not believe that schools with a 4-day school week should be required to go to a 5-day school week due to the facts. If you do your research, most schools that are on a 4-day school schedule out perform a 5-day schools' week. That its self should be more than enough evidence for you to notice that we should not go to a 5-day school week. If you need more evidence I could provide it for you. I am not what you would call a book smart person and in the future, I rather be working for myself rather than in an office job. But my true dream is to go to the NFR. If you were to put me on a 5-day school week. I would have less time to practice at it and accomplish what I want. So there for you are taking away the possibility of my future and my goals. And instead of me being able to accomplish my dreams I would instead have to try and follow another person's dream. I believe that is not right to be taking someone's dream away from them because you want them to have a 5-day school week. Even though they are out performing most people on a 5-day school week. So, you guys need to consider other people's Lives when you say that they should go to a 5-day school week and not just what you think is best. most people get a 9-5 job and they do not like it very much but that's what they are stuck with because they followed the average person. I myself do not want to be average. i want to make a name for myself i want to be recondized. I do not want it to be given to me i want to work for it because i am not an average person. My mom dislikes her job. My dad likes him because he works when he wants to and makes more money than the average person because he is not a follower, he is a leader. And i want to be like my dad I do not want to follow I want to lead.

From: [Javida Roberts](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Five day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:34:44 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Truely i believe that a five-day school week will severely drop our schools graduation rate. In small towns it takes hours to go to any major city. If you have a doctor's appointment you have to dedicate a whole day to the matter, now when you have a four-day school week instead of missing a day of school you can just go on a Friday. By changing the school week you'll be forcing students to miss more school then necessary. You also have to consider how this will affect students work- life balance. As children i believe that they need more time to do activities with their families and just be children. School is draining enough as is and now you're going to be adding a whole day. It is just a terrible idea and would be a massive waste of time.

Adding on more school days would just burn students out and cause test scores to drop.

From: [Chase Anderson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Changes to School Calendar
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:36:01 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

The proposed calendar mandate strips away the essential element of local control, undermining our ability to make decisions that best serve the Mesa Vista Schools. Our schools are small, and our needs are unique; we deserve the right to make decisions specific to our community. Local control has allowed Mesa Vista Schools to flourish, ensuring that decisions about our school calendar remain in the hands of those who know our community best — us. We are making gains and should be allowed to continue guiding our schools through our unique calendar.

~ Chase Anderson, 6th grade

From: [Jennifer Anderson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Calendar Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:37:17 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

The proposed calendar mandate strips away the essential element of local control, undermining our ability to make decisions that best serve the Mesa Vista Schools. Our schools are small, and our needs are unique; we deserve the right to make decisions specific to our community. Local control has allowed Mesa Vista Schools to flourish, ensuring that decisions about our school calendar remain in the hands of those who know our community best — us. We are making gains and should be allowed to continue guiding our schools through our unique calendar.

--

Jennifer Anderson
creativejen@gmail.com
404-422-6886

From: [Jayden Gonzales](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] mv
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:38:49 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

The proposed calendar mandate strips away the essential element of local control, undermining our ability to make decisions that best serve the Mesa Vista Schools. Our schools are small, and our needs are unique; we deserve the right to make decisions specific to our community. Local control has allowed Mesa Vista Schools to flourish, ensuring that decisions about our school calendar remain in the hands of those who know our community best — us. We are making gains and should be allowed to continue guiding our schools through our unique calendar."

From: [Desta Rose](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Debate on Reduction of 4-day school weeks
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:42:45 AM

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I think the 4-day school reduction in New Mexico is an idea that should not follow through. Not only does a four- day school week save money and time, but also has lots of other benefits to it for student learning and health. Students who have to show up 5 out of 7 days of the school weak are more likely to become physically and emotionally more tired than students with a 4-day week. More students tend to show up with a 4-day week rather than 5-day week. This is when academically, students will learn more because their attendance is better. So, the more people at school, the more learning will take place. Also, the percentage of students who graduate in 4-day week schools is much higher than schools with 5-day weeks, with 85% graduating with a 4-day week, and only around 50% of students graduating with a 5- day week.

4-day school weeks also have benefits for the teachers because they only have to work 4 instead of 5 days. 4-day work weeks will attract more teachers to the school, and most likely better teachers, which is once again another benefit for the students. It also has benefits for students and their families. There are more opportunities to be with family, it creates better bonds, and can help students cope with stress levels. Parents may also find it stressful trying to get their children to school every day, so it can take stress off of both parents and students.

From: [Hayden Bruhn](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No 5 Day School
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:44:59 AM

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Hi, my name is Hayden Bruhn and I attend Logan Highschool. I am in the 10th grade and I believe if we change to 5 days a week instead of 4 days that many negative things will happen. First off, our graduation rate at Logan High is around 97 percent. The state average is only 76 percent. As a student I believe we have plenty of "Class Time" each day. I think it is even too much for some people. Adding another day will negatively affect everyone. First off, overall scores will go down. People will stop looking to do better in school, they won't want to do homework, and they won't want to be in school for 5 days straight. That leaves us with a 2-day weekend which is not a good ratio from learning to having a break. As humans we need a break from school and learning. Me personally, this will completely burn me out of school. As of now I do enjoy school and I look forward to it most days. If they add another it will completely change my mind. Second, I am on the varsity basketball team and we have a game most Thursdays and most Fridays. We already miss most of the day on Thursday and have to makeup all that work. When we do this, we don't get to fully understand the lesson and miss out on many things in class. Then we have to makeup that work over the weekend when we have games. Adding that 5th day will only make it worse. That will mean we miss 2 days of school almost each week. The amount of makeup work and homework not done completely or at all will be at an all-time high. Test scores will drop increasingly, with the amount of work and things we have to do each week, no one will have any motivation to be here. I don't see a single plus for the new addition. As a student I don't believe we need "additional learning time" I believe we get enough as it is. And I know they will reduce the amount of time in each day. But that doesn't come close to outweighing the fact that we have a whole other day to attend each week. I believe academically the State will see a big drop in overall scores. I can tell you this, as a student, no one wants to be at school for 5 days in a row. It's way too much, especially for the high school kids. This will be terribly overwhelming and will make kids look at school much differently. Instead of kids going to school to learn, they will just look at it as a time waster and want to get through the five days as quick as they can. We already had to add 15 minutes to our school day and that's bad enough. Adding a whole extra day will negatively affect the school and its attendees so much. Looking at it from a parent or teacher perspective, I personally have a teacher that works two jobs and won't be able to go to work on Fridays to make money because they have to come to school. For parents this is another day they have to bring their kid to school, because not everyone can ride the bus. I have interviewed around 25

parents on this subject, and every single parent said they absolutely are not for the 5-day weeks. They too believe that this will overwhelm all of the students, parents, and teachers. They think this will interfere with life outside of school. Also, many people have stuff going on during the weekends that will no longer be allowed. Many of my buddy's rodeo and rope on Fridays and Saturdays. They won't be able to practice these things because they will have to be attending school. This will also affect the little kids. Life as a 5th grader isn't as hard as a 10th grader but the thing is they don't have the attention span and motivation like most high school students have. Some kids can't stay focused every day for 4 days long. Imagine 5, think about the stress the teachers will have when their students don't want to be at school, won't pay attention, and test scores and homework are severely dropping. On a political level it is stated that we have to have a certain amount of "instructional hours" not "instructional days". Also, Logan Highschool has very good overall scores in everything, we even got a visit from the secretary of education in New Mexico. He congratulated us for our welldoings and our great State averages and scores.

Overall, the addition of 5-day school weeks will negatively impact school and everyone who is in it. It will change the way people look at school and the way people are at school. All I ask as a student of New Mexico and a student of Logan Highschool, that the state will read this message and seriously consider all of the emails that have been entered in.

Thank You For Your Time

- Hayden Bruhn

From: [Hannah Baggett](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Thoughts on 5 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:45:18 AM

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I do not believe that it is reasonable to make all schools go five days a week. There are many reasons why this is not even needed. If it was passed it would not help to improve graduation rates, because if this was to happen more students would drop out and get there GED. Logan school has gone for four days a week for a long time, and are scores still have not fallen. The school has a high graduation rate but if the five days were to be passed the rates would go down.

Logan this year was awarded for being a spotlight school. Are scores being the highest in the district, and we only go 4 days a week. The grades have never suffered while going a four-day week. Places with a four-day week consistently score higher than places that do go the five-day school week. This bill should not be passed for many reasons.

Some of the points on the other end of the spectrum are that we have reduced learning time only going for four days a week. This may be true that we have a little less time in the seats, but what is the big deal when we are scoring higher than the schools that go five days a week. Are scores show that we are doing significantly good. If it were to come to a five-day school week are scores would show a major downfall. Between many kids going online and some skipping most Fridays, the school would start to show that probably even at a quicker rate than what would be expected.

If the bill for five days a week were to be passed many teachers would leave for a place with pay. Who knows how the smaller schools will deal with this, there is a possibility that schools would lose to many teachers that they would have to go online for a bit. Rural schools would lose a good number of staff as well as students if this was to happen. This bill would affect so many schools and not in a good way, like some of you believe. This affects the school but in some way home life to, some teachers already have two jobs and doing this would mean there is never a day they have off. This also will affect student from being so busy with their job and school, there is no time for family to fit in. These are just a few key points on why this bill should not be passed.

From: [Mitchell Wall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Four Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:46:08 AM

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I think a four-day school week is much better than a five-day week. It gives the students more time to rest and spend time with their families over the weekend. This extra day over the weekend can also allow students to learn more on their own time. If students are getting the same number of hours in classrooms learning I think it is irrelevant how these hours are divided.

I'm a student at Logan Highschool and the graduation rates are significantly higher at a graduation rate of 97% compared to the state average of 76%. I think that this difference of 21% is due more to how great the teachers are and the work ethic of the students. The extra day in the weekend allows both teachers and students to prepare for the next week, teachers get more time to make lesson plans, students get more time to rest and recover to come back on Monday ready to work.

Although four-day school weeks work for us and many other schools, it won't work for all schools. I think it should be the school's choice whether they go for four days or five days depending on what works best for them, but I don't think it should be decided by the state.

From: [Mitchell Freedman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposed longer school hours/days
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:46:16 AM

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I write to say we are having the wrong conversation about education in our State. There are three reforms or changes we need to make that are either not discussed or insufficiently discussed:

1. Absenteeism. You can't teach a student if the student is not in the seat too many times. This problem is far more tied to socio-economic status, and since we are historically and currently a poor state, the absentee issue has grown even worse over the past two decades. See this article from just a month ago, and the report to which it links.

[New Mexico School Absentee Rates Still At High Levels](#)

2. Every student added to a teacher's class diminishes that teacher's ability to help struggling students. When I look at official numbers, NM is slightly higher in class size than better school performance states such as NJ and NY. So why the need for lower class size? NM is a much higher poverty state, and students from impoverished families need more direct assistance from teachers and administrators--full stop. I saw it with the relatively few impoverished students I taught in the suburban environs of Rio Rancho, where I had to make myself push to help them more with extra time, more direct discussion about the work eventually handed in, and even some informal counseling when they refused to seek any help from a counselor. This is why NM needs to lower its class sizes, and provide teachers with more opportunities for tutoring while in class, and immediately before or after school.

You can say we can't lower class size because there is still a teacher shortage. For starters, do what Washington State does: Have an aide in every single class. It makes a difference when a teacher has a classroom full of kids and can't get to the ones who hide better until it is too late for those students to catch up. Also, don't keep overburdening teachers with administrative paperwork, which is a major driver in teacher burnout after three years (and I certainly felt that at the end of my third year regardless of my big social security check). We actually need to raise teacher salaries further to a \$60K starting salary, and incentivize young people from going into other professions. We must then lessen paperwork on the job, and we'll see more people entering and staying in teaching. This brings me more directly to number 3, which goes to teacher morale and the paperwork:

3. I was a civil trial lawyer on the defense side for nearly forty years, mostly in CA, and two years in NM before transitioning to becoming a high school social studies teacher for three years (As a lawyer, I was known as the "professor" of law to younger lawyers whom I mentored over decades). But, as I was hitting age 66 after teaching here for three full school years, I did the math and realized my net social security after taxes would be the same as teaching full time. In January, I will be making MORE on social security than teaching.

Also, before starting full time teaching, I decided I should sub in K-12 to get a feel for teaching. What I experienced surprised me: The problem is not with teachers in our State. When I subbed in two districts (RR and Bernalillo), 95% of the time, I had teachers' detailed lesson plans to work with as a sub. The plans were most often detailed and showed the teacher was well engaged in the practice of teaching. When I became a full-time teacher for the next three years, I worked an average of 50 to 55 hour weeks preparing and tweaking lesson plans, teaching, and grading. My lessons were online for all parents and students to see 24/7 on Google Classroom and my grades were up on PowerSchool for 24/7 access. Still, I had to email parents in Rio Rancho (many of whom were middle to upper middle class) when "Johnny" didn't hand in three assignments in a row, and even then, I had a response rate of less than 1/3rd. I say this because Ms. St. Peter has not told you the half of how hard these teachers work here. But, State politicians and appointed officials love throwing more administrative paperwork at teachers than any other professional. I know. In my nearly forty years of lawyering, I did lots of business litigation, employment

litigation, and insurance bad faith litigation, but I also represented lawyers, accountants, doctors, dentists, engineers, real estate brokers, stock brokers, insurance brokers, and even a couple of architects in professional malpractice cases. I know what their professional requirements are.

LET ME BE CLEAR: No other profession makes a professional do anything like a "dossier" or its equally wasteful and dumb alternative. No other profession asks me to write curriculum maps on top of lesson plans. I wrote a Motion for Summary Judgment as a lawyer, but did not have to explain how I wrote it. It is so ridiculous to put this added strain on these professionals, who are already far underpaid compared to all other professions. When a lawyer is working in the NM AG office, they have no "dossier" requirement to go from Level 1 to 2. It is just years of practice and the supervisor says "You are going to Level 2" after three years or you are out. Same with accountants at the Taxation & Revenue Department. No dossier! Lawyers and doctors, etc. have yearly continuing education requirements. But they are about 12 or so hours a year. Teachers already do 60 or more hours a year, and Romero and the legislature want more! The "dossier" alternative wants another 50 hours on top of that to go from Level 1 to 2, and if you don't do it, you're out. No other profession does this. You take the entrance exam and that's it. These extra and morale lowering paperwork requirements have to end and end now. My wife went through the dossier as an elementary art teacher and spent 150 hours preparing it. I left teaching before I had to do the dossier, thank goodness. It struck me as a waste of time and just a punishment.

Overall, Education Secretary Romero would do much better to look to Finland, which has double NM's population (!), and went from nearly last in Europe to either first or in the top three over decades. It did this first by ensuring better work conditions and pay for teachers. Pedagogically, they focused first on the first two years of learning not by doing what neoliberals and corporate people always think, which is more readin', writin', and 'rithmetic to five and six year olds, but with teaching social skills. This created more healthy environments for students to begin to learn and see schools as a sanctuary and oasis in their lives. It was then easier to implement curricula with less homework, and less testing regimens. This is how their later middle and high school test scores dramatically increased over time. Finland also implemented stronger child care to ease parents' burdens, which our state is just starting to do. Now if only we can help every NM avoid medical burdens, but of course, that may be the bridge too far for now (when it is actually not too far, since half the state or more is already with VA, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits).

As I say, we are having the wrong conversation. Due to the recent law changes, teachers already lost their prep time this year, and specialized teachers in the arts lost their weekly meetings, and will lose them nearly completely in APS in January. Our political leaders are saying, "Hey! You teachers want that 4% raise? You gotta work even harder--and we have more paperwork for you to fill out and complete!" It's a punishment culture NM has had for years, and it hasn't worked. We need to look at this from the above perspectives. We need to first improve work conditions and salaries, increase opportunities for students to get direct, personal help from teachers, and give parents government paid for pre- and after school day care so parents can think more about their children's learning, and realize how important it is to respond to a teacher's communications to them about their child --and maybe check Google Classroom and PowerSchool once a week.

In all bluntness, I am someone who agreed at a young age with Aldous Huxley that public education must teach how to think more critically AND not lose a person's natural curiosity to learn on one's own. Over decades going back to the 1980s, I have read Kozol, Ravitch, Goodman, Finn, Hirsch, and others regarding our educational system. The discourse surrounding education in this State is hateful towards teachers, gets too often mixed up with culture war-style arguments, and refuses to recognize how socio-economics, on and off Native pueblos, and even into whitest suburbs, foster a culture that does not sufficiently value education--and then wonders why the metrics and outcomes continue to stagnate.

Thank you for listening. I may stop by Monday to say a short version of the above as I think this needs to get out to change this entire discourse around.

Mitchell J. Freedman
4541 Aguila Road SE
Rio Rancho, NM 87124
858 776-2223
December 14, 2023

From: [Adam Van Buskirk](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Bruhn, Johnna](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment opposing Regulation 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:48:30 AM

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Good morning, I submit this comment in strong opposition to the proposed rule change that would force small rural schools to adopt a 5 day school week.

I am a school bus driver for Mosquero Schools in Harding County. I also have 4 children enrolled in Mosquero Schools.

I find it shocking that law-makers, who are probably unaware of the challenges faced in operating a small and super-rural school district, are going out of their way to override the local community's decision to operate a 4 day week.

My daily bus run can be as much as **140 miles**, with some children on the bus for over an hour. Some of these children are being driven by their parents for up to 20 miles one way on dirt tracks before they even reach the school bus stop.

Going to a 5 day week would add literal hours of travel time per week for these children and their parents, as well as fuel costs, wear and tear, loss of sleep, etc. There is a very good reason our district uses a 4 day week.

My prediction is that this rule change would be totally counter-productive, since many children would simply be taken out of school and homeschooled if the already burdensome transportation issues became worse.

It's not an exaggeration to say that this type of top-down mandate that ignores the needs of the local community could decimate enrollment and put the future of public schooling in this area at risk.

Adam H. Van Buskirk
36 Westfall Road
Solano, NM 87746

From: [Michael Riemen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Bernstein, Ellen](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:57:52 AM

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Dear Sir|Madam,

I am writing to help make you understand that adding days onto the school day will not be of any help to our students. We just had a major overhaul of our school schedules including beginning and end hours as well as added instructional and professional development days. These represent a significant impact on students, teachers, school systems and parents. More isn't always better. Better is always better. Please allow the already radical changes to have some effect before implementing new ideas. This is my thirty-first year of teaching. I've taught in Indiana, South Dakota and New Mexico and the idea of making big changes even before allowing the previous big changes to work is always wrong.

Please respect the process that was legally instituted through our state legislature not even one school year ago. There is no need for further change and disruption.

Sincerely,

Michael Riemen, M.A.,
World History,
New Mexico History,
Jefferson Middle School

From: [Baylee Salvador](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opinion of the 5 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:59:43 AM

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Good Morning, I believe that five-day school's week is not necessary. There are many reasons for this like what about student with a job, or student athletes. Many students with a job can only work on the weekend, especially on Fridays. Fridays are known as a rest day in the student athletic department because we have games on Thursday then on Saturdays, which makes Fridays so important for our bodies to rest and regain that energy and strength.

If you want numbers since you say we lose so many instructional days, I have numbers and proof. There are 129 school districts in New Mexico who operate on a four-day week, that's about 20% of the state. Those schools have a 76% graduation rate. The attendance rate would improve. The mental health of students would improve.

If you ask teachers or any staff in school major would tell you that their students are stressed because they have extra circumstances to attend to. homework, work and even parental stress on them from school. Adding another day would just add more stress n mental health being unstable. Some teachers have two jobs, they need rest as well. The board of education wants so much from student. like " play sports, it helps with social skills." or "you need to get a job, to experience the real world." They're not looking for how much stress or counting for the mental energy all that takes.

Thank you for taking the time to read and to consider our student opinion,
Baylee Jones Salvador

From: [Laurel LeGate](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Subject: Request to revoke proposed rule change re: school calendars
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:06:49 AM

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Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to strongly request that the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) rescind the instructional time proposal (6.10.5 NMAC). I am also writing to request that the PED and the Legislature and all education policy makers respect and promote increased site-based decision making in our public schools.

As a teacher and education professional going on 20 years, various ideas, philosophies, proposals, and reforms have come and gone with the swing of the proverbial pendulum. However, one idea that is a constant and has “followed” me wherever I’ve been an educator (multiple schools, primary and secondary, multiple states, higher education) is that of the need to differentiate. People are not “one approach fits all.” As an extension, the human institutions of schools aren’t either! Any reform about anything is going to fail to meet its desired objectives if it does not properly account for the unique characteristics of unique communities and populations. For example, many younger children who are building their reading foundations or their mathematical foundations really do experience better outcomes with more instructional time. But saying all schools need to increase instructional time is a waste of both money and teacher time that could be better spent in collaboration with fellow professionals. Students in Finland and Singapore spend less time in school than their American counterparts and outcomes in these countries are much better. Another case in point, my students at East Mountain High School would not universally benefit from more academic seat time. This community is largely more affluent on average and are more educated. In general, these parents are highly invested in their children’s education and these students are successful in school and the majority of our students are college-bound. Our students up here in the mountains actually need more time OUTSIDE of school pursuing not strictly academic interests and making community connections. We are isolated here and students need time in their lives to “get out of their bubble.”

There are of course some students at our school who benefit from increased academic time in school but the fact that it’s a small percentage means our faculty can be innovative and creative in how we serve these students who need more time with teachers. For example, right now, we have our tutoring time after half day classes on Wednesdays when I can work one on one and in small groups with struggling students, really targeting my interventions to their unique needs. The flexibility of our calendar makes this possible. Not all students have to stay after school on Wednesdays. It’s a reward of sorts for staying caught up not to have to go to school all day on a Wednesday and it really motivates these high schoolers. Last year before the first inflexible school year-lengthening policy implementation, we were able to do this twice a month with FULL DAY WEDNESDAYS and that was even more effective. Here is an example where a well meaning but nevertheless “blanket” reform actually hurt our students and teachers. We have less time now for intervention with our kids who need us the most, ironically!

I love my job and I love my school and its community. Many, if not most, of the teachers I work with have worked at my school for multiple years and many for decades. That low turnover rate is what PED needs

to be focused on in my humble opinion. The teachers at my school are incredibly talented and collaborative. Our director is innovative and inspirational and we are a place kids and families report they want to be. We have worked on developing these systems collaboratively with stake-holder input that are working well for us and our community. Why would we ever want to undo that? How is that in anyone's interest?

I teach New Mexico History to freshmen. The guiding question of our class is *how can we use history to make New Mexico better?* We learn about all of the factors that contribute to the most wonderful unique and enchanting parts of our state and then also about the not so wonderful parts too that the people and institutions of this state had to weather and are still working to overcome. We are "last" in education despite spending billions of dollars. Yep. Because our education is only as robust as our communities are. Who are our neighbors down there on the bottom in these rankings? Mississippi? Other places with similar historic poverty, lack of suffrage, generational trauma, etc...? Can schools in New Mexico really be held to the standard of stopping all of the leaks in our cobbled together excuse for a social safety net alone? Is that truly what you expect of us? Believe me, I am a believer in teacher miracles and in schools' power to transform lives and communities and we need to be aspirational and seek those miracles. But, also, we have to be pragmatic and realize that the people need to drive this endeavor and be part of it, whatever it is or it will fail or will force educators like me to leave the profession and more parents to choose private schools. I teach because it gives me meaning to know I am doing the best for my students. When I have faced top down inflexible reforms in my teaching past in another state, I quit teaching and came to New Mexico where I was delighted to experience years of more site-based approaches to school governance where teachers and parents and students collaborated to design programs and processes that worked well for their needs as a community.

You can only work this hard if you believe in what you're doing. You have an ethical responsibility to do what you know works the best for your students. When the state micromanages schools too much, teachers are demoralized because they are no longer able to practice their profession with integrity.

Please save us from this calendar approach and any others in the future that are excessive, unpopular and inflexible!

Thank you,

Laurel LeGate
East Mountain High School
Sandia Park, New Mexico
llegate@eastmountainhigh.net
(505) 318-8339

From: [Zachary Schaefer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:19:39 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

I think that as a student, we should continue to have 4-day school weeks. At my old school i had 5-day school weeks, and my grades and energy were low all the time. I had trouble focusing and enjoying school. Ever since I came to my new school with 4-day school weeks my grades have skyrocketed as well as my energy and happiness. With 4-day school weeks I get more sleep, spend time with family more often, and my performance increased. I enjoy 4-day school weeks, they have helped me and others in a lot of ways.

From: [Todd Burleson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Floyd Municipal Schools Written comment
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:19:43 AM

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We are a small rural school and village in northeastern New Mexico. While we welcome accountability and oversight, we believe that local control is absolutely essential. The proposal that is currently on the table to force school districts to make more than 50% of their school calendars, 5-day weeks is a circumvention of that local control. We have been on a 4-day week calendar since 2012, and it has worked for us. We have a middle school campus that is currently "Traditional", we have a high school campus that is currently "Traditional", and we have an elementary campus that is currently "Spotlight". Additionally, we have out of district students, which we are dependent on to grow and remain open, that attend Floyd Municipal Schools because of the 4-day week calendar. Many of these students travel from 16-20 miles away, and the extra day will most likely cause them to save the fuel and attend their resident district. We have trouble finding staff and retaining them. Our staff is 100% at the moment, but we know that many of them are here, because of the 4-day week calendar. If we are forced into the proposed calendar, we will lose staff, and finding replacements will be very difficult. Teachers who are near retirement, will most likely go ahead and retire, if forced into a new calendar. We also save 20% on our utilities because of the 4-day calendar.

We appreciate all that you do for us, and are simply asking for your consideration in leaving the local control and the decision on local school calendars in our hands.

Sincerely,

Todd Burleson

*Todd Burleson
Superintendent of Schools
Floyd Municipal Schools
1564 NM 267 / PO Box 65
Floyd, NM 88118
Phone: 575-478-2211
Fax: 575-478-2277
Cell: 432-210-9622*

From: [Emma Moyers](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:20:37 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

My personal opinion on this statement is that I think we should continue to have 4-day school weeks because it is better for the kid's mental health. The kids get to stay home for an extra day and have a good time with their families and have an extra day for homework to get caught up on it, the choice that was made by the education department is an interesting one but most people have strong feelings about it including myself. The school we work in is good one but I feel like it doesn't need a 5-day week. Most teachers would want it to get extra learning time in for the kids so the teachers can work more with the kids incase they have more questions.

From: [Zethlin Sherwood](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:20:45 AM

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I hate it because 2 days off school. I hate it because i have things to do on Friday can't go to school on Friday. I don't feel recharged after 3 days what makes it think I will after two days. I'm fine with getting to school at 740 but I cant do 5 days. why can't we do 3 days of school but longer school periods cause I would be fine with that.

From: [Connor Moore](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:22:26 AM

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Dear New Mexico Education Department

My thoughts on the 5-day school day are negative. They are negative because I won't have time to do work, I need done since I work on a ranch which is a major workplace for me and the country. It also gives me less time to hang out with my family which matters to me a lot. I will be really exhausted at the end of the week due to the extra amount of work I will have to be getting done in two days as homework. Those are the reasons why my thoughts are negative towards the 5 day weekend thank you.

From: [Aubrey Reed](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:23:21 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department

I don't like the idea of having a 5-day school week. It is hard on some kids to have to come to school 5 days because they have jobs. Also, some kids don't get enough sleep during the week. It is also taking away time from our families. Some kids have a lot to do on the weekends and making it a five day week can take time away from that. Lastly some kids dread coming to school.

From: [Tara Stalford](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:23:23 AM

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Hello,

I am an Educational Assistant with the Los Alamos Public School District at Aspen Elementary School. Also, for 19 years I am been a parent of students in the Los Alamos Public School District. Currently, my student is a sophomore attending Los Alamos High School.

I am in agreement with AFT-Los Alamos, the LAPS School Board, and the LAPS administration who are in agreement that we do NOT support the adoption of the proposed rule change.

Additionally, I am concerned that we will lose teachers and staff as I have heard some of them talk of this in response to the proposed changes.

Another deep concern I have is for the pressure that this will place on my student who is already struggling to keep up with the current schedule.

Thank you,
Tara Stalford
1654 36th
Los Alamos



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Robyn Vines](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed rule change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:23:49 AM

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Good morning,

This is in regards to the rule change to HB 130. I am a teacher expressing my extreme frustration and disappointment in this effort.

When will the people in charge start to understand that you are not addressing what is actually needed in schools? Adding hours and days is not what students will benefit most from. What they really need is smaller class sizes so they can get more direct support from adults. What they really need is reading curriculums that align with science of reading and math curriculums that aren't entirely dependent on reading at or above grade level. What they really need is social nets that support their families so that students are able to be at school and ready to learn. What they really need are school meals that are not prepackaged, sugar-filled junk food that has been nuked in the microwave. What teachers need is less testing and data analysis when we are being forced to teach with programs that do not meet students' needs. What teachers need is support with all of the current discipline problems that prevent us from teaching.

I cannot understand why the people in charge do not spend time trying to understand the true needs within schools. Adding days and hours without addressing these issues is not going to increase student performance. The people making decisions are truly out of touch and unaware of what is happening in schools and what students truly need.

Please don't do this to teachers and students. Please consider better ways to support us and use public monies.

Thank you,

From: [Vincent DeLuca](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Do we need a 5-day school week or stay at a 4-day week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:25:07 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department, I feel that there are pros and cons of both a 4 and a 5-day school week. To me I think that a 5-day week isn't necessary because us at logan school have a 97% graduation rate. We have been able to have more than the average number of kids graduates from logan school, but there are also some good things about a 5-day week at allows us to learn more, practice more and some many more. This could allow us to become better as a school, but there isn't very much room for us to grow. I know that we can allows grow and improve but we have made it this far with a 4-day week and I don't think that we need to change that.

Thank you for reading this,
Vincent DeLuca

From: [Caylee Pope](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:25:11 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

I am very much against the 5-day school week. I love the 4- day weeks. They give me more time to rest and spend time with my family. If this were to change to 5-day school weeks instead of a 4-day school week I would feel a lot more stressed. I know a lot of other kids that would hate this change as well. Family is one of the most important things in life and after high school you might not get to see them as often. I feel like school has us for long enough and we also need time to live our own lives at home. I'm sure you are thinking this is just another day od school a week but really if you think about it adds up to a lot. I would just really appreciate it if you could just keep things the way they are and not change the 4-day school weeks to five.

From: [Reese Hastie](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:26:03 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

as a student athlete from logan high school I already spend my day from 7:45 to 6 due to practice. Adding another day would be draining. I think this decision needs to be decided on local level not statewide. I feel that rural 4 day schools shouldn't have to suffer for bigger schools lower scores. If a school already has a 97% rate of graduating why do we have to change.

From: [Lynda Ray](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Bruhn, Johnna](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regulation 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:26:27 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am highly opposed to taking away the option for schools to have a 4 day school week. The buzzwords in education are experiential learning, hands-on learning, acquiring trade occupations and teaching our students to solve problems. Students in rural schools that attend a four day school week spend the other two- three days a week gaining valuable work experience, learning responsibility and discovering what they choose to do for a career.

I have two daughters who were raised and educated in a four day school system in Mosquero, NM. One is currently a pediatric audiologist working for a large school for the deaf and blind. The other had the confidence to spend a year in Ghana and return to earn a master's degree in agriculture leadership with an emphasis in foreign agriculture. I can without a doubt say that the four day week did not in any way harm their learning or careers but it did give them the opportunity to learn how to work, persevere and how to problem solve. Many weekends were spent working on our family ranch. These two girls spent time in organizations such as FFA, 4H and on the court learning how to participate on teams.

Some may say, well you were a teacher in the school and are biased. Here is my response: I did teach vocational agriculture, language arts, science, shop and occasionally health for 20 years in a four day school week. I also helped run our family ranch, followed our two daughters on life learning adventures, taught students the value of work ethic and integrity. As most effective teachers will tell you, I spent hours preparing lessons, staying after school to help kids, and hauled kids to FFA competitions on the weekends. In those four days, I learned to be intentional in my teaching and the students became intentional in learning.

Please do not take this opportunity away from students. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please call me at (575)447-2321.

Sincerely,

Lynda Ray "Lyn"
T. E. Mitchell and Son Inc.
665 Tequesquite Lane
Albert, NM 87733
(575)447-2321

From: [Lucas Barreras](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:26:52 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM Public Education Department,

Hello, my name is Lucas and I would like to say I do not like this odea of having a five-day weekend. It would not be nice to have a three-day weekend because that means less time to rest. We need more time to do homework just incase we cannot finish or have no time to finish it cause us too busy doing homework and there is too much. We are already doing good and us above average is enough to prove we do not need an extra day of school.

From: [Stratton Schoonover](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:26:53 AM

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The conversation of a 5-day week has been going around for quite some time now. I think that a 5-day week is bad because it takes an extra day out of everyone's time on doing other things. Having a 3-day weekend allows older high school students to have a part time job and earn money for after high school. Another thing that benefits people with having a longer weekend is it gives them more family time at home. A 2-day weekend adds so much more stress on kids because they are constantly working and not truly enjoying their childhood.

From: [Keira Black](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:27:40 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

More school days on our four-day weeks could cause much more stress to the students, along with the fact that most of the families in our area have cattle or horses that they take care of over the weekend. By taking one more day out of the weekend, when most families are religious, that would leave a single day to relax or reset after a stressful school week. It would especially hurt some of the students who have a "social battery" especially if it comes out at their classmates. Low social batteries sometimes lead to students lashing out aggressively so it's better if those are "charged." So please consider those schools who have high graduation rates along with great grades within the class, who have these four-day weeks, and consider how they are able to keep those grades up without becoming mentally tired.

-Student of logan NM highschool

From: [Jadyn Garcia](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Jadyn Garcia](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school weeks
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:29:27 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

As a student who is also in sports, 4 school days is already hard on us. We Go to school 4 days a week and then have practice for 2-3 more hours after school. We are all tired after sports practices and go home and we still have homework that takes us another 2-3 hours. Students' mental health goes down when we have more, so they get more physically and mentally exhausted. The students are getting a good education, and we do good academically with just 4 days a week. The Logan high schools' graduation rate is 97% and statewide the average is 76%.

From: [Blake Bidegain](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:30:09 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

Hello, I'm Blake, and I'm upset with your proposal to change the 4-day weeks for schools who go for 155 days to have 180 days. I strongly disagree with this change and I'm sure many other people would agree. Statistically, 4-day school weeks result in more sleep for the students, allowing them to perform better on assignments, and test. By having a 4-day school week, students have more time to have a mental break and allows students to socialize more with family and friends. These are just some of the reasons why a 4 day week is better then a 5 day week. Thank you for your time in reading this.

Sincerely, Blake Bidegain
Logan High School

From: [Julian Sena](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:31:59 AM

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Dear NM, Public Education Department,

I strongly recommend that you should keep the given days of education for only 4 days. It has been flowing smoothly for many of the students and staff in our school in logan, NM. It has also been an increase of moral for many people in other schools as well. Even though school is fun sometimes, I feel we should keep the weekdays to a minimum. We don't want to deal with an exhausting increase of school days every week.

- Julian Sena

From: [Elizabeth Kanapilly](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:35:16 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

This is a student from Logan New Mexico, we are doing perfectly fine without a 5-day school week. This is really important to me because on Friday my family schedules appointments on Friday. If we use Friday as another school day, we lose school time for going to appointments. My mom is a school teacher and at her school they can't drop a student from their class if they have come to school within the ten-day period and have shown up to one class. That means if they show up one day out of the ten then they can still have that class. She has a lot of kids not showing up, and they don't show up.

At Logan we have a 97% graduation rate, compared to the state with a 76% graduation rate. I personally would like to keep it as a 4-day week because I am a good student who loves school, but a 5-day week is just too much. I have a lot of stress in my life, and this will be my breaking point.

On Fridays now I am meeting with the Amarillo College Volleyball Coach because I am trying to get better at Volleyball. If we have a 5-day week I can't do this because then I won't be able to get better and hopefully make varsity and after play in college.

I understand that there is a problem with attendance rates but for the most part the kids that do show up care about school and want to succeed. Friday will not only cut into my family time and our teachers but I will also not be able to get the help I need for Volleyball.

Sincerely,
Lizzie Kanapilly

From: [Kaitlyn Hall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:36:58 AM

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I am a freshman at Logan High School and I disagree with the motion to eliminate 4-day school weeks. There is a lot of thought that needs to be put into this. A 4-day week allows me to spend more time with my family, friends, and just rest from the week before. It helps me get ready to come to school for another week and learn. If we move to 5-day school weeks I feel kids will be very tired and won't uphold their learning capabilities to their very best. Our graduation rates in Logan are 97%. I feel it's so high because of the 4-day school week. It's easier on the kids and not to mention we go to school from 7:45 - 4:00. This is why I think if we go to 5-day weeks that rate will go down a lot. I think we should seriously put more thought into this and let schools themselves decide what's best for their school.

From: [Alison "Ali" Renner](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:37:53 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I am emailing in **strong opposition** to the new school calendar requirements. The fact that PED feels the need to micromanage how each district handles the unique needs of its communities is insulting. If the goal is to get better student outcomes, the solution cannot be to burn out all of the district's good educators. Disincentivizing PD days is detrimental to the betterment of our faculty and we are going to lose the valuable wisdom of our best, veteran educators because they will see this as a breaking point.

Taking away free periods from juniors and seniors and having to add additional classes, teachers, or have larger class sizes to ensure all students are placed in 4 credit bearing courses each day is ludicrous. We have a teacher shortage as is and we are generally the highest performing district in the state. Did anyone actually think about all of this or did they just think that more time equals better student outcomes with no thought to the unintended consequences?

The timing of this is outlandish. We have been on our new school calendar for 4 months and trying to say that HB130 as implemented is not working doesn't make sense. The timing of last year's calendar negotiation put a real strain on our community and these new rules being implemented for SY24-25 when calendars and budgets need to be approved by April, is not something that PED should be putting on us. Above and beyond the district calendar, the high school and middle school are on a block schedule and there is not adequate time to completely revamp our entire schedule to accommodate this. I don't even know if our current buildings can handle this change and I don't know what would happen to our planning time if we all had to teach more classes.

You are going to lose good educators if you go through with this. And this will turn the educators that are left against PED. We want to be partners and help our students but you are putting us in a situation where I think our students will end up being hurt by these decisions.

Respectfully,
Ali Renner
Physics Teacher and Science Bowl Coach
Los Alamos High School

--
Ali Renner
Physics Teacher - Conceptual Physics and AP Physics C
Science Bowl Coach
Topper Freshman Academy / Los Alamos High School
Rm E-120

From: [Charlotte Judd](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:39:06 AM

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Dear NM, Public Education Department,

I have mixed feelings about having a 5-day school week. Here are some reasons why I want to have a 5-day school week. One reason is, in my opinion I do not think I am that smart and need some more education. Another reason is, there are other kids that really need to have one more day because they are not on the same level as the other kids in their class. The last reason is, other kids did not finish their work in class and can have a makeup day. Here are some of the reasons why I do not want to have a 5-day school week. One reason is, me and other kids like to have longer weekends, to relax our brains. We can also study on our own if we want to. The 2nd reason is, we get less time with our families but sometimes kids don't want to be at home. This can go both ways for those reasons. Another reason is, for me and other kids that live on a ranch, we have to work on our off time from school. We have to do all kinds of things such as, building/ repairing fence, clean house, feed cattle, and especially in the winter check/ break ice in the tanks. The last reason is, for me and the other kids that play sports, we have games on Friday, and we won't be able to attend class for at least half a day. It also depends on how far the game is from our home town. We will still miss at least the last class or two. These are the reasons why I do and don't want to have 5-days of school.

From: [Trinity Grant](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Talking about moving to a 5 day week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:40:32 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM Public Education Department (PED)

I'm a student at Logan School and I think going to a 5-day week is a poor decision. By what I mean is that some of my classmates and teachers work on farms or own one. Which adding another we could lose a lot of students and teacher, this would not be good for our school. Plus, we are one of the spotlight schools tied with Los Alamos and a 93% graduating rate, with a 4-day week. I have read about "Debate Continues over PED proposal to Reduce Four day- school weeks in New Mexico." There are some good debates but what stuck to me is that they talk about how 4-day weeks allow students to have more sleep and time with family. There is a report that says sleep helps with grade and well-being. To read more about the research which is short go to <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nickmorrison/2019/02/11/more-sleep-means-better-grades-for-students/?sh=fb2b79d50159>. Also being a 9th grader, I only have a few years left with my family before college and adding another day will lessen my time to spend with my family. So please do not add a 5-day week.

From: [Tyler Batson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:41:48 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department

I'm a student at Logan municipal schools and I very much disagree with an expansion of the school week. I'm also a student athlete and having to balance out work and going to practice can get pretty complicating. Not only does the three-day weekend help many kids in stress relax and have more time to get the work done that has been assigned to them. after the weekdays it is amazing to be able to relax and do things that I can't do on the weekdays. having the extra day would also take time away from family members.

By: Tyler Batson

From: [Aliyah Garcia](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Unite for local control of MVCS
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:57:46 AM

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"The proposed calendar mandate strips away the essential element of local control, undermining our ability to make decisions that best serve the Mesa Vista Schools. Our schools are small, and our needs are unique; we deserve the right to make decisions specific to our community. Local control has allowed Mesa Vista Schools to flourish, ensuring that decisions about our school calendar remain in the hands of those who know our community best — us. We are making gains and should be allowed to continue guiding our schools through our unique calendar.

From: [Arthur Melendres](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Elder, Scott](#); channell.segura@aps.edu
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment to Proposed Rule 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:58:40 AM
Attachments: [Letter to PED with objection to Proposed Rule \(W4931346x7A92D\).pdf](#)

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EXTERNAL EMAIL: Please do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and are expecting this message and know the content is safe.

Dear Policy and Legislative Affairs Division

Attached are comments by the Albuquerque Public Schools to the Proposed Rule 6.10.5. We request that you give the comments careful consideration with a view to withdrawing the Proposed Rule or modifying it to allow among other changes that Professional Instruction can be embedded in the regular work day.

Regards,



Arthur Melendres

amelendres@modrall.com

Modrall Sperling | www.modrall.com

P.O. Box 2168 | Albuquerque, NM 87103-2168

500 4th St. NW, Ste. 1000 | Albuquerque, NM 87102

D: 505.848.1805 | O: 505.848.1800 | C: 505.321.5498



MODRALL SPERLING

L A W Y E R S

December 14, 2023

Arthur D. Melendres
Tel: 505.848.1805
Fax: 505.848.9710
art.melendres@modrall.com

By email to: Rule.Feedback@ped.nm.gov
Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Re: Comments on Proposed rule changes to NMAC 6.10.5 (calendar requirements)

Dear Policy and Legislative Affairs Division:

On behalf of our client, the Albuquerque Public Schools ("APS"), we write to object to the proposed changes to NMAC 6.10.5.

The Proposed Rule conflicts with §22-2-8.1 NMSA 1978 which provides that

[S]tudents shall be in school programs, exclusive of lunch, for a minimum of one thousand one hundred forty instructional hours per year, except half-day kindergarten, which shall have five hundred fifty instructional hours per year.

The statute goes on to provide that

Up to sixty instructional hours per school year for elementary grades and thirty instructional hours for middle and high school grades may be used for professional work hours, which may be embedded during the course of a normal school day.

The proposed rule change ignores these statutory requirements. First, it appears to require one thousand one hundred forty hours of instructional time exclusive of "professional time." This is the result of the new 6.10.5.8(H) which says that "time shall not be double counted as both instructional hours for student learning and professional work hours." That would mean that professional time would not be embedded during the course of the school day, and it could also mean that professional time could not be a part of the "instructional hours," contrary to the express language of the statute.

Administrative regulations do not supersede statutes. It is axiomatic that an agency such as the Public education Department cannot by regulation overrule a statute. As the Supreme Court held in *Jones v. Employment Services Div. of Human Services Dept.*, 1980-NMSC-120, ¶ 3, 95 N.M. 97, 99, 619 P.2d 542, 544:

Modrall Sperling
Roehl Harris & Sisk P.A.

500 Fourth Street NW
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New Mexico 87102

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To: Policy and Legislative Affairs Division, NMPED
December 14, 2023
Page 2

If there is a conflict or inconsistency between statutes and regulations promulgated by an agency, the language of the statutes shall prevail. An agency by regulation cannot overrule a specific statute.

See also, *Tri-State Generation and Transmission Assn, Inc. v. New Mexico Public Regulation Comm'n*, 2015-NMSC-013, ¶23, 347 P.3d 274; see also, *State v. Bowden*, 2010-NMCA-070, ¶ 10, 148 N.M. 850, 852, 242 P.3d 417, 419 (“In the event of a conflict or inconsistency between a statute and a regulation, we interpret the statute to take precedence.”)

As the Legislature recognized in enacting the new §22-2-8.1, additional instructional time requires that teachers have time to do their professional work if student outcomes are to be improved. Districts need the flexibility to determine how to provide professional development and collaboration time for teachers in alignment with individual districts’ needs and goals, and that may require that professional time be embedded in the instructional day.

Implementing the proposed new rule will result in a longer school year even after taking into account the additional days APS already added for the 2023-2024 school year. APS has polled the community and determined that the community does not support adding additional days to the existing school calendar.

The Proposed Rule should be withdrawn.

Very truly yours,



Arthur D. Melendres

cc: Superintendent Scott Elder
Chief of Schools Channell Segura

From: [Stephanie Haaser](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:00:10 AM

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Please stop with the last minute rule changes that schools have to implement immediately. We haven't even seen the impacts on last years' changes and schools are still struggling with those. Have you ever been in a school and experienced the teacher shortage? How about that labor shortage to manage the school lunch requirement?

Teacher's needs breaks. They need planning time. Stop overloading them with more and more requirements. You're going to run all our teachers out of this State.

Further, students need a break.

Please reject this rule change. Give teachers a break and stop asking more of them!

Stephanie Haaser
Parent - Los Alamos Public Schools

From: [Scott Crespin](#)
To: [Notification, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule notification request
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:00:43 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am a parent of a teacher and a grandmother of 5 students. I saw a change right off the bat when they started 4 day school week. With their sports on the weekends they were ready to start school on Monday . Seeing my daughter working with students M-T she actually has Friday to get ready for the next week . How does a teacher juggle work and family ? The time I see her put into her classroom and students is unbelievable how could she do this working five days? I think we have recruited more teachers having a 4 day work week as an incentive. Also, it is cost saving to have a 4 day week, which is a great bonus. I think if we went to year round school or 5 day weeks, most students would quit and either get GED or learn on line. We have students who need their summers to work and earn money for their family. I cannot understand why this is even an issue let's go to 4 day school week across the state and collect data for a couple of years and see the difference before you make a decision. I think it would improve morale and scores .

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Karsyn Jordan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] We Need Support
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:08:59 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I see that we are wanting to change PD days into instructional days. As it is, teachers already do not have enough time to plan effective lessons, make copies, collaborate, look at data, etc. These PD days offered some extra time, and it would still be nice to have more. If the issue is we need to have the children in the classroom more to improve academics, ATTENDANCE is what needs to be fixed first. The attendance rate is low and needs to be improved. We need to get support from PED to have the attendance rate fixed, not take days away from us.

Thank you.

--



From: [Margaret "Maggie" Moore](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: Proposed Rule Change 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:20:20 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please do not enact the proposed rule change for 6.10.5 NMAC!!!

The proposed rule changes appear to have been written by someone who has not recently experienced elementary education in New Mexico, as I currently do. The new rule drastically reduces the amount of time that teachers have to adequately prepare so that students can have the best possible presentation of curriculum. This amount of time is already being eaten away at by inservice trainings, meetings, etc. Whittling away from it any more will reduce the quality of education that students get and might even cause some teachers to quit altogether. I see teachers quit and go to other higher paying jobs at the conclusion of every school year. They are sick and tired of being overly controlled by rules like this. My school is already having a hard time finding enough staff and substitutes. Imagine how much harder this rule change will make our jobs for us?

Please do not do this.

Maggie Moore
she/her/hers

Mountain Elementary School



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Kennetta Lamay](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:21:52 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

Many rural school districts are using the current rule and for many districts it is working positively. This was first started in 1980 and for each district that uses the 4 day school week or the allotted hours of time in school. I know that this is saving operation costs for those districts who already struggle with funding for additional teachers, overhead, hourly contracts. Most districts are still struggling with attendance and failure/graduation rates. Adding days and additional time to the calendar will only add to this problem. Many highschool students use the 4 day school week to obtain employment 3 days a week. What has dramatically impacted the New Mexico schools in general is not providing adequate educational needs during the two school years that we did not allow students to attend school in person due to COVID. Additionally, taking the option away from the Districts, School Board, and the public to operate as they see most adequate seems to be a violation of American rights. The system is not broken, quit trying to fix things that are not broken.

From: [Angelo Sciolì](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:27:58 AM

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Dear NM, Public Education Department,

I am against the movement because we have been on a 4-day school week for a while. If you decide to change this the students will miss school because of extracurricular activities. It would also cause the bus personnel would have to drive an extra thirty-three days for the schools that only go for four days. So, therefore I am against the movement because schools that go for four days have better test scores.

Sincerely,
Angelo

From: [Bailey McEwen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NM Public Education Department
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:30:00 AM

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Dear NM, Public Education Department,

I feel as though most New Mexico schools have been going four days a week for many years. As students struggle going to school for the four-day school week as it is. As a student attending a school that goes four days, I have realized that with our schedule, is busy as it is, adding another day would be stressful. There are many sport games on Fridays, which would make it pointless to have school on Fridays. As almost all high school students would miss that whole day. As a student, going to school on Fridays would not benefit me as I hold a part-time job, and it's hard enough to get work hours during the week.

Bailey
Highschool Senior

From: [Bryce Merrill](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Dear NM Public Education Department
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:31:25 AM

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My Name Is Bryce Merrill I go To school at Logan, NM (Logan High School) I'm a Senior at LHS and Teachers Have Talked about adding an extra school day, I do not think that the school days should be changed, Small schools have proven by our test scores that we don't need an extra school day!.

Bryce H Merrill
LHS Student
301 N. 2nd St.

From: [Barbara Sultemeier](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:32:31 AM

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Mr. Romero,

Corona Public School was one of the first schools to go to a 4 day week back in the 1990's. This change will disrupt our successfully established school calendar and our thriving educational system. Take a look at our school reading and math scores, you will see that we meet or exceed the state mandate. We have been ranked as the 3rd best school in the state behind Los Alamos and Texico.

Your approach to make a one size fits all is deeply flawed, the manner in which available instructional time is used may be more important than the way in which that time is scheduled. We have grave concerns that this change will lead to the loss of local control over Corona's educational decisions, drastically change our unique needs and exceptional practices in our school district. Rural schools do not need to be "fixed" as we are not "broken".

Best regards,

Barbara T. Sultemeier
Corona Public School Board Member
Former Business Manager
Parent of a Corona HS Graduate

From: [Ross Hastie](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:33:25 AM

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Dear NM Public Education Department

I think this idea of a 5 day week is not a good idea. I think the 4 day week has worked just fine for years. Schools that go 4 days a week have prove to be just as smart or smarter the schools that go 5 days a week. With only going 4 days a week I am able to do so much more and make things happen Fri Sat Sun the solving for X. if anything maybe you guys need more schooling because clearly this 5 day school week is by far one of the most stupid ideas you guys have come up with.

From: [Angelica Guerra](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:37:41 AM

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Dear NM public education department,

I do NOT agree with changing our schedule, that's like fixing something that didn't need to be fixed. For the schools who are known for sports having school on Friday would be pointless because of how many games we have on the weekdays. Instead of changing our school schedule, maybe fix how we learn and flip the classroom.

Sincerely, Angelica

From: [Jesus Moreno-Cortes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School 5 day note
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:55:06 AM

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Dear, New Mexico Public of Education,

I Jesus disagree with your statement about adding another day to school. Why is it because there is too much work for a student to handle and 4 is enough. And some kids have work on Friday. Just throwing in one more day is time consuming even with 4 is enough. Adding another day will destroy the freedom of the kids. And some parents Don't have time to drop-off kids at school.

Sincerely, Jesus

From: [Cheryl Scott](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day weeks
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:00:31 PM

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Four day weeks would be ok IF the district would utilize the 4 days for instruction. Today's example 12/14, Roy called a two hour delay because of snow, then cancelled completely in favor of remote learning, but the basketball teams were able to leave and travel to a ballgame, leaving at 11. It's being abused at the expense of the students. I'd like to say this is an isolated incident, but sadly it's a common thing in Roy district. I taught in Roy School for 29 years and we were held accountable for instructional time, right down to the hours. Time to increase the school days in my opinion so maybe there's more instructional time.

Cheryl Scott

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Maddy Kruse](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:06:10 PM

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Please don't do this to us.

I am a public education employee of the state, imploring you to stop making unnecessary changes to our calendar and leave things as they are. I am a masters level professional in New Mexico, whose degree is not in education, but I choose to work and give back to the children in our state as a school counselor. Each time our calendar is extended I am closer to leaving education altogether and never looking back, there are not many benefits working in public education now that our time off continues to decrease.

We are dealing with overwhelming issues of poverty, violence, mental health needs and drug usage in our city that impact our children on every level, including educationally, and we do not have the resources within the school to make a big enough impact to address those changes. Put your time and effort and money into that! Simply adding a handful of more days of the same thing is not going to change any outcomes.

I have multiple options for employment outside of education, the main reason I chose to work for the school system is for the time off. Now that that is being taken away, each time that the PED decides to add days to our calendar instead of addressing our educational needs at the root of the issues, I as well as so many of my colleagues are one step closer to being out of the door and never returning to education. The largest benefit of being a school employee is the time off, adding more days of the same thing that isn't working, isn't going to make a difference. Keep the law how it currently is. Teachers can better use those days that are already in place as collaboration time, and they deserve to enjoy a long break in the summer to return as their best selves. Have you sat in a room with 25 kids lately?

You're not giving anyone any real help by changing the law, keep the hardworking educators in mind, as there are already too many teaching and counseling vacancies in our state.

Madeline Kruse
APS Middle School Counselor

From: [Teresa Miranda](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Do not force schools to 180 day calendar
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:12:41 PM

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With regards to 6.10.5 NMAC, i am writing to urge that you NOT force all NM schools to adhere to a 180 day calendar.

Local school districts and charter schools can best determine what calendar will work for their communities.

It is an overreach of your authority to force this change through your propsed rule making.

Thank you!

Teresa R. Vigil
Rio rancho resident

From: [Albert Spungen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:14:07 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a teacher of 47 years I can assure you that the changes you propose will not make a positive difference for our students and will result in driving good educators away from the state. Let's get serious. The reasons for poor educational outcomes in this state are obvious yet your body continues to ignore them and redirect the public's attention. Poverty and lack of parental involvement are the chief causes and you know that. Your band aid solutions do nothing to address those problems so you make teachers, who are already overworked and underpaid, suffer the brunt of your foolishness solely because we are easy pickins. How about if you try to positively contribute to our children's education by asking teachers first instead of throwing garbage at us for your own political purposes.

I wish I could end this with a "sincerely," but your continued lack of seriousness does not warrant one.

--

Albert M. Spungen



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Christine Engelbrecht](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:14:07 PM

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Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I teach English and Reading at Los Alamos High School. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 187 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students on a block schedule, meaning that students take seven classes per semester with one class meeting daily and the other six classes meeting every other day. Due to this schedule, our students are able to gather most of the credits they need to graduate by the end of their junior school year, using their senior year for their few remaining requirements and extra enrichment like internships, jobs, tutoring, and other post-secondary preparation opportunities. At this time, the graduation rate at Los Alamos High School, largely due to the flexibility of our schedule and number of opportunities for students to pursue their interests while still meeting the requirements of the state, has risen to 97%.

The proposed 6.10.5.6. A requires students to be enrolled in four classes per day and does not appear to accommodate the fact that our last class of our day is half as long as the other classes and split over a two day period, considering that a half class. This means that we currently hold 3.5 classes per day at LAHS and would have to reenvision our schedule to have 4 completely different classes per day in our two day block rotation, totaling 8 classes per semester. Increasing our students' class loads to 8 classes per semester would be problematic for our students because it would increase their work loads, squeezing out what time after school that they currently have for sports, activities, volunteering, and recreation with friends and family in favor of homework. When school becomes incompatible with students' lives in this way, it is more likely that our students will drop out of high school to escape unnecessary expectations that threaten their life balance and overwhelm them with stress. In addition, increasing our students' class loads to 8 classes per semester would be problematic for our staff because more classes would have to be created in order to accommodate this schedule. It may be difficult for the district to hire additional teachers to take on these classes due to Los Alamos' remote location, high cost of housing, and low availability of housing. As a result, our existing stretched-thin teachers may feel pressure to teach more than a 1.0 FTE so that each of these new classes with all a qualified instructor. Teachers who feel that more and more responsibilities are thrust upon them in order to make our education system functional are more likely to leave the profession due to burn out. Another possible outcome is that teachers who are approaching retirement age may choose to retire on time due to this additional pressure without comparable benefits when they otherwise might have stayed in the profession longer. I think we can all agree that while time in school is important, the quality of the schooling is as or more important, and the quality of our students'

education would not be benefited by a void of highly qualified teachers in our district. Subsequently, staffing our classrooms with unlicensed and not highly qualified teachers in lieu of qualified teachers will not help to bring our district or NMPED closer to its goal of our students earning higher math and reading scores.

The proposed 6.10.5.6. A would also greatly impact the flexibility that our senior students have in their schedules because it would require students to be enrolled in four credit-bearing classes per day even if they do not need to take four classes in order to graduate on time. Right now, seniors may select an "unsupervised period" or "supervised period," which are not credit-bearing, if they have completed the required credits, are currently completing any senior courses required to graduate, are generally doing well academically as measured by a GPA requirement, and are on track for graduation. Forcing these seniors to take classes instead of unsupervised periods would impact our students in that they would lose the option to use this time to accomplish their own goals or pursue their own interests. Yes, the proposed 6.10.5.6. A change would accommodate LAPS students who choose to work in town or arrange for an internship, but it would not provide flexibility for the students who want to use this time to pursue other goals. For some students those goals and interests are to use these unsupervised and supervised periods as time built into the school day to work on homework, apply for scholarships, or tend to the many paperwork tasks associated with applying for college or a technical program. If they feel that this time has been squeezed out of their schedules, when will they complete their homework? Apply for college? Fill out the FAFSA and apply for scholarships? This impact is a problem because for some students, it would have the unintended consequence of failing grades or a lack of ascension to career-preparation opportunities. Additionally, the 6.10.5.6. A proposed change would impact staffing as well. Currently, approximately 480 students are taking a supervised or unsupervised free period per semester at LAHS. In order to put those students in credit-bearing courses instead, 20 classes of 24 students a piece would need to be created. If a full time teacher teaches five classes, then four new full time teachers would need to be hired to teach those classes. In addition to the aforementioned hiring struggles in our school district, our school also does not have the physical room to house four additional teachers. Additional portable classrooms would need to be brought in with additional buildings built in the future while our district needs to focus its funds and energy on rebuilding Pinon Elementary School, Chamisa Elementary School, and Mountain Elementary School, all sites that are older than our high school buildings and in various states of disrepair, demonstrating much more need for renovations and new construction.

Los Alamos would likely have the opportunity to apply for exceptions to this rule and no rule is absolute without being balanced by the people's opportunity to appeal, but the underlying question is that if this proposed rule could make students drop out and staff leave the profession as a consequence, is that rule serving the children of New Mexico well? If this proposed rule causes school districts to need to devote their attention to legally fighting requirements that do not better the lives of students in their district rather than focusing their attention inward towards their students' learning, is New Mexico Public Education Department fulfilling its role of supporting school districts so that they can best serve their students? If this proposed rule takes away

the flexibility that communities deem necessary for their students, is the New Mexico Public Education Department fulfilling its role of providing an education that all New Mexico students will find meaningful?

To best serve our students and staff, I ask that you remove the language that requires that "Secondary students shall attend a minimum of four class periods per instructional day" from proposed NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements."

Thank you for your consideration,
Christine

Christine Engelbrecht, M.Ed., NBCT
Los Alamos High School | AP Language & Composition, College Skills Reading Lab, and Academic Skills Lab
New Mexico Certified Teacher | English, Grades 7-12 and Reading, K-12



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This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Sisy Stauss](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Jon Stauss](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I am a teacher and I agree with the extended days of instruction
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:17:17 PM

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To whom it might concern,

I'm an elementary school teacher with about 17 years of experience and I agree with extending the number of days of instruction. I have thought in Title I schools for about 15 years, and I have experienced how we can absolutely use more contact time with our students. In the past I have hosted clubs, offered after school tutoring and taught summer school, because I believe I can contribute to my students' growth as people and as scholars by providing more time, more experiences.

I have spent the last 2 years at a TOPS school in APS, with extended number of school days, and extended hours, and I believe more time does make a difference.

I hope you are able to make it happen, along with free breakfast and lunches for the students.

Thank you,

Sisy Stauss

From: [Sherrie Ray](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Bruhn, Johnna](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regulation 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:17:49 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this email in heavy opposition to the attempt to revise regulation 6.10.5 and remove the option for school districts to have a four-day school week.

I attended Mosquero Municipal Schools in the northeastern corner of New Mexico from Pre-K through 12th grade. After graduation, I attended Texas Tech University where I double majored in Agricultural Education and Agricultural Communications and graduated Summa Cum Laude. After graduating with my undergraduate degree, I lived in Ghana, West Africa, for a year implementing School Based Agricultural Education programs in a senior high school. I am currently pursuing a master's degree at Texas A&M University on full assistantship conducting a poetic autoethnographic study identifying factors limiting and contributing to the longitudinal success of School Based Agricultural Education programs in rural areas of Ghana. In conjunction with my research, I am managing a USDA Foreign Agricultural Service-funded grant at the Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture and Development.

As an alumnus from a four-day school week, I can assure you that the structure of our school week did not hinder my educational fortitude or ability to be successful in life. I can say the same for my classmates as 100% of my high school graduating class attended a postsecondary institution for a minimum of two years and each of them are gainfully employed.

As a scholar in the world of academia, I have spent hours at conferences, seminars, and in meetings discussing the structure of our education systems. Please do your research before making the decision to restrict school districts from having a four-day school week and read the context of all studies before jumping to conclusions.

From a logistical and economical standpoint, rural school districts need Fridays to travel to town, go to doctors appointments, get groceries, and help on their family's agricultural operations. Coming from a rural area, we do not have the luxury to get the basic necessities we need for life 10 minutes down the road. Growing up, I traveled 217 miles for the dentist, 155 miles for my primary care doctor, and 100 miles to get to the nearest Walmart. If you do the math, I don't think our students will be able to make their dentist appointments during the lunch hour. I would expect attendance rates to dramatically decrease.

As someone considering returning to the classroom to teach after completing my degree, I can assure you that the decisions you make will largely impact individuals' decisions to return to New Mexico. I know many young teachers considering returning to New Mexico from Texas, but we all agree that we will not be moving back if all districts return to a five day school week. Teacher retention is already at an all-time low. I would consider finding ways to improve retention, rather than hinder it.

Many businesses are moving to a four-day work week because studies show higher productivity Monday through Thursday and a better sense of work-life balance and self-efficacy. In the last year, 76 school districts in Texas moved to a four-day school week. Please consider moving forward as a state – not backward.

Put your trust in the local school districts to evaluate what makes the most sense for their students and teachers. One size does not fit all. The quality of time spent in a classroom far surpasses the quantity. Please be mindful of the long-term implications this decision could have on our rural areas.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me via email or at 575-447-1700.

Best,
Sherrie Ray

Sherrie Ray

Program Coordinator - IAEFP Guatemala

B.S. Texas Tech University

M.S. Student Texas A&M University

AGSV Building, Suite 201

sherrie.ray@tamu.edu

From: [Adeliah Candelaria](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: School calendar change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:20:14 PM

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This is a farce! The PED requires instructional HOURS, not days. The four day school actually offers students and teachers more class time on a daily basis. The kids have longer school days and longer class periods with the four day school week. The reasons for adopting the four day school week still exist. The four day school week was adopted so that families in rural areas could have a week day to schedule appointments and for school to schedule most sports events outside of school hours. This actually decreases the number of absences greatly. The PED also needs to really examine school performance. The rural schools with four day school weeks are some of the highest performing schools in the state. The old adage "If it ain't broke don't fix it." certainly applies here. Kids are struggling with burn out. Kids hate school. Many kids are working in the trades by the time they're 16 years old and the four day school week provides them a chance to work, earn money, contribute to society.

This rule will likely cause higher burn out rates. Is the PED forgetting that these are children we're talking about? They can only handle so much and then the ability to take in more knowledge is negated. I worked in the schools. I saw children shut down, give up, and brought to tears on a daily basis simply because they were completely overwhelmed and could not handle the amount of instruction and work that is required by the state. These were students of all abilities in very well performing schools.

The four day school allows many students to obtain employment. This allows them a head start in the "real" world, earns them valuable skills and often they can earn certifications in numerous trades. Sadly, in this state and this economy many families need this little bit of additional income. If the state requires a four day school week there is guaranteed to be a big increase in drop out rates because many students need to or would rather work than be in school an additional day each week.

As a former school employee and a parent that has experience with both four and five day school week, this rule is just a shot in the foot that it going to be a devastating for some of the highest performing schools in the state.

Student looking to advance on to college also benefit from a four day school week. Many colleges operate on a four day schedule or students select classes that don't meet on Fridays so they have that extra day to work or to spend time with friends or family. In this day and age many, many professions are moving toward a four day work week. These are professions ranging from professors, doctors, contractors and small business owners all over the nation. If we as a community along with the PED are really invested in improving our children's education and preparing them for adulthood, whether that be entering the workforce or going to college, we have to admit that the states educational system is broken. Kids are miserable. Families are struggling. School just isn't a priority when families need every person in the household eligible to work working, just to pay the bills. PED needs to look at these schools performance, what the kids are doing with that extra day off. Survey the high school kids. See what they would prefer or what they feel they need from their school and their education.

Many years ago, when I was in school, must kids enjoyed school, worked to get good grades, got an education that was practical and applicable to real life. Generally there were only a few kids that hated school. Students today struggle. Very few feel that their education is beneficial, many would rather work and many feel school is a waste. When person watches the students getting to school in the morning it is plain to see the attitude of sheer defeat in the kids posture

and expression. Making these kids suffer an additional day each week in a broken and dysfunctional educational system is not going to increase the states nation ranking. Again, look at how those schools with four day school weeks perform. That alone shows that the number of days per school years does not determine school success or increase performance.

There is no proof that five day school weeks increase performance. It's actually the adverse and will likely only bring these high performing schools down.

Adeliah Candelaria

From: [Rebekah Ormand](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; aftnmaction@gmail.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Objection to proposed rule changes to the school calendar requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:20:47 PM
Attachments: [PED Letter.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my attached letter expressing my concerns about the proposed rule changes. Thank you!

--

Rebekah Ormand

SPED EA Cliff Elementary

Rebekah Ormand
PO Box 1465
Silver City, NM 88062
rormand@silverschools.org
575-649-0545

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: ***Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department***

I am writing this letter as a concerned parent of a student attending Cliff Schools in the Silver Schools Community, as well as a Cliff Schools staff member. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours. I strongly oppose these changes, as they pose a direct threat to the educational system that has proven successful for our community and, most importantly, for our children.

1. Unwarranted Extension of Instructional Days: The proposal to increase the school year to between 181 to 205 instructional days, requiring at least 1,140 instructional hours annually, is not in line with the legislative intent of House Bill 130. Our current calendar of 173 student days has been effective, and any extension threatens to disrupt not just our schedules, but the well-being and academic progress of our students. I believe that increasing days would only increase burnout and create poorer mental and physical health of both staff and students, as well as behavioral challenges and incidents.
2. Disruption of the Four-Day Week Model: Our community has thrived under the four-day school week model. The requirement that over 50% of school weeks be five days long undermines a system that has not only been successful but also favored by the community. This change seems to disregard the unique needs and preferences of our district, particularly of Cliff schools. I have been willing to commute 30 minutes each way this school year to be a staff member at this rural school, and it has been a very positive change for my daughter and myself. The positive educational and social environment and the 4-day weeks were a major factor in my decision to apply to work at and bring my daughter to Cliff, and I feel honored to have been hired here. If it were not for this opportunity, I would have felt compelled to pursue a homeschooling or private school option for my daughter's education.
3. Bias in Funding and Accreditation: The new funding criteria and accreditation rules that favor five-day weeks could severely disadvantage our successful four-day model. This bias could lead to unnecessary financial and administrative pressures on our schools, detracting from their primary focus on education.
4. Neglect of Essential Professional Work Time: Excluding planning and training from instructional hours fails to recognize the comprehensive educational approach that is vital for the success of our educators and students alike. Teachers need this time for effective lesson planning, collaboration, and professional development. I chose to not

complete a dossier and move to a level 2 teaching license last year, due to the immense pressures of trying to complete LETRs training, SPED paperwork, and other training, as well as being a single mom. This decision led to me not having a NM teaching license and not being able to reapply for one for 3 years. My physical, emotional, and mental health were being compromised due to the pressures of all these requirements with no support or provision of any extra time to complete the ever-increasing demands of the PED. Having some 4-day weeks might have enabled me to be able to complete the dossier and continue to teach in a field in which teachers are in very short supply, Special Education. There are many Special Education teaching positions that I could have filled, both in the Silver Consolidated and surrounding districts, some of which are currently being filled with long-term subs and alternative licensure candidates. I would like to eventually pursue regaining my teaching license, but I also desire to know that if I were to do so I would be supported and my well-being and opinion would be respected and taken into account and I am struggling to trust that this will be the case.

5. Lack of Evidence for Improved Outcomes: There is no conclusive research to suggest that merely increasing instructional time guarantees better student outcomes. The success of a school should be measured by a multitude of factors, including student engagement, class sizes, the quality of teaching, and community support-area in which Cliff schools excel. My daughter, who is on an IEP, is getting a much more effective and balanced education in Cliff's smaller class sizes and positive environment, and having Fridays off allows us to concentrate on other areas of a complete education: driving practice, sewing, cooking, and other household responsibilities, as well as time for more positive social interactions. I echo the concerns of our legislator, who have pointed out the flaws in PED's rule-making process and the lack of effective communication and research backing these changes. The proposed rules not only bypass the legislative process but also ignore the voice and needs of our local community.

In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and maintain the current educational structure that has served our community well. As a parent, my primary concern is the well-being and academic success of my child, and I believe that the proposed changes are a step backward in achieving these goals.

Sincerely,
Rebekah Ormand
SPED EA Cliff Elementary

From: [Lisabeth Lueninghoener](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:27:36 PM

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Please do not pass this rule. Please allow districts to set their own times and to have time to fully implement prior changes before needing to make new ones. This is not measurable because the target keeps moving.

Please consider allowing for districts who are meeting standards or making progress towards standards to have more room for self governance. I taught in Chicago Public Schools and we were absolutely kneecapped by universal application of rules that allowed for no teacher or school autonomy.

Treat teachers as professionals and use the money that would be required to fund this rule to instead increase teacher and staff pay. Fully funded schools produce better outcomes.

Lisabeth Lueninghoener
Los Alamos, New Mexico

From: [Crystal Dennis](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] nmac
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:30:21 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Crystal Dennis
5054096244*

From: [Jamie](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed changes
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:30:39 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Jamie Barela*

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jade Tattersall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed rule change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:31:27 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely yours,
Jade Hernandez

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [Chelanna O'Brien](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please keep the 4 day week for schools that already use it.
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:31:44 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I am writing to give public comment on the proposed requirement for schools to operate a 5-day week. My children attend a charter school that has had a four day schedule for their entire educational career. This is beneficial to my children because they are academically exhausted by the end of the week and we use the 5th day to focus on hands-on learning.

I also believe in the integral autonomy of charter schools to set their own schedule. We chose our school because of the schedule and if you require a 5-day week, that takes away options from families. Our school does operate with the same number of instructional hours because we have a longer day and a longer school year, so not having a 5th day per week does not mean that my children are getting less instructional time.

I feel very strongly that a 4-day week is beneficial to some learners, it may not work for everyone, but it's good for families to have a choice.

Thank you,
Chelanna

From: [Los Alamos STEAM Lab](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:31:54 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Los Alamos STEAM Lab runs after school programming in Los Alamos and will be negatively impacted by the passing of this rule. Not only that, we feel our students will be as well.

Los Alamos Public Schools have half days on Wednesdays. This has allowed for elementary students to pursue activities and interests or just plain leisure for a half day in a very busy, very academic town. For our many neuro diverse students this respite is essential to their mental health and well being.

Please do not pass this rule and eliminate this opportunity.

--

Lisabeth Lueninghoener
Robot Whisperer and Math Witch
Los Alamos STEAM Lab, LLC
Los Alamos, NM 87544
<https://lasteamlab.com/>

From: [sasha chavez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AKCS
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:32:55 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Sasha A Chavez*

From: [guadalupe herrera](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Change to 4-Day
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:33:27 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Also, as a single mother who already struggles to find a workplace that will work with schedule is hard enough. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

I respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Guadalupe Herrera

From: [Trish Ingersoll](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] rule.feedback@ped.nm.gov
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:33:29 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Trish Ingersoll



Virus-free. www.avg.com

From: [Lauren Huichan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:34:00 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

This school and it's ways have changed my Childs life and the way she is able to learn and interact with her peers. Being special needs/hypersensitivity my child needs her routine to continue as well as would highly negatively impact her Dr's appointment days and therapy days which are every Friday. My child's medical care is high priority as well as her education. To change her lifestyle and routine would greatly impact us in a negative way.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change. Especially for charter.

Sincerely,

Lauren Huichan

From: [Stef Saccoccia](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Change to 5 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:34:43 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Stefani Saccoccia

From: [K. Padgett](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:35:02 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Kristen Padgett*

From: [Randy Lawson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School schedule change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:38:06 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Randy Lawson*

From: [Randi Gatlin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:38:40 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Randi Gatlin*

From: [Alexis Jaramillo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:41:04 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Charlie Jaramillo*

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Missy Wauneka](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment for Proposed Changes to Rule NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:41:37 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

I teach at Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our families. The 4-day school week provides our families the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development, which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Missy Wauneka NBCT
8th Grade STEM Teacher*

From: [Rebecca Lynn](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:43:11 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Rebecca*

From: [Margo Batha](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:43:41 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Dr. Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I teach English Language Arts at Los Alamos High School. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 187 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students on a block schedule, meaning that students take seven classes per semester with one class meeting daily and the other six classes meeting every other day. Due to this schedule, our students are able to gather most of the credits they need to graduate by the end of their junior school years, using their senior years for their few remaining requirements and extra enrichment like dual enrollment classes, internships, jobs, tutoring, and other post-secondary preparation opportunities. At this time, the graduation rate at Los Alamos High School, largely due to the flexibility of our schedule and number of opportunities for students to pursue their interests while still meeting the requirements of the state, has risen to 97%.

The proposed 6.10.5.6. A requires students to be enrolled in four classes per day and does not appear to accommodate the fact that our last class of our day is half as long as the other classes and split over a two day period, considering that a half class. This means that we currently hold 3.5 classes per day at LAHS and would have to re envision our schedule to have 4 completely different classes per day in our two day block rotation, totalling 8 classes per semester. This would be a problem for students because the two day block schedule reduces stress and the block 90 minute period allows for greater depth of learning, a critical component for college-bound learners.

This change would be problematic for staff because this mandate appears to be completely unfunded placing the burden of funding on our already understaffed and underfunded school districts. Our contracted bargaining agreement would need to be completely overhauled in the midst of an already short time frame for turning in a district budget and calendar to PED.

Los Alamos High School is already understaffed with ballooning class sizes. This mandate would exacerbate the staffing shortage. The way this rule is written we would have to completely change our master schedule and hire more teachers to teach more classes. Our real need is to reduce the number of students in the classes we already teach to ensure that students are receiving high quality instruction.

The proposed 6.10.5.6. A would also greatly impact the flexibility that our senior students

have in their schedules because this rule essentially increases the number of classes required for graduation. New Mexico already has one of the highest graduation credits requirements in the United States. This impact is a problem because for some students, it would have the unintended consequence of reducing their ability to use their abilities in the work force and by taking dual credit and AP classes.

Additionally, the 6.10.5.6. A proposed change would impact staff in that we would have to work more hours but the time we need for professional development and training in high quality instructional materials would be reduced. Student instruction will suffer under this new rule.

I ask NM PED to reconsider implementing NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements. There is no solid data from either the NM PED or from national studies that state that student achievement will increase with even more seat time in the classroom. Students will benefit far more from clear attendance policies that address the root causes of chronic absenteeism, reducing class sizes, reducing the workload of Special Education teachers, and reducing class sizes.

Thank you for your consideration,
Margo Batha, NBCT
Pronouns: she, her, hers
MAT, Teacher Leadership
English teacher, Grades 11 and 12
Coach, Los Alamos Hilltalkers Speech and Debate Team
(505) 663-2651



"Go forward, attempt great things, accomplish great things."--Mary Lyon

"No matter how I feel, I get up, dress up, and show up for life."--Regina Brett

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This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Steve Scott](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:44:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Steve Scott*

From: [Kristy Ferguson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:45:14 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Kristy Ferguson*

From: [Nicole Gonzales](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5- day week rule
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:49:08 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Nicole Gonzales

From: [Carrie Rodriguez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Charter School - Change in Instructional Time Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:49:20 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am currently employed by Alice King Community School, a charter school in Albuquerque, where students attend 4 days/week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have significant, negative implications for our charter, our students, families, and our staff.

Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This change would also remove VITAL professional development days for our staff that are used for curriculum development, among other necessary training components, which would also negatively impact our Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

**This change would contribute to a "Cookie Cutter" educational foundation which is what Charter schools are NOT! We work extremely hard and follow all mandates placed upon us. This change would be disrespectful to all educators across the State of NM.*

I respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department DECLINE to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Thank you, in advance, for your support of all NM educators.
Carrie Rodriguez*

--

Carrie Rodriguez, MA, CCC-SLP
Special Education Coordinator
Alice King Community School
8100 Mountain Rd PL NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110
Phone: 505-344-0746 Fax: 505-344-0789

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVILEGE NOTICE

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From: [LouiseFoliot](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:51:47 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I teach French at Los Alamos High School. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 187 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students on a block schedule, meaning that students take seven classes per semester with one class meeting daily and the other six classes meeting every other day. Due to this schedule, our students are able to gather most of the credits they need to graduate by the end of their junior school years, using their senior years for their few remaining requirements and extra enrichment like internships, jobs, tutoring, and other post-secondary preparation opportunities. At this time, the graduation rate at Los Alamos High School, largely due to the flexibility of our schedule and number of opportunities for students to pursue their interests while still meeting the requirements of the state, has risen to 97%.

The proposed 6.10.5.6. A requires students to be enrolled in four classes per day and does not appear to accommodate the fact that our last class of our day is half as long as the other classes and split over a two day period, considering that a half class. This means that we currently hold 3.5 classes per day at LAHS and would have to re envision our schedule to have 4 completely different classes per day in our two day block rotation, totalling 8 classes per semester. This would be a problem for students because the students would not be able to concentrate and practice for my class due to too many subjects. This change would be problematic for staff because our class size would become larger.

The proposed 6.10.5.6. A would also greatly impact the flexibility that our senior students have in their schedules because they may not be able to work a part time job. This impact is a problem because for some students, it would have the unintended consequence for their families and themselves.

Additionally, the 6.10.5.6. A proposed change would impact staff in that we would have to teach an extra class or prep which is a problem because I already teach 4-5 preps. An unintended but costly result for our students would be that staff members like me are likely to burnout quicker or take an early retirement..

I ask NM PED to reconsider this rule, choosing to keep our present schedule instead.

Thank you for your consideration,

Louise Foliot
French Teacher
Los Alamos High School
Los Alamos public school

From: [Abby Paris](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Four-day school reduction
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:54:23 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am against the schools going to a five-day week. I do not think it will benefit us students at all. Us students that play sports and in school will suffer more from this than gain anything. Us students that play sports will be more exhausted and will miss more school due to sports. A lot more students will be missing school because they want to be free on their Fridays so they would rather just stay home. I do not think that they should go to five-day school.

-Abby

From: [Cassiah Chavez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:55:17 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Cassiah Chavez-Anderson

From: firegirl.geekgods.net
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Change to Instructional Time
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:55:19 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

This would also severely impact our child who uses those extra days for learning in environments like museums, zoos, gardens, and family.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Melissa Grosso
505-463-3890*

From: [Diane Maestas](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:56:45 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern.

As an educator for over 25 years, the proposed changes to the upcoming school year are ridiculous. We already work before and after school as it is. We have more demands placed on us each year without proper support from the district. Funding has been cut each and every year. You expect us to do more with less. We educators have shouldered the increases of instructional and professional development hours implemented this school year, but we can't continue to do more with less support.

There are so many things that we have no control over in our student's lives. Our students are affected by chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. Staffing our schools for the whole child means that every preK-12 school has a specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) team—composed of licensed school social workers, licensed school psychologists, certified school counselors, licensed school nurses and other highly qualified personnel—who work with teachers and parents to address barriers to educational success, ensure positive conditions for learning, and help all students achieve academically and ultimately become productive citizens.

Stop making us do more with less. We are tired. We are sick and tired. We are stretched thin at our schools and because of this, our own families are paying the price. And you wonder why there is a teacher shortage. Stop. Just Stop.

Diane P. Maestas
AFT Union Member

From: [Haden Judd](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:57:40 PM

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dear NM public education department,

I am not against or and not for it. I do not really care if we go five days because the school days are shorter. Plus you get out faster for the summer. I think it would be better just to get school over with. I think it is not better because it takes up our weekend. Other than these reasons I really could care less. That is my opinion on this.

From: [Deanna Sullivan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:58:56 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Deanna Sullivan

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From: [Greyson Bollinger](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Four-Day School Weeks in New Mexico
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:00:31 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Good Afternoon,

Hi, my name is Greyson Bollinger, I'm a Junior at Logan High School, home of the Logan Longhorns. As a high school student, I highly recommend that schools do NOT change to sessions on Fridays. Personally, for Logan High, we as Longhorns rank high with schools such as Los Alamos. If we were to be required to attend on Fridays, I promise that absentee rates will skyrocket. Many kids will avoid going to school on Fridays, and those who do attend will be discouraged and rather useless on Fridays. Being that this proposed idea is a big change I do not think this will benefit our school. With a 97% graduation rate and high-ranking proficiency levels, I strongly disagree with the proposed changes.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a 4th/5th grade teacher at Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our children and families. The 4-day school week provides our families the opportunity to support our students learning from home. Moving to a 180-day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days from the educators who utilize that time for curriculum development, which in turn, would change the focus of the school's Charter related, multi-age inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

*Ms. Kari Rizzo
4th/5th grade teacher
Alice King Community School
karirizzo@akcs.org*

From: [Lauren DeGregorio](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback- proposed instructional time changes
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:02:32 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a teacher at Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our school community. The 4-day school week allows teachers to attend professional development and develop curriculum to meet the needs of our students as well as families to engage in meaningful learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. Please allow NM Charter Schools the autonomy to schedule our schools the way that best fits the needs of our community.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Lauren DeGregorio*

--



From: [Andrea Scarberry](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:03:02 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Andrea N. Scarberry

From: [Hilary Hawks](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment Regarding Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:04:12 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in regards to Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC, the proposed ruling to end 4 day school weeks in New Mexico.

New Mexico is a large and diverse state in which a "one size fits all" approach does not meet the needs of all residents. Mosquero, New Mexico is one of the most rural districts in the state which poses a unique set of challenges for the school district. A 4-day school week is the solution to many of these challenges and allows for the most efficient use of resources.

Four day school weeks allow:

1). less travel time for students without losing instructional time. This might seem counterintuitive however, the large area the district covers requires many students to drive from a significant distance away, (some upwards of 60 miles one way, upwards of 2 hrs on a bus route). A little quick math shows how 4 day weeks schools will gain very little instruction time but significantly increase travel time for students.

Let's take LCPS school hours with our student travels times vs. our current hours with student travel times:

LCPS Elementaries 8:00-2:40 (6hrs 40 mins per day/400 minutes per day)

- 5 days weeks this is 33.3 hrs of instruction with 20 hours of travel time for students

Mosquero Elementary - 7:45-4:00 (8hrs 15 mins per day/ 495 minutes)

- 4 day weeks this is 33 hours of instruction with 16 hours of travel time.

My point with these calculations is to show that adding another day to our 4 day week will only increase instruction by .3 hours or 20 minutes but will add 4 hours of additional travel time for our students. This trade off simply does not make sense.

2). more instructional time for our students. Aside from the point made above which shows ONLY 20 additional minutes of instruction per 5 day school week, the other instructional factor to consider is multiple grade levels in one classroom. All of our classes have multiple grade levels, some of which have as many as three grades! This means teachers teach 3 lessons of reading and three lessons of math in addition to writing, science, and social studies. If we move to a 5 day a week model, core subjects will take up more percentage of the day, leaving less time for instruction in other subjects.

3). families to make doctors appointments and other necessary appointments on Fridays without missing a day of school. Living in such a rural community requires significant travel for doctor visits or anything else in town. Amarillo, Santa Fe, and Albuquerque are the main locations where our families receive healthcare and have primary care physicians. Amarillo and Santa Fe are both 2.5 hours each way and Albuquerque is 3.25 hours each way.

Therefore, if families have a doctors appt, dentist appt, or any other need to make the trip they will, without a doubt, be gone from school the entire day.

4). Mosquero Schools to be fully staffed. Currently 33% of our staff live in other communities (some as far as 90 miles one away). Four day school weeks make these commutes "doable". The move to 5 days of these long commutes would be enough to cause many of these employees to look closer to home for employment. This would be detrimental to our district.

5). the culture and heritage of our community to thrive. Many of our students live and work on family ranches. Family ranches historically depend on help from their children to keep the operation afloat. The majority of our families utilize their Fridays off to enlist help from their children on the ranch. Not only does this help the families financially, it also helps to instill a strong work ethic and love of the land for their kids. Eventually this translates into those children returning to their family ranches which keeps this community alive.

6). maintain a robust student population. I am very concerned that if we are forced to go to 5 day school weeks many of our most distant families will choose to homeschool. I have had several families express this as something they are considering. This would be detrimental to our student enrollment and therefore, our budget.

It is my hope the points above illustrate why New Mexico should continue to allow local school districts the flexibility to design their own calendars (as long as they are at least 1140 instructional hours) to meet the unique needs of communities and the families districts serve.

Sincerely,

Hilary Hawks

Principal, Mosquero Municipal Schools

From: [Nicole Bordlemay](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Change to 4-Day School Weeks
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:04:13 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods. There is a reason we are in a charter school which should have the ability to make their own scheduling decisions. This state and your office have NO idea what is good for my child which is why I worked 3 jobs to pay for private school for my son because i REFUSE to let my children go to a public school in a state that puts our kids last. Leave our charter school alone and our schedule. My child is very bright and thriving in this 4 day week environment.

I respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Nicole Bordlemay

From: [Payson Nials](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day week vs. 4 day week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:05:08 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear, NM Public Education Department,

In recent years, there has been a growing trend toward implementing four-day school weeks instead of the traditional five-day week. While some argue that this change could negatively impact student learning, there are many benefits to moving to a four-day week. For one, it allows for more flexibility in scheduling extracurricular activities and appointments and gives students and teachers an extra day to rest and recharge. Additionally, research has shown that shorter school weeks can lead to increased academic performance and attendance rates. A four-day school week can provide a more well-rounded and beneficial educational experience for all involved. Logan Municipal Schools has a 97% graduation rate vs the state average of 75%. Logan Schools is a 4-day week, and we are very successful. Also going to a five-day week will make students who do extracurricular activities will miss more school because most activities occur on Fridays. This is why I think that you shouldn't change all schools to the 5-day week but just the schools that are struggling academically.

Respectfully, Payson Nials

From: [William Hood](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments and Concerns
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:06:00 PM

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I am not really sure where to begin at, so let's start here.

I am primarily concerned with the fact that PED is establishing rules that seem to be out of step with current NM Legislation. I fully understand rules that are established to bring about compliance with NM Legislation but this seems to go well beyond that. Whether you believe that just by adding time or school days you are going to fix the educational concerns of NM students or not, when there is legislation in place we need to comply with the legislation. At the local level any school board should be able to go beyond what is required by NM Statute if they wish to allocate their funds in that manner.

These rule changes coming from PED require districts to add days to calendars without any significant funding to provide for the changes being mandated. For districts that are currently on 4 day schedules (legal by legislative actions) this is going to be very costly (will even be costly for many other districts) and, in essence, require that those districts return to 5 day weeks (not currently required in the legislation).

The other real issue in my opinion is then trying to provide teacher time for Home Visits, Parent Conferences, Staff Professional Development, Staff Work Days, etc. How are districts expected to pay for these activities. Of course, they are all necessary but if time and funds are not allocated (would need to come from the legislature I believe) then these should not be mandated by the state. And, districts will try to build these activities into extra days, extra hours. Yet, the question remains as to where the districts are going to find funds to pay for the extra days/hours.

And, of course, there are other expenses to consider. Bus transportation is going to be a major cost for current 4 day schools but will also impact many other schools. Throw in additional heating/cooling, electricity, etc and we are talking some major dollars.

Maybe PED has the monies on hand to pay for these extra days and all the expenses that go with them. But, then I would wonder why they have those kinds of dollars on hand. Should they not have been dispersed to the districts.

Finally, I just believe that this is true overreach by the Public Education Department and we need to be following legislative actions.

William D. Hood

From: [Kara Bibbs](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:06:29 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM public Education Department

This is Kara Bibbs, a student at Logan High School. I am against the four-day school reduction in New Mexico. I am against this because they are trying to add Friday school to our schedule, and it is taking time away from our weekend. Even though it would be shorter days doesn't mean that it would be better. It is taking away from the weekend and us as being in a smaller area/town we have a high graduation rate then the states average. Ours is 97% and the States 76% averages. I think that not everybody should have to go five days a week if our school is doing good. Our 3-day weekends are nice, and they give us time to rest from the sports and time to hang out with friends and family. But not even does it give students time to rest, it gives the athletes and other school involved kid's days to have their school activities and team things. It helps us better achieve our achievements. This topic has been talked about in recent years, but I don't think that it has fully gone through because of Covid-19 and the recovering years. This change could negatively change students' prospective on school.

From: [Destiny Jaramillo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:06:29 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Destiny Jaramillo
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Devin Kotara](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:07:41 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM Public Education Department,

Hello,

My name is Devin Kotara and I attend Logan High School, which has a four-day week. The proposed bill to make all schools go to five-day weeks. I read that the purpose of this is because of the low proficiency rates and the low graduation average. My school has a 97% graduation average which is way above the state average of 76%. The proficiency rate of my school is 85% for reading and 35% for math, meanwhile, the state average is 38% for reading and 24% for math.

Devin E. Kotara

Student at Logan Schools

Logan Municipal School

301 N. 2nd St.

P.O. Box 67

Logan, NM 88426

(575) 487-2252 ext. 1310

From: [Robin Rosenquist](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:09:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am writing to share my concerns regarding the proposed increase in instructional hours for New Mexico schools. Rather than extending the quantity of school days, we should be focusing on the quality of the education. If we want test scores to go up, we need to increase planning time for teachers and keep time for them to talk with parents at conferences. We need to increase staff to support students, not just add time to the calendar. We have had a lot of changes in the last few years. Teachers need a minute to regroup and adjust, instead of continually having to do more and more and more. These changes might push out many teachers where morale is already low.

EG Ross Elementary
3-5 Reading Intervention



From: [Tim Scarberry](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week Review
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:09:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Tim Scarberry*

From: [Billie Coughlin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] N.M.A.C. 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:09:56 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Billie Coughlin*

From: [Steve Lucas](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on PED Regulation 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:10:14 PM
Attachments: [Resolution.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

This comment is on behalf of the Lordsburg Municipal Schools Board. Please see attached Board Resolution. The board would like for PED to not move forward with this rule as it negates local control of the school calendar as well as the lack of research and reasoning behind the rule. The board would suggest that if things are not left as HB130 mandates, then to remove the built in professional development allowed in the 1140 hours and allow districts to set their calendar to either 4 or 5 days as determined by the board and community.

Thank you!.



Lordsburg Municipal Schools
401 West 4th Street
P.O. Box 430
Lordsburg, NM 88045
Telephone (575) 542-9361
Fax (575) 542-9364
<http://www.lmsed.org>

SUPERINTENDENT
Stephen Lucas

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
Ryan Chaney

Resolution of the Lordsburg Municipal Schools Board in Support of New Mexico Schools Superintendents' Efforts to Challenge the Public Education Department's Proposed PED Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC

Whereas, the Lordsburg Municipal Schools Board (the Board) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of education and ensuring the well-being and academic success of all its students;

Whereas, the Public Education Department (PED) has proposed changes to the public-school calendars and instructional hours which significantly impact the educational framework of our community.

Whereas, the proposed changes necessitate over 50% of school weeks to consist of five days, thereby directly contravening the legislature's intended flexibility in implementing the required 1,140 instructional hours annually, as mandated by House Bill 130, and this requirement fundamentally alters the established educational structure and undermines the legislative intent focused on increased instructional hours rather than mandating the structure of the school week;

Whereas, these changes threaten to disrupt our successfully established school calendar and the thriving educational system at Lordsburg Municipal Schools, which has effectively operated a full-time 4-day per week schedule for several years;

Whereas, there is a profound concern that these changes may lead to a loss of local control over educational decisions and undermine the unique needs and successful practices of our school district, especially in rural areas like ours;

Whereas, the Board acknowledges the concerted efforts and strong advocacy of New Mexico Schools Superintendents, including our own, who have lobbied against these changes and are preparing to present their objections at the upcoming public hearing;

Whereas, there is a need for solidarity and a unified voice from school districts across the state in response to these proposed changes by the PED;

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Alfredo Morelos Jr., President

Aimee Samuel, Vice-President

Alyssa Esquivel, Secretary

Susie Cole, Member

John Plowman, Member

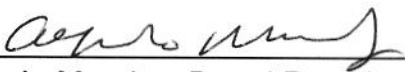
Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Lordsburg Municipal Schools Board hereby declares its full and unequivocal support for the New Mexico Schools Superintendents in their efforts to challenge the PED's proposed changes to the school calendar and instructional hours.

Be It Further Resolved that the Board urges the PED to consider the significant impact of these changes on local communities, the importance of maintaining local control over educational practices, and the need to preserve the unique and successful educational models that have been established in districts like ours.

Be It Further Resolved that the Board encourages all members of our community, including parents, staff, and other stakeholders, to participate actively in the public comment process and to attend the public hearing to voice their concerns and opinions.

Be It Finally Resolved that this resolution be sent to the PED, the New Mexico Legislature, and relevant parties to express the Board's stance on this critical issue and to underscore the importance of collaborative decision-making in educational policy and request that the PED proposed regulation 6.10.5 NMAC not move forward as presented.

Adopted this 11th day of December 2023 by the Lordsburg Municipal Schools Board.


Alfredo Morelos, Board President


Alyssa Esquivel, Board Secretary

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Alfredo Morelos Jr., President

Aimee Samuel, Vice-President

Alyssa Esquivel, Secretary

Susie Cole, Member

John Plowman, Member

From: [Amanda's iphone](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opinion on Instructional Time Requirements (NMAC 6.10.5)
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:11:39 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

My children have always excelled within the charter school atmosphere. It would be a great disservice to my child's education should this rule take effect. It would also disrupt our home routine schedule we worked so hard to maintain. Please consider this when making a determination

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Thank you and have a wonderful day!

*Sincerely,
Amanda L. Howard*

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Michelangelo Lobato](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Referencing "NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:12:43 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Good afternoon, my name is Michelangelo Lobato from Los Alamos, New Mexico. I'm a former school counselor and father of three children in the public school system. I recently read the proposal, "*NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements,"*" and wanted to express my opposition to the proposed rule.

After ten years as a school counselor in Los Alamos, I left last year because of ongoing proposed changes. During that time, ten teachers/IA's/ secretaries left my small school because of the system. I sincerely believe that kids and teachers need less, and not more time in school. I believe last year, the state added time to the already dwindling calendar, and now there is another proposal. Having kids in school for longer hours does not fix the educational system in New Mexico, all it does is provide more hours of babysitting. By the time May rolls around, kids and teachers are done. Having longer days and more expectations will make them done a lot sooner than May.

I hope that those in charge of state rules are asking numerous teachers, students, and parents for opinions on this issue. I frequently see politicians making rules for the many with their limited knowledge, or by listening to a few "supposed" experts on subjects. Teaching is the hardest job there is. Helping students in large classrooms, while dealing with either absent or overbearing parents, students with behavioral issues, leveling individual students, administration and the state is an impossible job. Adding more time will only push more teachers out of the profession and will also hurt students who won't have the support of good teachers leaving, and frankly, those students should be outside playing or being creative instead of being in school for longer hours.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,
Michelangelo Lobato

From: [Savannah Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:12:56 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM, Public Education Department,

I think that we should not have to add on to our four-day school week in Logan, New Mexico. A lot of the things we do are based around the four-day school week. We recently received a talk from the secretary's representative about how amazing we are currently doing for the numbers in education. Especially on the overall test scores we get for elementary, middle, and high school. We are in a higher percentage than the rest of the state. I think that certain numbers are bad but for the schools that are showing growth like Logan, they should not have to suffer the consequences. We use our Fridays for sports games, hanging out with family, and many other things.

We have certain events that take place on Fridays so that way we still have Saturday-Sunday to be able to do weekend activities. No school on Fridays has given us as students more time to rest and be able to thrive throughout the weeks. We have more time to study and do homework. We as a school have a 97% graduation rate, this number is higher than the overall state graduation rate. I think that is more than enough of a reason to keep the way we work around. I think a lot of us as students, teachers, parents will have to change the whole way we work our lives. For example, my parents try to schedule doctor appointments in on Friday's so that I will not have to miss school. I know a lot of people also do this, because it is the best time to get in.

Our school has great activities, and the students even get rewards because of how great they are. We have the National Honor Society, a great FFA program, our Student Council holds great assemblies and pep rallies. We are a school built off love and part of our three-day weekend is a part of this. From a student's point of view, I know I will be more stressed with only a short weekend. I have a job, I am in dual-credit college courses, I am in NHS, a basketball manager and so much more. Utilizing my three-day weekend has helped me get through all these things and relieves some of the stress some busier students might have. I think that we have good enough numbers, and our students should not have to be worried about how much school they are going too. Mental thoughts and stress should be taken into consideration too. Sure, there are other schools with low statistics, but I do not think this should affect Logan Schools, students, parents, teachers, and staff.

Sincerely,

Savannah Smith

Student

Logan Municipal School

301 N. 2nd St.

Logan, NM 88426

From: [Savannah Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:12:56 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM, Public Education Department,

I think that we should not have to add on to our four-day school week in Logan, New Mexico. A lot of the things we do are based around the four-day school week. We recently received a talk from the secretary's representative about how amazing we are currently doing for the numbers in education. Especially on the overall test scores we get for elementary, middle, and high school. We are in a higher percentage than the rest of the state. I think that certain numbers are bad but for the schools that are showing growth like Logan, they should not have to suffer the consequences. We use our Fridays for sports games, hanging out with family, and many other things.

We have certain events that take place on Fridays so that way we still have Saturday-Sunday to be able to do weekend activities. No school on Fridays has given us as students more time to rest and be able to thrive throughout the weeks. We have more time to study and do homework. We as a school have a 97% graduation rate, this number is higher than the overall state graduation rate. I think that is more than enough of a reason to keep the way we work around. I think a lot of us as students, teachers, parents will have to change the whole way we work our lives. For example, my parents try to schedule doctor appointments in on Friday's so that I will not have to miss school. I know a lot of people also do this, because it is the best time to get in.

Our school has great activities, and the students even get rewards because of how great they are. We have the National Honor Society, a great FFA program, our Student Council holds great assemblies and pep rallies. We are a school built off love and part of our three-day weekend is a part of this. From a student's point of view, I know I will be more stressed with only a short weekend. I have a job, I am in dual-credit college courses, I am in NHS, a basketball manager and so much more. Utilizing my three-day weekend has helped me get through all these things and relieves some of the stress some busier students might have. I think that we have good enough numbers, and our students should not have to be worried about how much school they are going too. Mental thoughts and stress should be taken into consideration too. Sure, there are other schools with low statistics, but I do not think this should affect Logan Schools, students, parents, teachers, and staff.

Sincerely,

Savannah Smith

Student
Logan Municipal School
301 N. 2nd St.
Logan, NM 88426

From: [Laura A Wylie](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:13:12 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Laura

Laura Wylie, MPAS, PA-C
Program Director
University of New Mexico
Physician Assistant Program
lamurphy@salud.unm.edu

**Interested in Becoming a PA or getting
involved:** <https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/departments/family-community/education/physician-assistant/>



SCHOOL OF
MEDICINE

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

From: [Haylie Bidegain](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-Day School Weeks Need to Stay
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:13:14 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom this may concern, I believe that four-day school weeks are beneficial to my mental and physical health. As a student that attends a school that only goes four days a week, I enjoy having Fridays off for many different reasons. One reason is that I get to spend more time with my family. Both my mom and my dad work and I don't get to see them all the time. Logan High is the school that I attend. Our graduation rate is 97%. This is significant because this is much greater than the states average of 67%.

Growth is always visible in our school. During covid we even showed growth unlike some other schools. Logan High is a spotlight school amongst many other schools that go to school for 5-day school weeks. This shows that despite our 4-day school weeks we continue to show continual growth. As a junior in high school, I have some friends that go to school 5 days a week and when I tell them that my school week is only 4-days they all become jealous. This is because not having school on Fridays allows students to rest.

As a 3-sport athlete at Logan, I do sports with hardly any break in-between seasons. I use these Fridays off to my advantage so I can rest and reset my body for the upcoming week. These days off allow me to catch up on homework. 4-day weeks are beneficial and are ideal for all students. Going to school in a rural area means that I also live in a rural area. To get to school it takes me 30 minutes. When the creek on our road rises high enough, we have to take the long way around which makes my drive to school 45 minutes. Without Fridays off I may not be able to be the student-athlete I am today.

-Haylie Bidegain

From: [Joe Brooks](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Change Proposal Comment
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:13:48 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. This is one think we loved about Alice King. Please do not take away the schools ability to operate with the 4 day week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Joe Brooks
505 977 3474*



From: [BJR Coughlin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:14:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Ryan Coughlin*

From: [Lisa Rossignol](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule change protest
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:19:31 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Lisa Rossignol*

From: [Karen Holmes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] "NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:20:19 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please DO NOT pass this rule!!! Kids do NOT need more time in school. Have you been in the classrooms?!?
Teachers need to be able to make better use of the time the kids are *already there* but they cannot because of lack of discipline, excessive screen usage, lack of teacher planning time, and lack of instructional aide support.

Take all that money you would spend paying teachers and schools for the extra days and increase teacher and IA salary *now* and figure out better discipline strategies to help teachers be empowered when kids are disrupting classrooms.

Please DO NOT pass this rule!

Karen Holmes
Los Alamos

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Abigail Johnson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regarding the Change of Four Day School Weeks
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:21:50 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Good afternoon to whomever it may concern,

My name is Abigail Johnson and I go to Logan Highschool. Our school is one that currently runs on a four-day school week. I'm writing concerning the possible changes that may take place. From personal experience I can confidently say that in our community a five-day school week would absolutely wreck the harmony that we currently have. We live in a town that focuses heavily on agriculture. A large portion of our community consists of farmers and ranchers, the students of the families that attend our school often have to help out in the family business. The only time that they can help is during the weekend, a lot of times this help is non-negotiable. The extra days implemented would only be a burden to these students, not to mention how many days they would have to miss due to that.

Another point I would like to bring up is our school's proficiency rate. Our school has a 97% graduation rate while the state only has a 76%. We also take seasonal testing called the maps test. A lot of our students score in the above average or excellent areas. Our results seem to speak for themselves. A four-day school week fits the needs of our community perfectly. There's a saying that goes; "Why fix it if it isn't broken?" I think this applies to our situation. We are able to perform above the state average in several ways, what use would it be to extend the days we have to go to school?

I also have another thing I would like to bring up. Mental health in schools is at an all-time high. In our state alone the depression rate in students has almost doubled since 2014. The suicide rate in students is also a concerning topic. It's no secret that mental health in school is becoming harmful to many students. Even in our small town you can see the affects that is having on our students. To extend the school week and add more days, how much more will we see that number rise? How many students will become another statistic? We are children, we are human beings, we need adequate rest. Two days out of seven is not enough time for us to recover from the exhausting nature of a school environment. Not to mention the students that have jobs or are in advanced placement programs. What time would we have then? If we go to school for eight hours a day, then have to go to work, then have to work on our homework, what rest would we get then?

In my overall opinion I do not think that it's a good idea. As a student, as a child, and as a human being the tole that this will take on me and my fellow students is a heavy one. I plead with you to rethink this, not just for the betterment of our education, but for

the betterment of us as people. I know that I am capable of scoring high enough to be successful, and I know that my fellow students are capable of this as well. I do not want to have to sacrifice the person that I am for a score, for a statistic.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Abigail Johnson

From: [Jane Dunn-Grajeda](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:22:26 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Jane Dunn-Grajeda*

From: [Janae Matai](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:24:04 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods. Not only would it change the school but it would change our home life and schedules. As a working mother I have already had to work an alternative schedule to be able to pick up my child from school. Adding another school day would cause another change to an already established schedule and make working even harder for mine and several other families.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Janae Lam

From: [Sarah Palomares](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Keep 4-day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:26:12 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Sarah Palomares*

From: [Lisa VanDyke Brown](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Instructional Time Requirement Rule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:27:24 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My children attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend four days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would negatively affect our child and family. The 4-day school week allows our family to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180-day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its charter and mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers used for curriculum development, which would change the focus of the school's charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

I respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Lisa VanDyke Brown

From: [Brittany Romero](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day Week Negative Impacts and Concerns
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:33:28 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Brittany Romero*

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Miranda Ramirez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Hello this is a Jal NM sophomore I would like to continue coming to school 4 days a week to school. The reason is we are used to it already and it has helped us in so many ways at school. It helps us get more rest for sports and school work....
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 11:59:44 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Brian Brown](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule feedback
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 9:35:49 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

This proposal is just another in a series of feckless rules imposed by a clueless bureaucratic agency out of touch with student needs. Districts do not want, need or have the funding or resources needed to make this effective time in the classroom.

Why not spend the time and money to provide districts with real options and opportunities that will enhance learning outcomes and teacher effectiveness rather than implementing unfunded mandates that just creat resentment and barriers for families and teachers?

Just another reason for veteran educators to get out of the profession.

Bad policy!

Brian Brown
Ruidoso Education Association

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Seven Yates](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] deer new mexico PD i have reasons why egolnestmiddle school should not have a 5 day week, for one most of are after school programs would be cancelled so for kids who have no place to be after school it would hurt there learn also paferom be...
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:00:09 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

From: [Molly Bell](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:37:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My children attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Molly T Bell

From: jonathan.spathallc.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMPED Rule to Change Day Requirements For School
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:39:09 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Grosso

From: [Donald Davis](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:42:17 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear PED,

In my opinion, the requirement of going from 24 credits to 32 credits is not acceptable.

As an example, a 1 semester elective course is 1/2 credit. This requirement would increase the number of electives by 16. That equates to 4 more electives per year or 2 per semester. That is a mind boggling increase in what these students need to do.

We have a lot of international students here in Los Alamos, and when talking to them, one of their comments about our schools is that "...you Americans try to cover way too many topics, but at a shallower depth. We cover fewer topics, but at much greater depth."

In my opinion, this approach of adding even more courses just exacerbates this ever increasingly failed approach to education.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Davis
Los Alamos High School
National Presidential Awardee
for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Kathy Owensby](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Changes NMPED
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:45:14 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Committee Members,

As a teacher at a high performing school, I object to the proposed rule changes for the following reasons:

- State law 22-2-8.1 only specifies a minimum number of instructional hours, NOT a minimum number of instructional days
- State law 22-8-23.14 specifically authorizes schools to operate on either 4-day or 5-day school weeks... Departmental regulations CANNOT prohibit something which is authorized by statute.
- Des Moines has consistently outperformed and led the state academically for decades.
- The HS Graduation Rate for Des Moines has always outpaced 5 day a week schools. Des Moines High School's most recent 4-Year Graduation Rate is 97.3%, significantly higher than the state average of 76%
- The Student Achievement in Reading for NM small rural schools consistently outpaces that of larger districts. Des Moines Elementary School boasts 81% and 67% proficiency as a district reading proficiency rate, more than double the state average of 38%.
- The Student Achievement in Math for NM schools Des Moines Municipal Schools boasts a 67% math proficiency rate, more than double the state average of 24%.
- The Des Moines District students are 64% proficient in science compared to the state average of 33% proficient, over 30% higher than the state average.
- Our current calendar with 12 remote days built in is a very successful model. We supervise our students closely and work one on one with struggling students, or students we know don't do well, traditionally, with remote learning. It has not affected our bottom line for learning, so should not be adjusted in Santa Fe based on other schools' performance.
- It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of the local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing State Law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

Please include: Des Moines, New Mexico; **this proposed rule 6.10.5 is in direct opposition of**

HB 130. I give consent for my email to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18th, 2023 should it be chosen.

--Sincerely,

Kathy Owensby

Des Moines 6th Grade

kowensby@dmsk12.org

From: [Beverly Allen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Change NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:47:07 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Beverly Allen*

From: [Jeff Gephart](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Romero, Arsenio, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Superintendent Feedback 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:47:26 PM
Attachments: [School Calendar Rule Changes-Superintendent Feedback.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Secretary Arsenio Romero,

I am writing to express my concern with the proposed rule changes that will mandate additional requirements beyond the requirements outlined in the current school calendar law. Animas Public Schools operates on a four-day school week, and we worked tirelessly with the New Mexico Public Education Department after the 2023 legislative session to meet the instructional time requirements in the school calendar law while still meeting the unique needs of our farm and ranch community, and we are getting results.

At Animas Public Schools, 60% of our juniors and seniors qualified to take dual credit college math and English courses this semester due to their Accuplacer scores, 82% of our sophomores, juniors and seniors are successfully completing dual credit welding, pharmacy tech, and/or veterinary assistant certification programs, and all high school students have the opportunity to take career-based electives based on their interests and career objectives such as graphic arts, mock trial, FFA, legislative leadership, and drama. The results we are achieving at the high school level are due in part to our academically rigorous and engaging elementary and middle school programming which consists of exposing our students to enrichment and real-world opportunities in 3D printing, photography, culinary arts, video production, art, community partnerships, and field trips.

I question the rationale for the proposed rule changes that will mandate additional requirements beyond the requirements outlined in the current school law. According to most metrics, four-day school week schools outperform five-day school week schools. Our schools consistently score well in the State school rating system, we have excellent graduation rates, and our students score above average on standardized tests like the SAT.

Because of this, I do not support the proposed rule change to 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements). In particular, I am most concerned with the following:

- The proposed requirement mandating a minimum of 180 instructional days.
- The proposed requirement mandating fifty percent of the school calendar weeks function as five-day school weeks.

Neither of these proposed changes are required in the current school calendar law. Unilaterally adding them into the NMAC after the bill has already been approved and signed into law sets a dangerous precedent. Additionally, these proposed requirements will have a devastating impact on our schools as follows:

The proposed additions to the requirements in the school calendar law will hurt our ability to recruit exemplary teachers. It is difficult to recruit highly qualified individuals to rural towns. The time to plan and prepare on Friday is our biggest recruiting chip to attract highly qualified teachers, and teachers are the driving force behind academically rigorous, standards-based, engaging educational opportunities that ultimately lead to future opportunity for our students.

Without dynamic teachers, the quality of our programming will suffer.

The proposed additions to the requirements in the school calendar law will also reduce educators' planning and preparation time and effectively hurt the quality of the product we are providing our community. The work our teachers do on Friday is instrumental in providing our students academically rigorous, standards-based, engaging educational opportunities. Without this extra time to plan and prepare, we will be sacrificing quality for quantity.

The proposed additions to the requirements outlined in the school calendar law will also result in lost instructional time and an increase in learning gaps. In rural New Mexico our students have family responsibilities they tend to on Friday. Many students work on the ranch and farm, and because we are located on the border, many of our students have family responsibilities in Mexico on Friday. Additionally, our families must travel to larger towns and cities for doctor appointments on Friday. Students who cannot attend on Friday due to these extenuating circumstances will fall behind and it will create new learning gaps.

The proposed additions to the requirements outlined in the school calendar law will needlessly increase the inordinately long travel time for our students and their families. Some of our students travel to and from school for up to an hour and 45 minutes each way. The proposed changes would add over 100 hours of travel time each year for some of our students. However, total instructional time would remain the same.

Furthermore, the proposed changes will compromise our ability to meet the administrative needs of our schools. In rural New Mexico, we do not have teams of people taking care of the administrative burden of running public schools. I serve as the superintendent. However, I am also the athletic director, the special education director, the human resources director, the technology director, the transportation director, and the safety and security director. At times, I cover classes, I coach, and I even transport students to activities, and I am not alone when it comes to having an inordinate amount of responsibilities. All staff in Animas Public Schools “wear a lot of hats,” and we work weekends to ensure that we are supporting the educational programming effectively. This work is essential to the success of our schools and would be compromised under the proposed additions to the requirements outlined in the current school calendar law.

In conclusion, we take great pride in how we have worked with our community to build a school that provides future opportunities for our students and meets the needs of our community. These proposed changes will have a devastating impact on our schools and our community. Therefore, I do not support the proposed rule change to 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements) that would add to the requirements in the current school calendar law. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at (575) 313-4341 if you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further.

Respectfully,

Jeff Gephart

Superintendent

Animas Public Schools

575-313-4341

SUPERINTENDENT

JEFF GEPHART

CELL: (575)-313-4341

jgephart@animask12.net

ANIMAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
P.O. Box 85
1 PANTHER DR.
ANIMAS, NEW MEXICO 88020

575-548-2299 Ext 3003

www.animask12.net

DISTRICT PRINCIPAL

KATHY ADAMS

OFFICE: (575) 548-2299

EXT. 3049

kadams@animask12.net

December 13, 2023

RE: Proposed changes in the 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements)

Dear Secretary Arsenio Romero,

I am writing to express my concern with the proposed rule changes that will mandate additional requirements beyond the requirements outlined in the current school calendar law. Animas Public Schools operates on a four-day school week, and we worked tirelessly with the New Mexico Public Education Department after the 2023 legislative session to meet the instructional time requirements in the school calendar law while still meeting the unique needs of our farm and ranch community, and we are getting results.

At Animas Public Schools, 60% of our juniors and seniors qualified to take dual credit college math and English courses this semester due to their Accuplacer scores, 82% of our sophomores, juniors and seniors are successfully completing dual credit welding, pharmacy tech, and/or veterinary assistant certification programs, and all high school students have the opportunity to take career-based electives based on their interests and career objectives such as graphic arts, mock trial, FFA, legislative leadership, and drama. The results we are achieving at the high school level are due in part to our academically rigorous and engaging elementary and middle school programming which consists of exposing our students to enrichment and real-world opportunities in 3D printing, photography, culinary arts, video production, art, community partnerships, and field trips.

I question the rationale for the proposed rule changes that will mandate additional requirements beyond the requirements outlined in the current school law. According to most metrics, four-day school week schools outperform five-day school week schools. Our schools consistently score well in the State school rating system, we have excellent graduation rates, and our students score above average on standardized tests like the SAT.

Because of this, I do not support the proposed rule change to 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements). In particular, I am most concerned with the following:

- The proposed requirement mandating a minimum of 180 instructional days.
- The proposed requirement mandating fifty percent of the school calendar weeks function as five-day school weeks.

Neither of these proposed changes are required in the current school calendar law. Unilaterally adding them into the NMAC after the bill has already been approved and signed into law sets a dangerous precedent. Additionally, these proposed requirements will have a devastating impact on our schools as follows:

The proposed additions to the requirements in the school calendar law will hurt our ability to recruit exemplary teachers. It is difficult to recruit highly qualified individuals to rural towns. The time to plan and prepare on Friday is our biggest recruiting chip to attract highly qualified teachers, and teachers are the driving force behind academically rigorous, standards-based,

engaging educational opportunities that ultimately lead to future opportunity for our students. Without dynamic teachers, the quality of our programming will suffer.

The proposed additions to the requirements in the school calendar law will also reduce educators' planning and preparation time and effectively hurt the quality of the product we are providing our community. The work our teachers do on Friday is instrumental in providing our students academically rigorous, standards-based, engaging educational opportunities. Without this extra time to plan and prepare, we will be sacrificing quality for quantity.


The proposed additions to the requirements outlined in the school calendar law will also result in lost instructional time and an increase in learning gaps. In rural New Mexico our students have family responsibilities they tend to on Friday. Many students work on the ranch and farm, and because we are located on the border, many of our students have family responsibilities in Mexico on Friday. Additionally, our families must travel to larger towns and cities for doctor appointments on Friday. Students who cannot attend on Friday due to these extenuating circumstances will fall behind and it will create new learning gaps.

The proposed additions to the requirements outlined in the school calendar law will needlessly increase the inordinately long travel time for our students and their families. Some of our students travel to and from school for up to an hour and 45 minutes each way. The proposed changes would add over 100 hours of travel time each year for some of our students. However, total instructional time would remain the same.

Furthermore, the proposed changes will compromise our ability to meet the administrative needs of our schools. In rural New Mexico, we do not have teams of people taking care of the administrative burden of running public schools. I serve as the superintendent. However, I am also the athletic director, the special education director, the human resources director, the technology director, the transportation director, and the safety and security director. At times, I cover classes, I coach, and I even transport students to activities, and I am not alone when it comes to having an inordinate amount of responsibilities. All staff in Animas Public Schools "wear a lot of hats," and we work weekends to ensure that we are supporting the educational programming effectively. This work is essential to the success of our schools and would be compromised under the proposed additions to the requirements outlined in the current school calendar law.

In conclusion, we take great pride in how we have worked with our community to build a school that provides future opportunities for our students and meets the needs of our community. These proposed changes will have a devastating impact on our schools and our community. Therefore, I do not support the proposed rule change to 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements) that would add to the requirements in the current school calendar law. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at (575) 313-4341 if you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,



Jeff Gephart
Superintendent
Animas Public Schools
575-313-4341
jgephart@animask12.net

From: [MMS Superintendent - Johnna Bruhn](#)
To: [Sherrie Ray](#)
Cc: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Regulation 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:49:12 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Awesome letter Sherrie! Thank you!

Johnna Bruhn
Superintendent
Mosquero schools
W: 575-673-2271
C: 575-403-9266

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 14, 2023, at 12:17 PM, Sherrie Ray <sherrie.ray@tamu.edu> wrote:

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this email in heavy opposition to the attempt to revise regulation 6.10.5 and remove the option for school districts to have a four-day school week.

I attended Mosquero Municipal Schools in the northeastern corner of New Mexico from Pre-K through 12th grade. After graduation, I attended Texas Tech University where I double majored in Agricultural Education and Agricultural Communications and graduated Summa Cum Laude. After graduating with my undergraduate degree, I lived in Ghana, West Africa, for a year implementing School Based Agricultural Education programs in a senior high school. I am currently pursuing a master's degree at Texas A&M University on full assistantship conducting a poetic autoethnographic study identifying factors limiting and contributing to the longitudinal success of School Based Agricultural Education programs in rural areas of Ghana. In conjunction with my research, I am managing a USDA Foreign Agricultural Service-funded grant at the Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture and Development.

As an alumnus from a four-day school week, I can assure you that the structure of our school week did not hinder my educational fortitude or ability to be successful in life. I can say the same for my classmates as 100% of my high school graduating class attended a postsecondary institution for a minimum of two years and each of them are gainfully employed.

As a scholar in the world of academia, I have spent hours at conferences, seminars, and in meetings discussing the structure of our education systems. Please do your research before making the decision to restrict school districts from having a four-day school week and read the context of all studies before

jumping to conclusions.

From a logistical and economical standpoint, rural school districts need Fridays to travel to town, go to doctors appointments, get groceries, and help on their family's agricultural operations. Coming from a rural area, we do not have the luxury to get the basic necessities we need for life 10 minutes down the road. Growing up, I traveled 217 miles for the dentist, 155 miles for my primary care doctor, and 100 miles to get to the nearest Walmart. If you do the math, I don't think our students will be able to make their dentist appointments during the lunch hour. I would expect attendance rates to dramatically decrease.

As someone considering returning to the classroom to teach after completing my degree, I can assure you that the decisions you make will largely impact individuals' decisions to return to New Mexico. I know many young teachers considering returning to New Mexico from Texas, but we all agree that we will not be moving back if all districts return to a five day school week. Teacher retention is already at an all-time low. I would consider finding ways to improve retention, rather than hinder it.

Many businesses are moving to a four-day work week because studies show higher productivity Monday through Thursday and a better sense of work-life balance and self-efficacy. In the last year, 76 school districts in Texas moved to a four-day school week. Please consider moving forward as a state – not backward.

Put your trust in the local school districts to evaluate what makes the most sense for their students and teachers. One size does not fit all. The quality of time spent in a classroom far surpasses the quantity. Please be mindful of the long-term implications this decision could have on our rural areas.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me via email or at 575-447-1700.

Best,
Sherrie Ray

Sherrie Ray
Program Coordinator - IAEFP Guatemala
B.S. Texas Tech University
M.S. Student Texas A&M University
AGSV Building, Suite 201
sherrie.ray@tamu.edu

From: [MMS Superintendent - Johnna Bruhn](#)
To: [Lynda Ray](#)
Cc: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Regulation 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:49:35 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Johnna Bruhn
Superintendent
Mosquero schools
W: 575-673-2271
C: 575-403-9266

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 14, 2023, at 10:26 AM, Lynda Ray <tequeslyn@gmail.com> wrote:

To whom it may concern,
I am highly opposed to taking away the option for schools to have a 4 day school week. The buzzwords in education are experiential learning, hands-on learning, acquiring trade occupations and teaching our students to solve problems. Students in rural schools that attend a four day school week spend the other two- three days a week gaining valuable work experience, learning responsibility and discovering what they choose to do for a career.

I have two daughters who were raised and educated in a four day school system in Mosquero, NM. One is currently a pediatric audiologist working for a large school for the deaf and blind. The other had the confidence to spend a year in Ghana and return to earn a master's degree in agriculture leadership with an emphasis in foreign agriculture. I can without a doubt say that the four day week did not in any way harm their learning or careers but it did give them the opportunity to learn how to work, persevere and how to problem solve. Many weekends were spent working on our family ranch. These two girls spent time in organizations such as FFA, 4H and on the court learning how to participate on teams.

Some may say, well you were a teacher in the school and are biased. Here is my response: I did teach vocational agriculture, language arts, science, shop and occasionally health for 20 years in a four day school week. I also helped run our family ranch, followed our two daughters on life learning adventures, taught students the value of work ethic and integrity. As most effective teachers will tell you, I spent hours preparing lessons, staying after school to help kids, and hauled kids to FFA competitions on the weekends. In those four days, I learned to be intentional in my teaching and the students became intentional in learning.

Please do not take this opportunity away from students. If you have any questions

or would like to discuss this matter further, please call me at (575)447-2321.

Sincerely,

Lynda Ray "Lyn"
T. E. Mitchell and Son Inc.
665 Tequesquite Lane
Albert, NM 87733
(575)447-2321

From: [RICHARD SEDILLO](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:50:18 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

Please note my child has Sensory Processing Disorder and ADHD the 5-day school week would have a big impact on his ability to stay focused. The 4-day instruction has worked wonders for my child.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Cecilia J. Carrillo

From: [Jacqueline Apodaca](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Remain on the current school schedule
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:50:28 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Good afternoon,

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Apodaca

From: [Michael Noble](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 180 day rule
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:53:11 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear PED,

This email is in response to the proposed 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements. It is curious to me why you are proposing a longer calendar when you don't even have one semester of data on the increase that the State Representatives just passed earlier this year.

As the lead organization in improving public education I find it sad that the best you can come up with is MORE DAYS. Maybe you should add half days every other Saturday to all the employees of the PED so they can spend MORE DAYS coming up with data driven ways to improve educational outcomes, because then they will have enough time to be helpful.

School districts and families have not even completely adjusted to significant changes in their lives when days and time were added to their current schedules. Day care options had to change significantly for many families. There are extra days when child care is required due to the Professional Development days added that puts even more stress on parents who work in the schools. Don't get me wrong, the addition of these Professional Development days is a strong step forward to improving the skills of teachers. At least this is more of a strategy for improvement than just doing more of the same.

--

Michael Noble
Special Education Teacher
John Baker Elementary School

NOTICE: This e-mail contains PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION intended only for the use of the individual(s) named above. If you are not the intended recipient(s) of this e-mail, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering this to the intended recipient(s), you are hereby notified that any disclosing, copying, distributing and/or other action in relation to the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this e-mail in error, please immediately notify the sender at michael.noble@aps.edu and delete this e-mail from your system.

From: [Gabriela B Salas](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Keep 4 day week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:54:46 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Gabriela Salas*

From: [Shanda Moore](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposed to NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:54:47 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the new rule change regarding school calendar requirements. I have been teaching for this state for 16 years, and I have never before felt so appalled by the way districts and teachers are being treated by the state. Do you WANT to drive teachers away and burn out students? That is exactly what will happen if this rule passes. We are working hard. If you want better scores, more needs to happen than just the constant adding of school days or abrupt changes. Instead, offer better professional development, high quality materials, teacher and student support, better attendance rules and incentives, etc.

It is extremely unfair to put this stress onto your districts with such a short notice for the second year in a row and expect to see positive results. School districts need adequate time to adjust calendars and schedules if what you truly want is successful teachers and students. Districts have barely had 4 months of instruction this year and it is premature to assess whether or not the changes made last year have been effective. This new rule wouldn't just cause a few adjustments here and there. It would be especially disruptive to our secondary schools. It would cause districts to completely have to change their master schedules and daily bus routes. Students are going to burn out with more classes and homework added to their plates. School districts will have to hire many more teachers, or increase class sizes to adequately support all highschoolers if free periods are no longer allowed. Neither of these are acceptable in a time when we are already short staffed, and we know that smaller class sizes equates to a better learning environment.

You also have to understand that all of your districts and counties are unique, and what might be best for one district, may not be best for others. You must give your districts some allowance to make decisions that are best for their own students, teachers, and families. Taking away a 4-day school week would be detrimental for your rural districts and is economically irresponsible.

This rule will also decrease the amount of planning and prep time teachers have. Again, don't you want quality instruction? How will taking away a teacher's planning time make instruction better? Please stop stretching your teachers and students thin. We need support, we need breaks and planning time, and we need you to listen to us. Please do not approve this new rule. Give your schools more time to adjust to the current changes, then make decisions that will actually address problems that are seen.

--

Shanda Moore
3rd Grade Teacher
Mountain Elementary School



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Nicole Dodson-Sands](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:58:14 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We chose AKCS for this unique 4-day week model and I have had 6 children benefit from this wonderful program.

As a teacher at APS I am able to see how the APS schedule is not benefiting our students and that the students at AKC are flourishing from the four day week model and their inclusive practices.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Nicole and Brent Dodson-Sands

From: [Alfred Chavez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:58:58 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

After receiving the information on the recent proposed rule change to this districts and other districts' work week; I have to say, why fix something that is not broken. Apparently, there is no evidence based data to go forward with this proposed change. I do work with the students in our school and have had the opportunity to ask their opinion. I have yet to receive an answer that supports this proposed rule change. With much respect to those who are in support of this change, please consider leaving things the way they are. Thank you for the opportunity to let my voice heard.

From: [Dorothy Lee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:02:19 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
[Your Name]*

From: [Natasha Murphy](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:02:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Natasha Murphy*

From: [Kait Wakefield](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:02:37 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern:

I am writing as a teacher and as a parent to convey my immense displeasure at the proposed rule change.

The PED has not allowed time to see results from the change we have already undergone. Making changes by using loopholes such as this is a bad faith action. It is a breakdown of trust between the ped and teachers and families. The sneaky and back door manner in which this is happening disgusts me and has made me lose faith and trust in the institution.

I have worked in school districts that had these extended years that did not account for necessary parent/teach conferences or professional development. Districts where mistrust between teachers and the department of education was commonplace. And I have never been around such miserable and unengaged educators. The interference and demand on teachers had sucked them dry. Coming to New Mexico was, at the time, a breath of fresh air. I went from wanting to leave the profession to falling in love with education all over again. A move like this would be a major step backwards for teachers and families. Families deserve teachers who love their work and who strive to be the best. The continual unrealistic demands that are being placed on teachers is going to drive passionate educators out.

At a time when, across the country, teachers are leaving the profession at historic rates, this seems like a terrible move to the PED to make. How are our students going to succeed without qualified, passionate educators? How will they succeed if teachers are suffering from depression and burn out? How will students succeed if teachers can't further their own learning in professional development, or collaborate with families? How can student learn if they are burnt out from spending so much time in school?

As a mother, I do NOT want my child to be in school anymore than is already required. I opposed the initial change, mostly for my daughter's sake. More time in school does not equal more valuable learning time. Children need time with their families, time for hobbies and exploration, time to be outside. New Mexico will not produce well rounded, global citizens, if we continually insist that more school time is the answer. This rule is not addressing some major problems that ARE affecting student success: chronic absenteeism, and high levels of poverty that lead to housing and food insecurity, and increased risk for students. Why isn't the PED investing in more social workers and counselors? Why don't our schools have someone to help parents who are dealing with chronic absenteeism? How can teachers teach students who aren't at school?

I want my daughter to have happy and engaged teachers. I want to wake up happy to teach. I don't want to have to be another teacher that was forced to leave the profession due to lack of respect and unrealistic mandates being forced on me. Please make the right decision and abandon this rule- for all of new Mexico's children!

Thank you,
Kaitlyn Wakefield

From: [Stacey Lusco](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re 5 Day Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:04:02 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

--

Stacey

From: [Brook Metzger](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Change Request
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:04:03 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Brook Metzger*

From: [Fabian Aragon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment on Proposed Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:04:06 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

This also would be highly disruptive to my ability to ensure my daughter continues to receive her speech and occupational therapy that we have scheduled on Fridays when we are off of work.

I respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Fabian Aragon*

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Ellen McBee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:11:12 PM

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Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I am the department chair of Special Education at Los Alamos High School. I teach English Language Arts and am the case manager to 16 students. I complete at least one training every year, generally in teaching writing, reading instruction for high school students, or special education research and techniques. I also teach training courses in inclusive education and co-teaching. Currently, I am enrolled in LETTRS training with my elementary school colleagues. I also am participating in a reading group based on the book *Grading for Equity* by Joe Feldman.

The very first thing that would happen if proposed rule 6.10.5.6 goes into effect is that teachers like me, who do a considerable amount of professional development, would not be able to continue these valuable activities.

We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 187 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students on a block schedule, meaning that students take seven classes per semester with one class meeting daily and the other six classes meeting every other day. Due to this schedule, our students are able to gather most of the credits they need to graduate by the end of their junior school years, using their senior years for their few remaining requirements and extra enrichment like internships, jobs, tutoring, and other post-secondary preparation opportunities. At this time, the graduation rate at Los Alamos High School, largely due to the flexibility of our schedule and number of opportunities for students to pursue their interests while still meeting the requirements of the state, has risen to 97%.

The second thing that would happen if proposed rule 6.10.5.6 goes into effect is that our graduation rate would decline. Our students need the flexibility we currently have to provide intensive interventions, transitions to the workforce through school-supported programs, and free periods that allow them to catch up on work in their more demanding classes. Particularly for students with special needs who are accessing inclusion classes, some for the first time, these supports are necessary to make them college and career ready.

I teach two classes for students with special needs in literacy. One of these classes,

American Studies, is a double block class and meets for 90 minutes per day. I collaborate with another special education teacher, who provides the social studies content. We use that time to teach using specially designed instruction that allows students to receive intensive literacy supports and interventions every day. The other is a reading program which meets during the last class of the day, again allowing students access to specially designed instruction and daily practice. Due to the intense nature of this course, it is not suited to a 90 minute block.

The third thing that would happen is a drop in the quality of services provided for students with special needs. I currently have two prep periods, as other teachers do. I have to stretch that time to cover IEP prep, data collection, meetings, observations, grading, class preparation, collaboration, mentor new teachers, meet with co-teachers, and meet the needs of the students on my caseload. It already takes 20 to 30 hours per month of off-contract time for me to accomplish the job. If the rule goes into effect, there simply won't be enough hours in the day for anyone to provide the students with everything that they need and continue to improve their post-secondary outcomes.

In short, the rule would create teachers who won't have the time, energy, or training to provide the top rate education our students deserve. It is not a stretch to predict an unprecedented exit from the profession in New Mexico.

This rule would stress the already existing systems at Los Alamos High School. With our co-teaching program finally showing successful outcomes for students, we are seeing more need for co-teachers but do not have more special education staff. The changes to the schedule that would be necessary would leave many students without federally mandated services. Teachers who are already stressed by high caseload numbers, students with increasing and changing needs, and new requirements for data collection and IEP mandates, will not be able to provide the high levels of service required by NMPED, IDEA, and the Yazzie-Martinez case, especially as class sizes continue to grow. There is not enough space for the number of classes we would need to add if students must be on campus and enrolled in four classes every day.

NMPED should reconsider this rule. Teachers and students are already feeling the strain of the additional days in the calendar. Research does not support more hours of students in seats leading to higher student achievement. The rule will result in more teacher and student burnout, more students dropping out of school, and a lack of the specialized support I am trained to provide but must fight the NMPED to provide. NMPED would benefit from approaching this issue from the ground up, just as I approach writing an IEP: What does the data tell us? How can we address the core issues in New Mexico? Why are students chronically absent? How can we provide programs tailored to student needs? What actions will result in making all students college and career ready?

Proposed rule 6.10.5.6 seems to be an attempt for NMPED to solve an unstated problem with a one-size-fits-all solution. It won't work for our students. It won't work for our school system.

We can't just give the students more of the same thing Judge Singleton told us isn't working.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ellen K. McBee, M.Ed.
Special Education Department Chair
Los Alamos High School
Los Alamos, New Mexico

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Ellen McBee, M.Ed.
American Studies
Literature and Composition in Sports
English Language Arts/Reading 9
Los Alamos High School
505-663-2650

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This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Randall K. Earwood](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 Calendar Rule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:14:39 PM

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I represent the Reserve Independent Schools in Reserve New Mexico. We are opposed to the proposed rule change for the following reasons:

1. The Reserve Schools has been on a 4-day calendar for 27 years which has benefited students, staff, and our community. Reserve New Mexico is a very rural community. Because of our location, we must travel at least an hour to obtain basic services such as medical services, basic household needs, and necessary merchandise. Being on a 4-day week calendar allows our students and their families the flexibility to ensure their needs are met without disrupting the educational process.
2. If we are forced to adhere to a 5-day week, our district will see a 20% increase in utilities, transportation, and cafeteria, just to name a few.
3. Transporting students an additional day per week will be detrimental to our environment by adding carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.
4. If we are forced to adhere to a 5-day week, our district will see a decrease in attendance for both students and staff.
5. We will also see several of our staff leave to go to neighboring Arizona. 40% of our teaching staff have told me that they will leave if forced to go to a 5-day week.
6. Because we are a small, very rural school district, being on a 4-day week is a great attractor in being able to hire and retain high-quality teachers.
7. Our present 4-day calendar allows us to have high-quality professional development which we will lose if we are forced into a 5-day calendar.
8. The most important negative impact that we will experience being forced to a 5-day calendar will be a decrease in student achievement, and morale, and an increase in student stress.

The Reserve Independent School District has great success in student achievement. Our current designations for our schools are **Reserve High School – Spotlight; Reserve Elementary – Excellence**

The Reserve Schools currently adheres to the Statutory requirements of hours per year. We currently have a longer school day to meet those requirements. Being forced to go to a 5-day week will only shorten our day, (thus each class will be shorter), and we will still have the same number of hours stated in the NM Statute only spreading those hours out to 180 days. This makes no sense.

The Reserve Independent Schools opposes the loss of **local control** which is the backbone of our district and community.

Randall Earwood, Superintendent

Coral Community Charter School

4401 Silver Ave SE
Albuquerque, NM 87108

Lori Bachman,
Executive Director

December 14, 2023

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to express concerns regarding the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke this proposal for two reasons: first, the Department lacks statutory authority to execute portions of the proposed requirements; and second, the legislative process is a more appropriate means to determine mandates that cause significant financial impact to schools and districts.

First, according to New Mexico State law 14-4-5.7(A), "No rule is valid or enforceable if it conflicts with statute. A conflict between a rule and a statute is resolved in favor of the statute." The language in the proposed rule that conflicts with current statute includes:

1. **Requiring Schools with 4 Day Weeks to Have 5 Day Weeks for 50% of Weeks**– There is no explicit authority for the secretary to mandate a length of school week. Statute is silent on the length of school week except for language surrounding K-12 Plus funding (NMSA 22-8-23.14), which states that schools operating on a 4-day school week must have more than 156 school days to qualify for K12 Plus programming. The proposed rule oversteps New Mexico school law by prescribing more than 50% of weeks to be five-day weeks.
2. **Requiring 180 Day Minimum School Calendar** – The proposed rule mandates that school calendars must have 180 days to qualify for K-12 Plus funding, which directly contradicts statute. Statute clearly allows for school districts to meet statutory hourly requirements without regard to school days. In fact, NMSA 22-2-8 only allows for the Secretary to waive minimum requirements associated with school hours in certain circumstances. It is essential to align the rule with statutory provisions on flexible scheduling for districts and charter schools. Revisiting the law to provide authority for the Secretary is necessary to implement the policy.
3. **Determining Maximum Hours in a School Day** - The proposed rule introduces a maximum number of hours in a school day without explicit statutory authorization. It is imperative to identify the specific statutory provisions granting the Secretary the authority to establish such limits. Further, this section of the proposed rule would not apply to charter schools that exercise a nondiscretionary waiver associated with "Length of School Day" NMSA22-8B-5(c).

www.coralcharter.com

Phone : (505) 292-6725 | Fax : (505) 200-0440

4. **Mandating 30 Minute Lunch Periods** – This language directly contradicts the 20-minute lunch period stipulated in statute (NMSA 22-13c-10). It is crucial to adhere to statutory limitations and recognize the bounds of PED's authority in prescribing lunch periods.
5. **Determining Minimum Daily Schedules for Secondary Students** – The proposed rule states that secondary students shall attend a minimum of four courses per day (6.10.5.8(A)). Dual credit high schools will be significantly impacted by this requirement. The potential impact on charter schools, exempt from course requirements through nondiscretionary waivers, also raises concerns about equitable application across all educational institutions. Should the proposed rule go through, this would be an area in which the state's public charter schools are exempt through non-discretionary waivers NMSA 22-8B-5(c).

Second, I urge the Department to consider working with the Legislature to analyze and clarify the most appropriate next steps for school calendar reform instead of instituting the proposed rule. This is a more appropriate process for the following reasons:

1. **Fiscal Impact Analysis Needed** – The proposed rule includes several requirements that will have a significant fiscal impact but the rule does not outline a method for funding the changes. These costly mandates include the 180 day calendar minimum; increase of 10 minutes to the lunch period; minimum daily courses for secondary students; 4 day weeks/50% 5 days; and not allowing professional work hours to be counted in the 180 day minimum. Schools who don't currently meet these guidelines will need additional funding to continue to provide the same level of student support and compensate staff adequately. These proposed changes need to go through the legislative process instead and analyzed for fiscal impact.
2. **HB 130 Fiscal Impact Needed First**– During the 2023 Legislative Session, the terms of the HB 103 calendar reform bill were debated and resulted in this legislation. Public Education Department staff interpreted the intent of this bill in such a way that caused a true funding gap for schools (including Coral Community Charter School) who were held to their K5 Plus and ELT Calendars without funding provided in previous years. This gap has caused a statewide inequitable, unfair distribution of resources that will continue in the future if it is not addressed. Also due to the Department's interpretation of this bill, funding for schools providing 205 plus days was grossly inadequate. Schools have not even completed one year of implementation; adding further requirements through the proposed rule prevents accurate analysis and opportunity for remediation of the unintended negative impact of this bill.
3. **Stakeholder Engagement** – The legislative process ensures comprehensive, statewide engagement in developing clear statutory language and identifying fiscal impact that can help the Department support schools and students. The rulemaking process does not.
4. **Absenteeism Should be Addressed** – Schools simply do not have the statutory backing nor fiscal resources to effectively address this serious issue, due in part to the shortages caused by HB 130 and other spending requirements for schools in FY24. Chronic absenteeism has hovered around 40% and the average New Mexico student misses 10.5 days of school. We need to focus on

Coral Community Charter School

4401 Silver Ave SE
Albuquerque, NM 87108

Lori Bachman,
Executive Director

supporting schools to get students to attend the currently required days before we add even more days.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me at lbachman@coralcharter.com or 505-270-4174 with any questions.

Sincerely,



Lori Bachman
Executive Director



From: [Katha Brady](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Year ext.
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:18:16 PM

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- Our students are affected by chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. Staffing our schools for the whole child means that every preK-12 school has a specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) team—composed of licensed school social workers, licensed school psychologists, certified school counselors, licensed school nurses and other highly qualified personnel— who work with teachers and parents to address barriers to educational success, ensure positive conditions for learning, and help all students achieve academically and ultimately become productive citizens.

How about we spend more time and money on the students who fight, can't complete work in school, and who refuse to do any work at all. Will a longer school year take care of this problem? Staff are being hit, yelled at, and defied. How will a longer school year take care of this prevailing problem in the school system? It isn't just the SES programs who have problems with students not wanting to participate, cooperate, or even be respectful to staff and other students. It would create a burden for teachers. We are basically glorified babysitters.

Thank you for considering teachers' perspectives

From: [Allison Greene-Wall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:18:21 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

The demand to remove the 4-day work week for schools is inappropriate. We should use the time we have effectively instead of adding more time. The following are a variety of reasons of why this is inappropriate.

1. It takes the local authority away from schools, communities, and school boards to set the calendar that is best for their community and students.
2. NMPED says it is aimed to help with the state-wide attendance issues. This will increase the attendance issues in 4-day week schools. Adding a day a week to school won't make a student not be absent.
3. The 4-day week helps with teacher retention and recruitment.
4. The new rule states 180 days with PD days built in, no snow days allowed, no PT conferences built in, and no PLC time. It is a minimum of 180 student days. (This also affects 5-day-a-week schools.)
5. Only a few days can be remote learning.
6. The law indicates an 1140-hour rule, not a minimal day count.
7. Each school district and community has different needs, The concept of one size fits all does not work.
8. Rural communities have to travel far for doctors, dentists, groceries, banks, etc., which would increase teacher absenteeism and cost for substitutes.

Thank you,

Allison Greene-Wall
MVMS

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.” — Dr. Seuss

Carrizozo Municipal School District
800 D Ave/PO Box 99
Carrizozo, NM 88301
Phone: (575) 648-2346
FAX (Business Office): (575) 648-3255
FAX (Office) (575) 648-2216

From: [Laura Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:18:22 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Laura*

From: [Annelise Jolene Dew](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Terrazas, Denise, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Changes 6.10.5NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:21:20 PM

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Good Morning,

To whom it may concern:

I would like to give my feedback for the proposed rule change. I would like to say that the change is not warranted. We as a state are behind the rest of the country. That being said, we have a state that is not like other states. We have so many rural areas, where teachers need to travel a distance to work there. We have a state where we cannot fill most of our classrooms with certified teachers, and in our most rural areas, the positions can be open all year long. When you take away any incentive, when they travel 45 minutes to an hour, or more, then they will not want to teach in these outlying areas.

Adding more time to students in the classroom is not always the answer. We should be looking at other states and what they are doing to help their students and teachers. When we are having an epidemic of students not attending school, how will adding more days help them? Students won't come currently with the days that are required now. The schools are currently doing all they can, and maybe this should be looked at before we add more days.

We have so many teachers from other places, and many of them have 3 year visas. So we train them, and they leave, and then we must train new teachers. The teachers that come, do a great job, and they are not permanent to our communities.

I think the questions must be, how do we keep teachers, give them the support and training that they need, while improving attendance and support from our communities? Look at how other states are improving their education and outcomes.

Writing a law that requires districts to not have any say in how their districts are run, is not something that will help our communities. The people who are writing laws, the people who do not work in the schools every day, are not the ones who know what is best for our students, families, and communities.

My recommendation would be to focus on getting teachers to come to New Mexico, keeping those teachers, and fixing the attendance problems, as both of these are bigger problems.

Annelise Dew-Chavez
IEP Facilitator
Sarracino Middle School
575-838-2676

From: [Brookel Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter about the Debate over PED Proposal to Reduce Four-Day School Weeks in New Mexico
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:27:07 PM

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I am a high school senior at Logan Municipal Schools, and I think that this new bill should not pass. However, I am not totally against 5-day school weeks. I think having 5-day weeks would give more time for learning and more projects could be given to grasp concepts better. I do believe that it will be an inconvenience for some parents and students to have to go an extra day of the week, especially on Fridays. Also, teachers will have to do some in-services on Saturday and that is giving a teacher only 1 day off, and not even that, because of lesson plans and papers to grade. I know that I am a senior and this bill will most likely not apply to me, but just because I am almost done with high school does not mean I do not care about the people who will be going to Logan Schools in the years to come.

I understand that there are schools that have been going 5 days a week way since before this new bill came about. I know it seems that if all schools have 5-day school weeks with more hours, students will learn more, and I have a feeling that students would. Although, I see with my own eyes that even going to school 4 days a week, where schoolwork is somewhat more and learning is pushed hard, some students do not pay attention and retain all information, so I don't exactly see how adding an extra day will make that any better. I almost believe that if this bill gets passed, more students will skip Friday school and not come, or ignore it and teachers will be more exhausted. There is a shortage of teachers anyway, which just puts more stress on the teachers already, trying to make it through the 4-day weeks.

-Brookel Smith

From: [Kathy Masica](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] purposed rule change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:38:12 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

December 14, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

My grandchildren attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our grandchildren and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our grandchildren's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Kathleen S. Masica*

*8517 Hannett Ave. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87112*

From: [Cathy Trujillo-Wiseman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School calendar rule 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:41:36 PM

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I oppose changing the calendar to 180 days. rule 6.10.5.

Small communities are unique in their own ways. It is difficult to get teaching staff to move to small communities. Our bus routes are not all the same. Those are just two examples of what we face daily.

Now adding more days makes it difficult for hiring and probably less money in the classrooms for students so that we may pay salaries. Where does such a large amount of money suddenly come from when we could use money in the classrooms to improve what we are already doing?

We are a four day school and that is what has worked for our families and community. We do not have everything as big city schools do and you don't seem to be looking at the big picture when you think we are all the same.

The law should not be changed by only a few people that think they know what is best for all.

Please think about the families and communities that should have a voice!!!!

From: [Linda Florez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:47:01 PM

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I am opposed to changing the current work week from 4 days to 5 days. I am also opposed to adopting a year round calendar. I don't see why something that has worked for everyone should change.

Thanks,
Rosalinda Florez

From: [Erica Florez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 2:52:11 PM

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I am opposed to changing the current work week from 4 days to 5 days. I am also opposed to adopting a year round calendar. I don't see why something that has worked for everyone should change.

Thank You,
Erica Florez

From: [Davy and Katie Ferry](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Instructional Time Requirements (NMAC 6.10.5)
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:02:40 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My three children attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our children and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Katherine Ferry*

From: [Jamie Johnson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:04:30 PM
Attachments: [Jamie Johnson Letter of Rejection of PED's School Calendar Requirements.docx \(1\).pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Jamie Johnson
P.O. Box 28
Buckhorn, NM 88025
jjohnson@silverschools.org
575-313-3496
Date: 12/13/2023

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: ***Strong Objection to Proposed Rule Changes to the School Calendar Requirements by the Public Education Department***

I am writing this letter as a concerned parent of a student attending Cliff Schools in the Silver Schools Community. I am also the Kindergarten teacher at Cliff Elementary. It has come to my attention that the Public Education Department (PED) is proposing significant changes to the public school calendar and instructional hours/days. I strongly oppose these changes, as they pose a direct threat to the educational system that has proven successful for our community and, most importantly, for our children.

1. Unwarranted Extension of Instructional Days: The proposal to increase the school year to between 181 to 205 instructional days, requiring at least 1,140 instructional hours annually, is not in line with the legislative intent of House Bill 130. Our current calendar of 173 student days has been effective, and any extension threatens to disrupt not just our schedules, but the well-being and academic progress of our students.

2. Disruption of the Four-Day Week Model: Our community has thrived under the four-day school week model. The requirement that over 50% of school weeks be five days long undermines a system that has not only been successful but also favored by our community. This change seems to disregard the unique needs and preferences of our district, particularly of Cliff Schools. Many families have come accustomed to the 4 day week and now depend on it in order for their lives to operate smoothly. We have several students who attend from out of zone because of the fact that we are a 4 day week and it is more convenient. I anticipate that we will lose both students and staff if we are forced to go to a 5 day week. Sadly, the students we will lose will leave our spotlight school to go to a lower performing school. I don't see how this is improving the quality of education. In addition to

losing students, I believe that our attendance rates will plummet. We already struggle to maintain good attendance rates. If you add another day to the week students who work, or have other obligations outside of school, are going to be absent that much more.

3. Bias in Funding and Accreditation: The new funding criteria and accreditation rules that favor five-day weeks could severely disadvantage our successful four-day model. This bias could lead to unnecessary financial and administrative pressures on our schools, detracting from their primary focus on education.

4. Neglect of Essential Professional Work Time: Excluding planning and training from instructional hours fails to recognize the comprehensive educational approach that is vital for the success of our educators and students alike. Teachers need this time for effective lesson planning, collaboration, and professional development.

5. Lack of Evidence for Improved Outcomes: There is no conclusive research to suggest that merely increasing instructional time guarantees better student outcomes. The success of a school should be measured by a multitude of factors, including student engagement, class sizes, the quality of teaching, and community support - areas in which Cliff Schools excel. According to the NMVISTAS school data for 2022-2023, Cliff Elementary and High School both scored higher than any other school in our district. Cliff Elementary and High School are both on a 4 day week schedule. All of the other schools in the district are on the 5 day week. This alone contradicts the idea that increased days increases the quality of instruction and learning environment. Our district recently attended a presentation from Anthony Muhammad that specifically addressed that increased learning time/quantity does not directly correlate with increased quality. There are many factors that determine the quality of education, but I believe it starts with happy, healthy teachers and students. Adding additional days/hours will not guarantee a higher quality education, but it could contribute to higher burnout rates amongst students and teachers. Another concern I have specifically relates to the health of our staff and students at Cliff School. Our buildings have been in poor condition for years. We have had teachers and students become very ill due to the air quality in our classrooms. We have tried for years to get new buildings, but due to how state funding works we aren't eligible for help because we are tied to a bigger district so our student population must include the entire district, not just our small school. I plead to you to please consider this before making any changes regarding increased time. I feel that time, energy, and money needs to be put forth to improve the condition of our schools across the state before we expect our students and staff to spend more time at these schools. How can we expect students to learn or teachers to provide a quality education when their health is compromised by simply being at school. I am sure we are not the only school in the state facing this situation.

I echo the concerns of our legislators, who have pointed out the flaws in PED's rule-making process and the lack of effective communication and research backing these changes. The

proposed rules not only bypass the legislative process but also ignore the voice and needs of our local community.

In conclusion, I urge the PED to reconsider these proposed changes and maintain the current educational structure that has served our community well. As a parent, my primary concern is the well-being and academic success of my children, and I believe that the proposed changes are a step backward in achieving these goals. I attended Cliff School from kindergarten until I graduated high school. The school operated on a 5 day schedule until I was in high school. At that point we switched to a 4 day schedule. The quality of my education did not decrease due to the change in schedule. If anything, I feel that morale was higher, staff and students were happier, and attendance was better. All of these things play a vital role in the quality of education. I went on to receive my Bachelor's in Accounting and Business and my Master's in Secondary Education. I also received credits in Early Childhood Education. Schools on a 4 day schedule can produce successful individuals. It has nothing to do with how many days we are at school. It has everything to do with how well we are being taught, and learning, while we are there.

I plan to attend the public hearing on December 18th to voice my concerns and I encourage other parents, staff, and community members to do the same. Our collective voices can make a difference in preserving the educational integrity of Cliff Schools and our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jamie Johnson
Kindergarten Teacher and Concerned Parent
Cliff Elementary School
Silver Consolidated Schools District

From: [John Reich](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:11:52 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

*My grandchildren attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our Grandchildren and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our **Grand Children's** learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.*

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
John Reich*

Always be a first-rate version of yourself, instead of a second-rate version of somebody else .

Cell 505-463-9780

From: [Veauthier, Jackie](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:13:49 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am writing to strongly object to the proposed rule changes. I strongly believe that Los Alamos Public Schools are doing a great job providing a high quality education to its students and that while I am unfamiliar with other districts that there may be other districts that also perform well. I believe this mandatory rule change will have unintended and very disruptive consequences, especially if required to implement it without a graded/grace period of implementation.

At a minimum I request that schools/districts be allowed to request a waiver to this immediate implementation and that waivers be granted when a school can show that it is performing well and meeting the needs of the student and community with respect to education.

Sincerely,

Jackie Veauthier
Parent and Volunteer – LAPS
Scientist and Manager, Los Alamos National Laboratory



Dr. Jacqueline M. Veauthier
Deputy Group Leader and Scientist
C-IIAC
Inorganic, Isotope, & Actinide Chemistry

Office: 505.665.8001
Mobile: 505.695.8398
Pager: 505.664.7483
Group Office: 505.606.2104
SCIF Office: 505.665.2793

Los Alamos National Laboratory
lanl.gov



To whom it may concern,

I am writing in direct opposition of HB130 Amended notice of proposed rulemaking 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. I am a parent of 2 kids, one in Middle School and one in High School at Logan New Mexico, which is a 4-day school week. My kids are honor roll students and are very active in 4-H, FFA, Football, Volleyball, Basketball, Track, Weightlifting, and Baseball. My husband and I work multiple jobs which also includes Agriculture production. I find that a 4-day school week is in the best interest of my family.

4-day school weeks have many positive things such as:

Same instructional time as a 5-school week, but allows for scheduling doctor, orthodontist, dentist, and sporting events which reduces the amount of time students miss school. Students that attend a 4-day school week have shown to have better test scores and out preform 5-day schools. 4-day school weeks reduces operational cost, amount of time students is on a bus (transportation cost) and helps recruitment and retention of teachers in hard to fill locations.

Changing from a 4-day to a 5-day school week is not ideal for Rural Communities:

Rural students will be forced to miss more instructional hours going to a 5-day school week, because most all medical services, dentist, orthodontist, eye doctors are over an hour's drive. Most of these appointments are scheduled on Fridays with 4-day school weeks. Going to a 5-day school week will not allow for families to work around the school schedule to make these appointments. Most Rural Families are tied to Agriculture- it's our culture and way of life. Our family/kids are a huge part of what makes our traditions and way of life successful.

4- day school weeks may not work for everyone; however, it does work for us here in our community. I ask that you stop discriminating against small towns and trying to make us fit urban school schedules. Leave it to our local school, school board, and community to determine what is best for us and our kids. If our school moves to a 5 day week, we will be forced to remove our kids from public school and home school them.

Respectfully,

Relissa Nials

Relissa Nials.

I give permission for this to be read aloud at the Dec. 18 hearing.

From: [Elias Gonzales](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:14:21 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am a 9th grade student at Jal Public Schools and I am against HB130 changing our 4 day week to a 5 day week. Some reasons I am against it are It is more stressful, some students have jobs to work, we still complete the same amount of hours, parents have their schedules around the 4 day week. Those are reasons why I think it should not happen. Thank you.

From: [Jessi Rowland](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:14:43 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hi, I'm a freshman who is against HB130. I think it not necessary to have since we have the same time and hours as a 5-day week. It also takes time away to get ready for work for some kids. Personally, I have a job and I only have a certain amount of time to get stuff done after school, and having an extra day doesn't make my job any easier

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From: [James Masica](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] instructional time
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:22:17 PM

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TO: NMPED

I oppose any rule or policy change that would impose a 5-day school week on Alice King Community (Charter) School, or any Charter School. The essence of Charter status is the individual school community's autonomy over the entire spectrum of education at that school.

I was deeply involved in the establishment, twenty-some years ago, of the conversion of Turquoise Trail Elementary School in Santa Fe to the first Charter School in the state. My children had a fine educational experience under that system.

Now my 2 grandchildren attend Alice King Community School, and both their parents and myself are pleased with the school's approach to learning.

Interference from the PED or a school district is exactly what the Charter status is meant to protect charter schools from. Now PED contemplates forcing a disastrous and completely inappropriate mandate on a well-functioning school. The strangling of innovation is exactly why the Charter School movement came into being.

Please do not force this ill-conceived mandate on a successful, well-operating Charter school.

Thank you.
---- James Masica

From: [allison okuyama](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Objection to 5 day requirement
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:25:05 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Allison Okuyama

Sent from my iPhone

From: [robert jason Scharff](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:27:54 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am strongly OPPOSED to the proposed amendment. *This new rule change comes before we have had a full year to judge the effectiveness of the changes that were made this year and forces the district to make drastic changes for the second year in a row with very little planning time.*

Jason Scharff
Los Alamos
scharff.rj@gmail.com
+1 (505) 412-2143

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jessica Maupin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:27:59 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dean NM PED,

I have some concerns about the proposed changes to rule 6.10.5 based on my review of the redlined document and based on how our district leadership thinks it may affect our schools, teachers and children.

Our teachers are experiencing the same fatigue as teachers across the country have experienced post-COVID. I am very concerned about these new instructional time requirements if they add work days to the teachers' year. I am also concerned the rule will remove the instructional planning time the teachers currently have at the elementary level on Wednesday afternoons. It was not clear to me whether the rule changes would allow districts to continue with their Wednesday half day planning time. This should continue to be at the discretion of the district since districts are able to better determine what their schools need rather than a state-wide approach.

The impact to my high school student is very concerning. He currently has 3.5 classes a day for a total of 7 classes. It appears the new rule would require 8. That would not benefit my child to require an additional class to manage each semester.

I am also very concerned that some believe the wording of the rule change seems to add to the number of classes a student must take to graduate high school and eliminate the option for a free period. This is unnecessary and would remove important flexibility available to high school students currently. One size does not fit all and the students benefit from flexible options. Please don't make changes that would have this effect.

It appears the rule would require the changes to be implemented next year. That is not going to give our district time to implement it in an orderly fashion. We are all still reeling from the last schedule changes.

Please do not require all districts to function the same way, when possible. Please recognize that Los Alamos has historically done a great job educating students and forcing changes is unlikely to improve anything and is likely to add additional unwanted fatigue to our teachers, students, administrators, school board and parents.

We appreciate our teachers very much and want to make sure they are not being constantly asked to do more with less.

Please make sure any changes continue to allow our high school and middle school block schedule with only 3.5 classes per day (the .5 class meets daily and the others meet every other day).

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns and thank you for your goal of excellent education for all New Mexico students.

Sincerely,

Jessica Maupin
Los Alamos, NM
Parent of 1st, 4th, 7th and 9th graders in LAPS.

From: [Erica Jacoby](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AKCS Proposed Schedule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:29:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

This would also affect special needs students (both ours included) who have therapies outside of school that are scheduled on Fridays. We chose this school to minimize the time they miss at school.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Erica Jacoby
Sent from my iPhone

From: [kyla Riedel](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Charter School
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:29:39 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I believe Charter school should stay with the 4 day work week as this supports the children to learn and do homework on Friday's and to support there community.

Kyla

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Finch, Eric Sherman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Alice King Community School
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:29:42 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department **decline to proceed** with the proposed rule change.

Thank you,



Eric Finch

Computing Infrastructure Engineer

Dept. 9322 | Mission Computing Services

Office 505.284.6303

Mobile 505.373.4218

Web site.sandia.gov

Sandia National Laboratories



sandia.gov

From: [Adalina Sanchez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] (NMAC 6.10.5)
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:31:40 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Public Education Department,

My name is Adalina from Alice King Community School, replying to you regarding the proposed new 5 day school week rule. Many students at my school love the idea of 4 days of school. Students should have the freedom and opportunity to have a life out of school without worrying about homework, grades, etc. Every student on Friday should have the opportunity to be free from school and have the definition of "Fun Friday". At my school, most students on Thursdays make plans with their friends on Friday when they don't have to worry about school. Many students at my school have adjusted to the 4 days a week and would not be very used to 5 days. 3 day weekends also give students from indigenous tribes like me to participate in tribal traditions/events.

In the middle school classes, every student has to choose to do a Future City or STEM Fair project and every student does a National History Day project. Many students need these weekends to have time from their projects and have some fun. I am a 7th grader at my school and have done both of the projects in limited time with 4 days in a week. I have managed to make my projects eligible for regionals in National History Day in an amount of 12 weeks with 4 days in each week.

I am sending this email not to say that schools shouldn't have 5 days a week but to say that every school that has 4 days should have the chance to fight for 4 days. Many of our students have families in city services, the medical field and the police force. They work weekends, and Fridays give them a chance to be with family.

I'm not saying 5 days isn't for anyone, but it isn't for everyone.

Sincerely,
Adalina Sanchez
Alice King Community
School

From: [Alexandra Swagerty](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on 5 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:34:50 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home as well as allows our family time for appointments and extracurricular without having to pull my child out during school hours.

Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Alex Swagerty



Board of Education
Robbie Chacon
Trent Cornum
David J. Lewis
Clancey McMillan
Tiffany Shirley

CARLSBAD MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS
408 North Canyon • Carlsbad, New Mexico 88220
Phone (575) 234-3300 • Fax (575) 234-3367

Dr. Gerry Washburn
Superintendent

Resolution of the Carlsbad Municipal School District Board in Support of New Mexico Schools Superintendents' Efforts to Challenge the Public Education Department's Rule Hearing

Whereas, the Carlsbad Municipal School District Board (the Board) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of education and ensuring the well-being and academic success of all its students;

Whereas, the Public Education Department (PED) has proposed changes to the public-school calendars and instructional hours which significantly impact the educational framework of our community;

Whereas, the proposed changes necessitate over 50% of school weeks to consist of five days, thereby directly contravening the legislature's intended flexibility in implementing the required 1,140 instructional hours annually, as mandated by House Bill 130, and this requirement fundamentally alters the established educational structure and undermines the legislative intent focused on increased instructional hours rather than mandating the structure of the school week;

Whereas, these changes threaten to disrupt our successfully established school calendar and the educational system at Carlsbad Municipal Schools;

Whereas, there is a profound concern that these changes may lead to a loss of local control over educational decisions and undermine the unique needs and successful practices of our school district, especially in rural areas like ours;

Whereas, the Board acknowledges the concerted efforts and strong advocacy of New Mexico Schools Superintendents, including our own, who have lobbied against these changes and are preparing to present their objections at the upcoming public hearing;

Whereas, there is a need for solidarity and a unified voice from school districts across the state in response to these proposed changes by the PED;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Carlsbad Municipal School District Board hereby declares its full and unequivocal support for the New Mexico Schools Superintendents in their efforts to challenge the PED's proposed changes to the school calendar and instructional hours.

Be It Further Resolved that the Board urges the PED to consider the significant impact of these changes on local communities, the importance of maintaining local control over educational practices, and the need to preserve the unique and successful educational models that have been established in districts like ours.

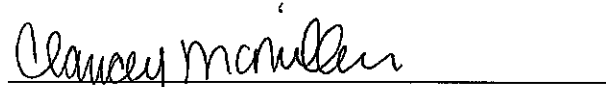
Be It Further Resolved that the Board encourages all members of our community, including parents, staff, and other stakeholders, to participate actively in the public comment process and to attend the public hearing to voice their concerns and opinions.

Be It Finally Resolved that this resolution be sent to the PED, the New Mexico Legislature, and relevant parties to express the Board's stance on this critical issue and to underscore the importance of collaborative decision-making in educational policy.

Adopted this 12th day of December 2023 by the Carlsbad Municipal School District Board.



Robbie Chacon Board President



Clancey McMillan Board Secretary

From: [Cristian Zacarias](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:35:46 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am opposed to changing the current work week from 4 days to 5 days. I am also opposed to adopting a year round calendar. I don't see why something that has worked for everyone should change. Thanks, Cristian Zacarias & Honesty Florez

From: [Victoria Montes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:42:34 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Victoria Montes

Alice King Community School
(505) 344-0746

From: scooby@spinn.net
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5-day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:45:48 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Lisa Finch

From: [Perri Altomare](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:54:30 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,



Perri Altomare, MBA, SHRM-CP
Human Resources Consultant
(505) 459-4221
Southwestern HR Consulting, Inc.
We Keep HR Simple!

From: [Crystal Terrell](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed 5 Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:57:26 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM Public Education Department,

Good afternoon,

My name is Crystal Terrell, and I have been a public-school educator for the past 14 years here in New Mexico. I was born and raised in this state, and I have taught in both 4-day and 5-day districts, so I feel qualified to express my opinion on this matter. I currently teach in a small school district, and I really wish you would heed what I'm about to say.

Small school districts do not operate the way larger school districts do. Too many times I have seen educational bills pass that benefit our state's larger districts, but really put a strain on our rural districts. It's almost as if we don't exist in the minds of people who reside in Santa Fe and Albuquerque, but some educational policies are made and passed through that feel like punishment to us in so many ways. I also want to say that our state pushes for differentiating of instruction, but refuses to do so for our own school districts. Blanketing situations is a ridiculous, lazy way of making things easier for people who don't want to put in the extra work by seeing each situation as different, or unique.

Let me begin by stating that 5-day school weeks are not terrible. There is a lot of extra instructional time and a lot of teachers who manage 5-day weeks well. I did not mind the 5-day week when I worked in larger districts. Most of us were allowed to leave at 3:10 or 3:30, which left plenty of time to tend to things at home. Plus, in a larger school district, educators typically teach one or two preps, not six, like where I'm at now. Larger districts have more staff members able and willing to take on extra duties and commitments, so teacher burnout may not happen as much.

Since I've been teaching in Logan, NM, I've learned just how much more time, effort, and energy is required to be a part of a small district. We all wear many hats in our district, and while it is exhausting, we're more like a family than anything. It is definitely rewarding, but exhausting. However, one of the greatest benefits of teaching here is the four-day week. It seems we are so busy all the time at school, but Fridays are typically our days that we don't have much school-wise going on. I would go into more detail about how busy we are, but I won't and instead I will say that our Fridays are pretty

sacred to us.

On another note, I know instructional time is important, but our graduation rate in Logan beats the state's average by more than 20%. Our reading and math proficiency rates also beat the state averages by quite a bit. If you won't listen to reason, please at least look at the numbers. We are doing our jobs here, and doing them well with a four-day week.

I implore you to think that there are many more ramifications to changing the number of days than you realize. Student apathy and chronic absenteeism is at an all time high in New Mexico...do you truly think making them go to school for more days will help that? Also, we already talked about teacher burn out, but did you consider that you may have a mass exodus of teachers if you increase the amount of days they have to work? Not to mention, that's not an attractive way to incentivize people to go into teaching, and surely I don't need to go into that.

Please, please reconsider adding more days to our calendar and let the districts continue to make their own decisions.

Thank you,

Crystal J. Terrell
HS ELA Teacher
Student Council Sponsor
Logan Municipal School
301 N. 2nd St.
P.O. Box 67
Logan, NM 88426
(575) 487-2252 ext. 1310

"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away." -Shakespeare

From: [Marc Owens](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Change to 4-Day School Weeks
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:58:43 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My grandchildren attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for my family. The 4-day school week provides my daughter's family the opportunity to support their children's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Marc Owens

From: [Melissa Goldman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: aftnmaction@gmail.com; [Jaramillo, Leo](#); christine.chandler@nmlegis.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:58:47 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

I currently teach Latin at Los Alamos High School, but have taught a number of other subjects, including Math as a Special Education teacher, in my more than two decades of teaching. My current contract is for 195 days, with 187 of those as instructional days. Our middle and high school both operate on a modified block schedule, with each day consisting of 3 longer classes (that meet on alternating days) and 1 half-length class (that meets daily). Juniors and seniors have the opportunity to request unsupervised periods, as long as they are on track to graduate and are maintaining a specific GPA. This flexibility helps students balance the demands on their time. Many use that period to complete schoolwork during the day so that they are able hold jobs without seeing their grades suffer. It also gives seniors time to work on applications for post-secondary programs and scholarships when they have immediate access to school supports. Allowing students free periods clearly is not hurting academic achievement, given our 97% graduation rate and our students' great success at all levels of later education.

The proposed 6.10.5.6.A would upend our schedule in a number of ways, as it requires students to be enrolled in four credit-bearing classes per day. The initial information we are hearing is that our current schedule would count as 3.5 classes, due to the class that meets every day for half the time of other classes. If we were to maintain the modified block, which provides more time for hands-on activities and in-depth discussions, students would need to take eight classes each semester. Even with a longer school day, each block period would be shorter than now, meaning our classes would cover less material and/or go less in depth unless work outside of class was increased. At the same time, students would have one additional class in their schedule, creating even more work and responsibilities, unless we made the decision across the school to lessen our expectations, which would have the potential to impact students' success after high school. I also worry that adding another class while also removing any opportunity for unsupervised periods would lead to greater student stress, less willingness to attempt advanced courses, and a higher dropout rate.

None of the above directly addresses the impact on teachers and class size.

Adding an additional class means staffing enough classrooms for that extra period. Not allowing students to have non-credit-bearing periods in their schedules means finding classroom space for even more. Our current enrollment at LAHS is 1180 students in

grades 9-12; our students collectively have about 480 periods in which they are not taking a class each semester. This means we would need to create 1660 more classroom seats each year. At 25 students per class, this would require 66+ additional classes, equivalent to more than 13 full-time teachers. Even at a cramped 32 students per class, we would need more than 51 new classes, equivalent to over 10 full-time teachers.

Given that the proposal of NMAC Rule 6.10.5 is not accompanied by any promise of funding to support such changes, it is unlikely that we would see the addition of 10 or more teachers to our faculty. Instead, it is much more likely that current teachers would be required to teach an additional class. In many cases this would mean preparing a new course in addition to what we already teach, but with less time overall for lesson-planning. Increased demands on our planning time would also mean less time for preparing student feedback, collaborating with colleagues, and pursuing any professional development that does not coincide with the days scheduled for that. Class size would need to be increased across the board, and many smaller classes that are allowed to run now would be removed from the schedule if they couldn't increase numbers. That would primarily impact advanced courses, again decreasing the level of rigor students would be able to experience before leaving high school. It would also affect classes that support struggling students, such as courses designed to help them develop stronger academic skills; smaller class sizes allow these teachers to work with students one-on-one and to target their individual needs.

Teachers are already demoralized. I have many colleagues who are re-calculating how much longer they will stay in the profession. The proposed 6.10.5 would only accelerate this. Two years ago, I thought I would be teaching until the mid-2030s. With the changes implemented for this year and the continuing negativity towards educators, I recently changed my goal to 2028, the year my youngest will graduate from high school. If these proposed changes go into effect, this very well could be my last year.

I ask NM PED to reconsider adopting NMAC Rule 6.10.5 without allowing more time to examine the options, costs, and potential consequences of any changes. The changes mandated by HB 130 have been in place for less than a semester, so there is not yet any meaningful measure of their impact.

Thank you for your consideration,
Melissa Goldman
Latin Teacher
Los Alamos High School
Los Alamos Public Schools

--

Melissa J. Goldman (she/they)
505-663-2563 (voicemail)
<https://sites.google.com/laschools.net/mgoldman/>
Los Alamos Public Schools
Safe Space Coordinator
Los Alamos High School

World Languages, Latin and Department Chair
Sponsor of GSA and Latin Club



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This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Kimberly Archuleta-Vigil](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback for proposed rulemaking
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:09:58 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to get my voice heard. I would like to submit feedback regarding the proposed rule change regarding the 5-day school week. My name is Kimberly Archuleta-Vigil and have lived in rural areas all my life. I have begun my 22nd year in teaching. I taught for 12 years in a 5-day school district and have been at my current 4-day school district for 10 years. I have enjoyed my job as a teacher in both districts. I can't deny how beneficial the 4-day school week has been at my rural Mesa Vista School District for first and foremost our students, teachers, staff, and community. Being from a rural area, students spend more than an hour riding the bus to and from school so having an extended day opposed to a longer week is more beneficial for them and their families. So, I am 100% in favor of keeping the 4-day school week. This is also an extremely important incentive that attracts professionals and students to our rural district and increases staff morale and student enjoyment. Living in a rural area, we need to drive at least an hour to get to the nearest grocery store or doctor appointments. The 4-day school week has also allowed for staff and students to adjust their schedule for medical appointments, grocery shopping, vacations, time to destress, and just time to spend with family which alleviates time away from school days.

In order to make the needed improvements, increasing the number of days or eliminating the 4-day school week is not the solution. We need to address issues of attendance for truant offenders, provide support for community members who are struggling to motivate their children to come to school, and understand that not all NM community schools work in the same one size fits all models. **That's what makes NM so wonderful!** We have such a robust population of people, cultures, families, traditions, and communities. We need to reignite the love and importance of learning and let our families know that education and learning are things that no one can take from you. Once you earn it with hard work and determination, they are yours forever. Allowing the community, students, and staff to decide collaboratively is what is going to be the most beneficial for our future (the children) and will make a lasting impact for future generations. This will give everyone ownership, which is a great motivator!

Kimberly Archuleta-Vigil

Mesa Vista Consolidated School District

Ojo Caliente Elementary 4th Grade Teacher

kimberly.vigil@mesavista.org

OCE

From: [Dustin Cook](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Changing from a 4 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:11:34 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Dustin Cook*

From: [Aaron Higgins-Brake](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:19:01 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Aaron Higgins-Brake; I am a resident of Albuquerque and a parent. I am writing in opposition to the rule change (6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements) that would impose a 180 day school year. I am deeply concerned that what New Mexico students need is not more time in the classroom, but a better support system for while students are in the classroom. It is imperative that funding be directed towards more school counselors, social workers, nurses, and professional development for teachers.

Skilled teachers are already being driven out of the profession by poor working conditions, and this rule change would surely drive more away. Whatever educational shortcomings students are facing should be met with better support services, rather than by compelling them to sit extra hours in the classroom and by eking out extra labor from teachers.

Best regards,
Aaron Higgins-Brake

From: [Allison Okuyama](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No mandatory 5 days/week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:25:05 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Allison Frazier

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sharon Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 180 day proposal
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:44:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NMPED,

My name is Sharon Smith. I am a military wife and mother whose children attend Cloudcroft Schools, one child in elementary and one in high school. As a family who has had to move around, I can say from personal experience that both of my children have excelled in the 4-day school format. Both are straight-A students and perform very high on state testing. The teachers and staff at Cloudcroft have made a huge impact on them, but also the 4-day format has been a far better learning environment than their previous 5-day schools. Their focus is better, and they don't come home exhausted after 5 days. It's been an impressive change in our home and in their lives.

The current NMPED proposal that requires students to meet for 180 days a year, rather than the 1,140 instructional hours, will negatively impact Cloudcroft Schools on several fronts. Losing our 4-day school schedule will strain our already burdened rural school budget that serves many surrounding areas. It's my belief that the 4-day schedule is also one of the greatest recruitment and retainment incentives for our incredible teachers and staff. The current schedule allows students to have rest, quality time with their families, hold jobs and apprenticeships as they age, excel at their extracurricular activities, and actively participate in our village events.

In addition, our students currently have a day in which they can have routine appointments, such as dental cleanings, eye exams, etc. This takes a full day as the commute for such appointments is quite a drive for the majority of our rural families. Our students are not missing out on entire days of learning for simple appointments.

If NMPED is concerned with meeting welfare and childcare needs, increasing funding for after-school care and programs, especially in rural areas, would be welcome alternatives to the 5-day school proposal. Creating a 5-day schedule would not remedy the after-school and working parents' schedule gap—nor should we expect young children's developing minds and bodies to adapt to an adult work schedule. In fact, a shorter school day in a 5-day model will be a challenge as our small community has an already full after-school daycare and almost no room for affordable growth on our mountain for more after-school options to accommodate the need should the school day be shorter.

Cloudcroft Schools have excellent graduation rates, test scores, and other measurable performance outcomes. Any school that is performing well, retaining teachers and students, and making the most out of their meager operational budgets should be able to choose how the instructional hours will best fit their community needs. Additionally, there are families who make an impressive drive out of district to bring their children to Cloudcroft Schools. Their local 5-day schools are not working for them and are not performing as high as Cloudcroft.

Thank you for your consideration, and please reach out if you have any questions or further concerns.

Sincerely,
Sharon Smith

From: [Ina Cook](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Alice King Community School
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:46:13 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Ina Cook, parent of two AKCS students

From: [Sel Caballero](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:49:34 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

When I first dreamt of being a teacher, I pictured myself making a difference in students' lives by learning as much about teaching and learning as possible, implementing curriculum that fostered critical and innovative thinkers, and working to build communities of engaged learners and mutual care for one another. I never imagined that the people who make decisions that affect our education system would create so many obstacles to achieving this goal. I honestly do not feel that the people in power in the educational system of our state have the same goals as teachers do. This has created a nearly impossible working environment.

More work days for teachers is NOT the solution to improving our education system. We are already overworked and doing the jobs of many people. As a general education teacher, I should not have to feed and clothe students, provide speech services, provide severe behavioral intervention services, provide counseling for families, potty train students, (to new a few extra things on my to do list) on top of all of the professional duties that come with being a teacher. Even after my eight years of teaching, I never go home at the end of my duty day because there is so much to do that I simply do not have time to do it during my work day. And that's aside from the fact that I am at a TOPS school, which I thought would be a great opportunity to do some innovative work with my teaching pedagogy and systems, but has just left me with even more work than I have had in years past due to the high demands of PD hours.

What do teachers really need:

- Support services and staff: counselors, behavior redirectors, educational assistants, behavioral health therapists, speech and language pathologists, math and reading interventionists, community school leaders, Student Assistance Team chairs... that work full time and are paid fair wages, so that teachers can actually focus on teaching and do not have to take on so many extra roles.
- Smaller class sizes: Our academic deficits will not be addressed until teachers have smaller class sizes so they can truly connect with students and target instruction according to individual needs. This is especially important for our students who live in poverty.
- Addressing our broken Special Education system: in our current primary special education classroom there are 18 students, in three different grade levels, with needs ranging from needing extra support in reading to students who have such severe behavioral issues that they destroy the classroom and threaten to kill their teachers daily. These students' needs are not being met. We are letting them down and wearing out the brave teachers who take on these positions.
- Consistency. In calendars, in staff, in leaders, in funding, in the time allotted for us to do the work that benefits our students.

These needs are so severe and so obvious to any teacher working within the public education system of New Mexico that an idea such as the 180 day school year clearly shows how disconnected educational law makers are from what is really happening in our schools.

Decisions like these are what make teachers feel powerless, defeated, and drive them away.

--

Sel Caballero, M.Ed. (she/her)

Kindergarten Teacher

SAT Co-Chair

Inez Elementary School

From: [Julia Hoffman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC - School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:55:05 PM

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Good afternoon.

I'm an English Language Development teacher at the high school level. I have a Masters degree in TESOL and I have taught English language learners in NYC and Santa Fe.

I'm strongly opposed to the proposed motion by the PED to increase the school year.

Research shows that increasing the school year is not only detrimental on students but on teacher retention.

If we really want higher student achievement rates, we need to put our resources into hiring more teachers so that class sizes are smaller.

Anyone who spends time in the classroom knows this and knows that adding more time to the year will result in an even more dire teacher shortage and even worse student performance.

This proposal is nothing more than educator bashing. It is effectively saying that we aren't good enough at our jobs to achieve high student performance during the current calendar school year—when really there is so much more stacked against us and our students. Listen to educators.

Listen to the experts. Work with us, not against us.

Julia Hoffman

English Language Development Teacher
Santa Fe High School
2100 Yucca St, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Tel: 505-467-2455
Text: 505-336-0444

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From: [Dean Strober](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] DO NOT FORCE A 5-DAY SCHOOL WEEK ON ALICE KING COMMUNITY SCHOOL!
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:58:04 PM
Importance: High

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

DO NOT FORCE A 5-DAY SCHOOL WEEK ON ALICE KING COMMUNITY SCHOOL!

My child Aleeya attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have severely negative implications for Aleeya and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

PLEASE - DO NOT FORCE A 5-DAY SCHOOL WEEK ON ALICE KING COMMUNITY SCHOOL!

Sincerely,
Dean Strober

.....
Dean Strober, Owner/Producer
Blue River Productions
(505) 510-1312
Dean@BlueRiverProductions.com
www.BlueRiverProductions.com

From: [Sarah Hendrix](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 5:15:52 PM

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The four day Loving School schedule provides more time for my family to be together. My husband currently works four 10's and is off on Friday's. The school schedule gives him and my kids more time together. We also go out of town often and it is so nice and convenient that we do not have to take our kids out of school on Fridays. The school is exceeding state average year after year as a four day school. Let the elected school board continue to set the school calendar. I ask that you please take into consideration the requests of the parents and the school.

Thank you for your time,

Sarah Thompson

From: [Damon Waggoner](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 DAY SCHOOL WEEK
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 5:35:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Sirs,

I have already sent an email about this issue, but because of what this will mean to many of us who live in the mountains, we are already talking and making preliminary plans to start homeschooling our children. Maybe that would be favorable with you at the state level, as it would lessen the number of kids having to be educated. Living in the mountains is a great blessing, but it is also a harder and different lifestyle. To go to a doctor or other appointments or even the grocery store, is a thing that must be planned, as it takes hours to do any of these things. For most of us, we heat our homes with wood and the job of cutting, splitting, hauling and so forth is a large commitment. We live in the mountains and work hard, so our families can enjoy skiing and hiking and so much more. I am a teacher who can fully retire in 5 years, but was planning to teach for a few more years, because I love teaching and the kids. Now, I am talking with teacher retirement about early retirement. I have construction skills where I can make good money to supplement my lower retirement pay, and it is worth it so that we can continue with the lifestyle we moved here for. At first my kids were concerned about homeschooling, but it seems a number of their friend's families are looking at the same thing, so we will make things work for our families. I would ask you to please consider the wellbeing and the education of kids. Our school has done well for 40 years on a 4 day (extended time) school - please don't mess with it. There are a number of school employees considering retirement, early retirement and just general job changes with these possible changes. Why make us do this and then put our children at risk, because of the staff that will be leaving?

Thanks for your consideration! Damon Waggoner

From: [Justin Green](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] feedback 6.10.5nmac
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 5:36:28 PM

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I choose to keep school four days a week due to family time at home the kids enjoy it more because it's only four times a week my kids are happy to go to school they are willing to learn due to having equal family time and equal learning time

From: [Crystle Gutierrez](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 5:38:34 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Secretary Romero, PED staff, and APS-

This email is regarding the PED Administrative Rule being proposed- 6/10/5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements:

I am disheartened and completely disappointed to hear of this new push for students to be in school even longer. Have you walked into an Elementary school this year? I have been an educator in APS for 20 years and morale is the worst I've ever seen.

Teachers are feeling pulled in every direction with little to NO prep time. Constant new initiatives and little to no support. Now you're proposing to take away the ONE day a month we have for professional development? No more collaboration among our peers? No parent-teacher conferences to foster the utmost partnership with parents? Unbelievable.

Bell to bell schedules have been a complete disaster. I am preparing hands-on meaningful lessons after school (after my voluntary bus duty that I have yet to be paid for) or at home in the evenings and weekends. I am coming in at LEAST an hour early to attend SAT or BIP meetings and having staff meetings or collaboration after school. I also meet with parents before and after school because I care about students. NONE of this I am being compensated for. Why on Earth do APS teachers have a 6.5 paid work day? It's absurd! I can only speak for Elementary teachers but we are absolutely being taken advantage of and many incredible educators WILL leave after this school year. Prepare for even more vacancies in the district. It's wrong to expect more and more of us and not pay us for our time. If you want student achievement to increase, pay all teachers in New Mexico a MINIMUM of a 7.5 hour work day.

The obvious to NM being poorly ranked in education is because schools are poorly staffed. My school in particular has no counselor, no behavior redirector, no assistant principal, no dean of students, no intervention teacher, SPED classes that are way over ratio, and the list goes on and on. IT'S SUCH A DISSERVICE TO STUDENTS. PED and APS want to talk often about SEL and meeting students' social emotional needs. Then put bodies in our buildings to support students' well being in totality. As much as I try, I am truly not equipped to be a counselor, intervention teacher, redirector, etc. all of those things to my students in addition to the many hats I wear as a general education teacher. More days in school will only compound the issue of APS asking appropriate and essential staff in every school to meet our student's diverse needs. We must have supplemental support staff provided at EVERY school to see an increase in student achievement. There is no correlation between higher test scores and number of days in school. There are strong correlations between more support staff within schools to support learners and

higher achievement. Has PED made proposals that will genuinely address how to lift the students in New Mexico out of poverty? I'm yet to hear real solutions.

The one size fits all approach in our state is not working. Each district in the state and zone within APS has diverse needs. I can tell you my school does not need more days with students. We have high achieving students whose families value quality family time, summer vacation. Many will leave and go to private schools if we add more days, as many already did this school year. Then the low enrollment problem will plague APS even more. You are creating bigger problems with your extended school year "proposal". Even more teacher burnout, student burn out, and frustrated parents.

Thank you for your time and reading my concerns.

Crystle Gutierrez
Kindergarten Teacher
Albuquerque Public Schools

From: [Rachel Light](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 5:38:41 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to provide feedback on the proposed rule change to 6.10.5 NMAC, School Instructional Time Requirements. I do not support the proposed change.

The proposed change would require major schedule changes in our district at both the elementary and secondary level. This would create an additional burden on already stressed school administrators and staff.

There is not sufficient time for districts to plan for these changes and it is unlikely that these changes would be implemented well given the time constraints.

The proposed changes could also have important financial implications for districts due to increases in teacher contract days, increased meal and transportation costs, and other operational expenses.

I hope you will reconsider the proposed change. New Mexico should focus on the quality of its instruction-not on adding additional instructional time. Our time is better spent asking why only 1 in 3 New Mexico students is reading on grade level. I don't think the answer is instructional time.

Sincerely,
Rachel Light

From: [Justin Green](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] feedback 6.10.5nmac
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 5:38:46 PM

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I choose to keep school four days a week due to family time at home the kids enjoy it more because it's only four times a week my kids are happy to go school they are willing to learn due to having equal family time and equal learning time



Justin Green

Field Tech Intermediate

M [575-689-5153](tel:575-689-5153)

E justin.green@kodiakgas.com

KODIAKGAS.COM



From: [Ryan Davidson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 5:40:19 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Thanks,
Ryan Davidson*

From: [Andres Grajeda](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Four day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 5:58:51 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Andrés Grajeda

From: [Kayoko Okuyama](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NO 5-day school week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 6:08:18 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Kayoko Okuyama

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Allison Washburn](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; aftnmaction@gmail.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 6:12:57 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I teach Second Grade at Aspen Elementary School. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 188 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students from 8:30 to 3:30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In our school district, Wednesdays are half days, starting at 8:30 and ending at 12:00. Due to this abbreviated Wednesday schedule, our students are able to catch up on school work, go to the doctor without missing school, still enjoy family time, join a club, and/or participate in various community activities. On these Wednesday afternoons, teachers are given time for professional responsibilities like grading, planning, meeting, and collaborating. This average of 300 minutes of preparation time weekly is guaranteed to our teachers through our collectively bargained agreement and ensures that our educators can provide students with a high quality education.

The proposed 6.10.5.8 C 1 requires 180 instructional days per school year and would not include professional development time and the proposed 6.10.5.8 D would require that elementary school days be no shorter than five and a half hours. In order to meet these requirements, our elementary schools would have to discontinue our early release Wednesdays, which would be a problem for students because it would require a schedule change for afterschool programs and drastically change how families would need to plan for after school care. Another consequence for students could be that release times would change to being earlier on a daily basis, again creating a problem for after school care. This change would also be problematic for staff as they would have to deal with a schedule change in order to get the allotted average of 300 minutes of prep time weekly. Staff also have children who will be affected by this schedule change. An unintended result may be that teachers leave the profession due to the increase in demands of their time.

I ask NM PED to reconsider NMAC Rule 6.10.5 and vote no on Monday December 18th.

Thank you for your consideration,
Allison Washburn
Second Grade Teacher
Aspen Elementary School
Los Alamos Public Schools

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN AT THE NMPED,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

I am a student from Magdalena New Mexico and I'm here to say that the five-day week would be hard on our mental health and extremely unhealthy. It would also make everyone way more stressed, increasing attitude and bad behavior. It could also make the teacher's life worse because some teachers and students live farther away from the school than others. It would make lots of time for the teachers to drive all the way here and then have to deal with a lot of misbehaving students. Also, the teachers and students wouldn't have as much time to hang out with their friends and also if they have maybe a second job to help their income. They also wouldn't have as much time for their kids not being able to be with them and also maybe not

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

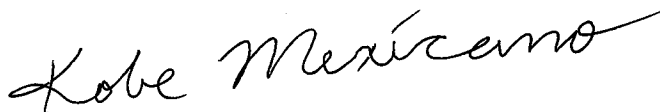
I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023, should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico Education.

We don't want to come to the school if there is school on Fridays, because we get exhausted from just being here until Thursday. If there is Friday school, kids won't go on Friday and they will be at risk of failing all their classes. School food will cost more and electricity will cost more and the water bill will go up. The bus gas is going to be more and the bus driver may even be more exhausted. Magdalena has been at a four day school week here, for over 40 years and it will change the community.

Changing the scheduling of the school week by adding another day that we must attend school can greatly impact many students from our school. It can impact many of us in many ways, it might even cause more stress and anxiety for the students after having the same school schedule their entire life, which more than 60 percent of the students at our school have gone their entire lifetime since the age they could go to school. It might hurt some of the students that go home and help out their families on the weekends

Sincerely,
A Concerned student

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kobe Mexicano". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kobe Mexicano
Class of 2025 Magdalena Student
A Concerned student

Dear To Whom it May Concern at New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

I am Colt Mendoza from Magdalena School District and I would like to explain why a five day weekend will not be good. It is not a good idea to change to a five day weekend because we are so used to a four day weekend and some kids can not test well or learn well when they are tired. It is also not a good idea because we have kids that are ranchers and farmers that need to help their families with their farms or ranches. On Friday me and my brother go out to my grandpa's ranch and help him a lot on Friday. I come from a ranching background and my grandpa has his own ranch and we have to go help him a lot on the weekends. We also have sports that we have games for and practices for. All of us have families too, our teachers and students are always tired by thursday and we all get stressed out. I think that another day will stress us out more and will not make us learn well. That is why I think we should stay on a four day week instead of a five day week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colt. Mendoza". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Colt Mendoza

7th grader

Student of Magdalena School District

To Whom It May Concern at The New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

I believe that 5-days of school would be very stressful, aggravating, and heart-wrenching. A 5-day school week, would for me would mean hardly any time for a break, considering I play volleyball, do cheerleading all year around, work Wednesdays-Sundays, clean my entire house, and help with my siblings. As it is, I hardly have time for taking care of myself, being with my friends, and keeping up with my grades/homework.

On Friday's my cheerleading team practices two-three hours learning how to stunt properly, as well as tumbling. Having only a four-day school week saves the students, as well as the school money. With a five-day school week gas costs raise a lot more for students who live far away, compared to students who live in town. Not everyone can afford these costs. I think myself, my peers, and our staff will be more worn out, stressed, and anxious being at school during a five-day school week. Even though, it is only a four-day school week now, I hear comments from my peers that they are exhausted, schedules filled, and that they just need a break. A four-day school week provides more productiveness, better mental health, and improved concentration.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Student,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebekah Cearley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebekah Cearley

11th grader

Student of Magdalena School District

To whom it may concern
Dear NMPED,

I am writing this letter to you from Magdalena multiple schools. On December 4, 2023. I think this is a bad decision to make a 5 day week of school. The reason for that is because it's really not going to make a big difference.

For instance, people are probably not going to Friday school because there are students who have sports games on that day or even have doctors appointments. That will make a big impact on Friday school. When you miss that, that could really affect our attendance and when you miss a day, even some teachers won't let us make it up and you could even fail and not be eligible to play sports.

Another thing is that there are students that live far away from school and drive like 30 or even more miles to get to school. We live in a small community where there is a house far away from school. Plus they spend a lot of gas money and nowadays gas prices are going up. Did you also know that we spend more time at school than we do at home? Like we need time to be a kid before going into the real world.

If you were to put in an extra day, the schools would have to pay extra money to the teachers, staff, just people who work. But please don't make it a 5 day week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jema Ganadonegro', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jema Ganadonegro
10th grader
Student of Magdalena school district

To Whom It May Concern at NMPED,

I'm a 10th grade student at Magdalena Municipal Schools, I've been going to this school since pre k. I think five day school weeks wouldn't benefit me or any of my classmates at all, the first week of school this year got canceled because of a power outage. We had to make up the days we missed on Fridays, and less than half of the kids actually showed up for the make-up days. Our attendance is going to be horrible starting next year if you follow through with this five day school week. Lots of the students are going to fail their classes for not showing up, they're going to become unmotivated and eventually they're not going to care about failing grades, or being eligible for sports.

Another problem this will cause is money issues, the schools are going to have to pay for a bus driver to run on fridays, enough food to last another school day, all of our school expenses will go up, and the kids are going to struggle with gas. Lots of kids that come to my school live 30-40 mins away, there's a bus that goes to Alamo but there isn't anything for the other kids. That's going to put a lot of pressure on the kids that drive, they have to worry about using more money every week for gas.

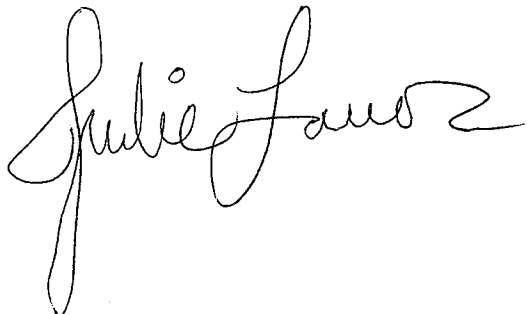
This change is going to affect my school in a negative way, I know my classmates and the kids at this school. We all don't want to be here more than we need to, if we get all the school hours we need done in a four day week I don't understand why we need to change it now. Four day weeks have been going on at my school for 40 years, obviously it's working if seniors are graduating and going to college every year.

School is very draining on students and teachers, getting through four days is already difficult. Adding another day even though the four days have been working just fine doesn't make any sense. I really like having a three day weekend. It gives me more time to see my dad who works out of town, and doesn't come home till friday. It lets us be kids, in highschool we're all concerned about college and graduating that we forget to live in the moment before it's too late. I think it's super important to have a life out of schooling and to have fun while we can.

Inclosing, please take this into consideration when making a final decision, thank you for your time.

XOXO,

Julianne Marie Lower 🍷

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julianne Marie Lower', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeremiah D.L Alvarez

Miss McAleese

6 December 2023

Consideration for keeping a four-day week at Magdalena Municipal School District

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico Education

I don't believe that we should go to a five day week because lots of teachers and students will get frustrated at the end of the week. We will all be drained from all the sports and clubs, dealing with all of the roundy kids. An additional day of all that stress, with only two days to recharge. Imagine being in a 15 year olds body, having to deal with all of that stress at school, work, sports and clubs that you're in, plus dealing with stuff at home. I feel students would not have time to relax because students have homework, practice or games, etc. Our brains are still developing and we need more time to rest and recuperate rather than have another day of stress.

Thank you for your consideration

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremiah Alvarez". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script.

Jerimiah Alvarez

9th grader

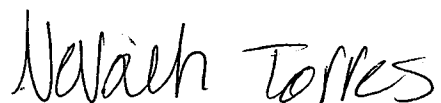
Student at Magdalena School District

To Who it May Concern at New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

New Mexico Public Education Department I don't think that a five day week would work with all the schedules that are students have even with all the ranchers that live far from school we all have a life outside of school that we want to attend too. we need that space to be ourselves and help family out we don't need to be having our minds on school 24/7 if you want to make us have school five day a week of school then you can clean my house do my chores pay for my gas i really do think that you should re think this decision it effects our metal heath some of us have therapy on fridays too we cant just give all our attention to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nevaeh Torres". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Nevaeh" and the last name "Torres" clearly distinguishable.

Nevaeh Torres

7th grader

Student of Magdalena School District

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department

I am writing to express my strong support for maintaining the current four-day school week in our educational system. As a student invested in quality education and the well-being of my peers, I firmly believe that continuing with the four-day school schedule brings significant benefits for both students and our community.

One compelling reason to sustain the four-day school week is the positive impact it has on student focus and engagement. With a condensed schedule, students are more likely to stay attentive and actively participate in class discussions, leading to a more immersive and effective learning environment.

The four-day school week allows for valuable flexibility in students' lives. Having an extra day off enables us to delve into extracurricular activities, part-time jobs, or community service, enhancing our overall personal development. These experiences outside the classroom are essential for shaping well-rounded individuals prepared for life beyond school.

Financially, maintaining the four-day school week could bring savings for both the school district and families. Reduced operational costs, such as transportation and utilities, could free up resources for other essential educational needs. Families might also benefit from providing relief for households.

Moreover, the longer weekend resulting from a four-day school week is crucial for our mental health and well-being. It grants us additional time to rest, rejuvenate, and spend quality moments with our families, helping us strike a better balance between academics and personal life.

In conclusion, I urge the New Mexico Public Education Department to recognize the importance of preserving the four-day school week. This schedule not only fosters a conducive learning environment but also encourages holistic development and supports the overall well-being of students.

Thank you for considering the significance of maintaining the four-day school week. I hope that the department acknowledges the positive impact it has on students and our educational system.

Sincerely,

Jaime Muñoz

11th grader

Student as Magdalena School District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jaime Muñoz', with a stylized, cursive script.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN AT THE NMPED

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen. It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

Changing the scheduling of the school week by adding another day that we must attend school can greatly impact many students from our school. It can impact many of us in many ways, it might even cause more stress and anxiety for the students after having the same school schedule their entire life, which more than 60 percent of the students at our school have gone their entire lifetime since the age they could go to school. It might hurt some of the students that go home and help out their families on the weekends and after school.

I feel that if we had school 5 days a week instead of 4, it would make students more tired. Which in turn means that student grades, attitude, and effort will go down due to tiredness and lack of positive attitude and work. Also our school is struggling with money and if we go to school 5 days a week that means more money will be spent on food, water bill, electric bill, teacher pay and in general more hours for most of the staff. As for students who do sports, there will be more school days for practice and it means athletes will be tired and more stressed out to do work, or athletic work for games, practices, and extra curricular activities. In conclusion this will end my letter based on 5 day school week.

Sincerely,



Jacob Marklnd

11th grader

Student of Magdalena Municipal Schools

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

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As a student from an agricultural background, I have animals to take care of and work to do. Feed for my livestock costs money that comes out of my pocket, and it's not only helpful but necessary for me to have time to work on weekends in order to afford feed and equipment for them. Especially when Friday is the main workday in the week for me as a student. I already work animals during the school week, before and after school. This is already stretching my capabilities thin, and adding an extra school day would add an abundance of stress, exhaustion and aggravation.

I, myself, have attended five day schools before, and I continuously got into more trouble. My grades were worse, I was stressed and constantly running to the point of exhaustion, which is why I've always preferred the four day week. It might seem that kids want a four day week so they can just stay at home playing video games on weekends, however in rural areas there are plenty of students like me who prefer it so we can work and set a standard for our futures.

Thank you for taking the time to hear a students side of the argument

Respectively,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Summers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca Summers

Junior

Magdalena High School

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition to HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023, if it should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, creating a rule that negates the existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico Education.

Why would school be switched from a 4 day school week instead of 5 days? With a longer weekend, students have more time to rest and engage in extracurricular activities, which can lead to better attendance during the week. This, in turn, can lead to improved academic performance. Furthermore, a four-day school week can help to boost teacher morale.

Best Wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julian Romero". The script is cursive and fluid.

Julian Romero

7th grader

Student of Magdalena School District

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition to HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023, so should it be chosen.

I think your decision about making us go to school on Fridays is a bad decision. We have ranchers and farmers out here who have lives and jobs they need to attend out there, we also have people who live out of town and drive all the way to school from over 30-45 miles away. If you really want to go forward with this decision then pay for our gas money, we shouldn't have to sacrifice our home life just because y'all want this. Would you like to come help our families and come work out on our ranches with us? Exactly. I didn't think so. It puts our teachers and staff through so much pressure and even us as students. It will crash our school and put us through heck. Hopefully you read this and understand.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sophia Haggemiller". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Sophia" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Haggemiller".

Sophia Haggemiller
Seventh Grader
Student of Magdalena School District

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

There are two sides to this argument and I am writing to keep the 4 day school day. There are also many reasons why we should keep it a 4 day school day. Many kids play sports and have to stay after school for practice. After the games and practices we students get tired and need a break to recover for our bodies and minds. Another reason is that a lot of kids come from other towns to attend this school and some have to drive over 30 minutes which adds up in gas money. I myself live in Lemitar and have to drive approximately 40 minutes and my parents work hard to get me to school on time. A lot of kids also live on ranches and farms and have to help out their families. Some including myself are involved in sports like rodeo and have to travel or be at the rodeo on Fridays making New Mexico attendance worse than it is. Overall there are many reasons why we should keep New Mexico schools a 4 day week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'KD' with a stylized flourish.

Kadence Duggins
8th grade at Magdalena School District

To Whom It May Concern at The New Mexico Public Education
Department,

I'm writing this letter on behalf of Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico. I consent for my letter to be read aloud at the December 18, 2023 meeting.

In my honest opinion, more school days would mess with a student's mental health, and it would mess up family plans and schedules. Kids deserve more time with their families. I feel NMPED should be made aware that when I lived in Albuquerque I went to school for 5 days and after a few months I ended up going to a mental hospital because I was so stressed out I even tried to kill myself. In Albuquerque, I was such a mental mess and I was so done with life and I kind of still am. Aside from me I mainly don't want school to go longer because I don't want my auntie to work harder than she does and that is because she is sick and having a hard time her sickness is getting worse. So, please don't allow the 5-day week.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Makhayla Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sincerely Makhayla Davis

8th grader at Magdalena Municipal School District

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition to HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023, so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

I think your decision is not good because our family has to wake up very early, 4am to take some of us to the bus stop or we have to spend extra gas money to drive us to school. Then they have to go to work please don't make us switch our 4 day school week to a 5 day school week. This will help with my stress levels and personal happiness. I am thankful for my 4 day school week.

Sincerely,

Tyrease Apachito

7th grader

Student of Magdalena School District

Tyrease Apachito

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

I am Xzavian Max Tafoya, a student at Magdalena Municipal Schools. I would like to protest against the five day school weeks you are trying to force on us students. I personally feel like it wouldn't benefit anyone and may even cause some people to move. The five day week will cause farmers, ranchers, and out of towners to spend a lot more money on gas expenses. I feel like many other students would agree when I say right now even with the four day weeks we don't get much social time with our family for most of the week; and even on the weekends a lot of kids have to work or sport games.

The five day school week will only cause students to have less sleep and not be as productive, and I can say from experience even after the four day week I am worn out on Thursday. I also live in town and my weekends are always busy and I live close to everything, I can only imagine how busy ranchers and farmers are on their days off. Having five days will create a lot more stress on teachers, students, and parents. Teachers will have to get more lessons planned out and have a lot more work to grade, students who already have a lot of work to do are gonna have even more homework. Parents are gonna have to worry about work and taking their kids to school an extra day and fit these changes into their schedule. So just think about how it will affect the people that will have to deal with it and not go based on the opinion of those who don't go to school.

Sincerely, Xzavian Max Tafoya



Sophomore at Magdalena Municipal Schools

P.O. BOX 1584

Magdalena NM 87825

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

I am Layla Lynn Lower, A Sophomore student in Magdalena Municipal School District, New Mexico. I think that a five day school week will affect our school in many ways because our school has been a four week school for forty years so this is a dramatic change.

My classmates and I, have been attending school with a four day school week schedule for the last ten years. I have read evidence that five day school weeks, have shown more fights in bigger schools and our school is small and there are no fights. There are slight disagreements with some students which is typical for high school and of course there are students that are academically challenging for our teachers.

Our four day week works for our community because we have many students who travel in from ranchers, reservations and other smaller towns. I think it will be a hardship to add another day. Our school expenses will go up, gas prices for families, electricity, water and propane. If we have a five day week we will not have very many breaks that we get to enjoy with our families. This will cause our students more stress and they already are. It will add more stress to the parents that have to work on a five day schedule due to the fact that the governor would like to add one more day to the week. I think that this will affect the student so much that it might be a possibility that some of our students will drop out.

Recently we had a power outage that lasted for a while and we had to make up three Fridays that were intense because everybody was upset about the fact that we had to make up those days on Fridays because they had to cancel working on that day so they missed a day of their weekly pay. This will cause emotional stress on our students and will affect our town and community.

Thank you for your time
PS- Best of luck!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Layla Lower', written over a horizontal line.

- Layla Lower
10th grader
Student at Magdalena School District

To Whom It May Concern at The New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

As a student at Magdalena Municipal Schools, I feel strongly, that changing the school week schedule would very negatively affect everyone. If the NMPED makes us switch to a five day school week it could have negative effects on not only the students, teachers, and work staff but also the families and the community. Five day school weeks take away from being able to spend time with our families.

If I wanted to spend more time at school I could have gone to a boarding school. How would you feel if you had to spend more time with your teachers than with your own family. This will also affect the community, taking away from fun and important community events. This will cost every family more money on gas just to get their children to school. Not only does it cost money it also costs mental stability, for the students and teachers. Every weekend including Friday my family and I have our own important and personal things to attend to. The school has been doing four day school weeks for 40 years so by changing it you are saying we have all been wrong for 40 years. I strongly believe that if the NMPED moves forward with a five day school week it will have so many more negative affects than the positive ones.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jada Reid". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "J" and "R".

Jada Reid
8th grader
Student of Magdalena School District

To whom it may concern at New Mexico Public ,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. This is my stance on the 5 day change. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

I think the weekends are very important. If NMPED started making us go to school on Fridays it would be a negative change in my life. I'm in the Civil Air Patrol Cadet program and it is important I attend the meetings. It is considered a project based class and our meetings are held on Fridays, so if I had school I could not attend the meetings anymore. C.A.P. is a leadership program and each cadet has specific jobs in the squadron. I would not be there to do my job duties. Other cadets would miss the meeting too if school is on Fridays.

My parents drive 120 miles a day (2 round trips) to get me to school. If you think about it, a lot of gasoline is being burned. It costs a lot of money to drive there and if I have to start going another day of the week that will just raise the cost for me to travel to school.

My dad works all week long so I barely get to see him when I get home. That means I only have 3 days to spend with him a week. If NMPED made us go to school on Friday I would only be able to spend time with my dad for 2 days! Plus I have to do homework on the weekends because I barely have time to do anything when I get home because sports keep me at school for longer periods of time. The weekends help me decompress after a long week. Kids will start to be less motivated to go to school because they will not have that time to rest. I believe things are great the way they are. I don't know why NMPED is doing this, but it is not the right choice to be made. You can believe me because I'm speaking from a student's point of view. Thank you for taking your time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

x William D Armijo

William D. Armijo
Student of Magdalena School District

To whom it may concern:

12/5/23

Im Trinity Trujillo, a student attending and speaking on behalf of Magdalena Municipal school district in Magdalena, New Mexico, in direct opposition of HB 130. I gave consent for my letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 concerning bringing back 5 day school weeks.

It has been brought to my attention that the school district is considering bringing back the 5 day week at school. I personally think that they are making a mistake if they do so, because 4 day school weeks have helped me as a student, and helped me become an independent adult.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. The state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

I'm 18 years old and live on my own. I cannot see myself being able to manage going to school 5 days a week and still being able to manage my responsibilities outside of school. Having a 4 day school week allows me to have more time for work to be able to support myself.

Today's students tend to have a lot more than just school going on in their lives. A Lot of students have sports, tutoring, jobs, house work, and working on themselves mentally or physically.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to the students that this decision would impact the most.

Respectfully, 

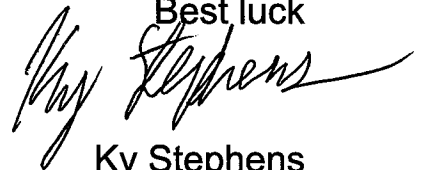
Trinity Trujillo
11th grader
Student of Magdalena Municipal Schools

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

If I have to go to school for five days a week, it would mess up my whole flow of life. I have been going to school for four days my whole life, and my schedule would be all messed up. I feel that three weekend days a week are mandatory for the recovery of my brain. After Thursday, my mind doesn't want to listen and I can't focus, so even if we go to Friday, it won't change anything. This won't just affect me though, it will also affect our school. We will have to pay lots more money for food and electricity, leaving less for things the kids actually need and want to come to school for, such as sports, extracurricular activities, etc.

Best luck

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ky Stephens", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ky Stephens

10th grader

Student of Magdalena School District

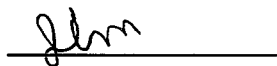
Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition to HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023, so should it be chosen.

I understand that you can not ignore our letters and I hope that is true. I have heard that you want to change our school week to a 5 day week. I want you to know that that would really mess things up. The reason our school has 4 days instead of 5 is because we are a ranching community and we need the time to help our families. We have to help our families with branding and other things and if we miss Friday our families will not get the helping hands they need.

Also in school when we have snow days and have to go to school on Friday and lots of kids fall asleep in class. Everyone is tired and the school looks like a zombie apocalypse. Also some kids like me come from Alamo and beyond and it takes 40-60 minutes to arrive at school. For me and my young sister we would be getting up at 5:30am 5 days a week and would be riding on the bus 10 hours a week.

Another reason you should not do this is because state law 22-8-23.14 says that the school district can decide to either have 4 or 5 day weeks. So you would have to get the state to get rid of that law. In total it would be a really bad idea and it would mess up a lot of schedules.



James Nance

Student or Magdalena School District

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen

I want to express my resentment of the 5- day school week. I have been to schools that have had 5-day week and the 5th day is really draining to the students and teachers who were always anxiously awaiting the weekend. Almost every Friday we wouldn't do anything educational in class and if we did work it was very little, because everybody is ready for the weekend.

The 4 day week system was a lot better than the 5 day because the 5th day was basically pointless and very redundant. With a 4 day week system the students have a lot less stress on them including teachers and staff and is overall a lot more beneficial for the students and teachers. In conclusion I don't think we should have 5 day weeks cause it's redundant and serves very little to none purpose.

Thank you for your consideration

Alex Torres

Alexander Torres

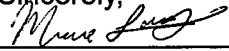
12th grader

Student at Magdalena Municipal Schools

To whom it may concern,

The purpose of this letter is to disagree with the new law of five day school. Magdalena Municipal schools has been on a four day school weeking for 40 years. If the state makes students go to school 5 days a week it will use more gas for students to drive to school one more day of the week. A majority of the students who come to Magdalena schools live on ranches and farms that range from 20 min-an hour away. The five day school week will interfere with student's' weekend jobs. It will interfere with student's personal lives with their family. I live 25 miles away from school. In total if I drive 5 days a week to school and back it adds up to 250 miles a week.

Sincerely,

x  _____

Matthew Lopez

10th grade

student of Magdalena Municipal School District

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition to HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023, so should it be chosen.

I am writing about why I think this is wrong and how it will stress out students to have a five day school week. Adding another day to school will be even more stressful for teachers and staff. There are farmers and ranchers who come here, this will cause us to spend more money, by adding another day to our already busy school week. This is especially hard for people who live farther away from school. We shouldn't have to make more sacrifices with our time and life. I hope you change your mind after hearing all of the students' complaints. Some of us help our parents on the weekends so the extra day ensures we can do more to support our farms, grandparents, and families in general. We all have a life outside of school.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Kali Bruton

Kali Bruton

7th Grader

Student of Magdalena School District

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition to HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023, should it be chosen.

The freedom of having a four-day school day (Monday- Thursday) allows me on Fridays to attend to the cattle I have. Friday is also the day that I get to check in on my Grandma and Grandpa and help them out in any way I can. This five-day school week will have a big mental impact on me and my peers. On what I know as a normal school week, I have to wake up at five o'clock in the morning, just to get on the bus by six thirty.

I live thirty miles away from my school. Which means I have to travel back and forth for those 4 days. In all that's 240 miles each week, yes we have bus drivers but having to go five days a week will mean less money to support our bus drivers, budget for gas, teacher and staff pay. Not only will it affect their pay it will also affect the budgets we have for sports, extracurricular activities, meals for school, water, heater, etc... The list goes on.

Not only will this affect the students and teachers but it will also affect the parents. Most parents find not having school on Friday convenient. Why? well because having Friday off means if needed can go to the doctor and or any appointments for that matter without having to worry about their kid missing any school. This takes away the stress and worry one might have of missing school and trying to make up the school work of the day missed.

When finalizing your decision please consider all sides and perspectives, no matter if it's a farmer, rancher, city kid, or small-town kid. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

Sophomore Belem Villa-Molina from Magdalena High School.

Baher Hilla-Holra

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.


The freedoms allowed by the 4-day school week for students to excel at extra-curricular activities such as 4H, FFA, NMAA sanctioned athletics, and a number of other extremely beneficial activities are simply unmatched. These programs and organizations help prepare the students for adult life and mold them into better functioning, higher achieving, and happier adults. These students will improve the workforce and the nation as a whole.

The stress levels caused by school are uncanny and unhealthy. Students, teachers, and even parents have reported stress and adding another day would just be too much. Studies show that 95 percent of students, academically as well as mentally, have improved from having school only 4 days a week. It's also been found that bullying incidents have decreased up to 39 percent. This makes for a better learning environment for the students and helps decrease stress on teachers.

Some studies show that attendance would decrease if the schedule is changed from a 4 day school week to a 5 day school week. When students have a 3 day weekend, they have more time to rest, spend time doing things they enjoy, as well as spend more time with their family

I keep talking about stress but where is this stress coming from? Well, students have been told that in order to have a successful life, you need to succeed in school. 61% of students between the ages 13 - 17 have admitted that they feel pressure to have satisfactory grades. 50 % of all middle school students say they stress about grades all the time and 75% of high school students agree with them. This is simply not fair. We can't expect students to deal with this stress, come to school 5 days a week, and get good test scores. If the 4 day school week stays, we would be giving students more time to decompress over the weekend and deal with this stress, which will take some weight off their shoulders. If the state wants functioning schools and students, they will choose to keep 4 day school weeks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jayden Carranza', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jayden Carranza

9th grader

A Student at Magdalena High School

To Whom This May Concern,

I'm in the Senior Class of 2024, at Magdalena Municipal Schools. I am writing this letter in concern for the future generations of graduates from Magdalena. Having a 5 day school week can lead to stress, depression, anxiety, and mental health issues. The 4 day school week makes children, teenagers, teachers, teacher assistants, and janitors have more time for addressing other parts of their lives. Turning a 4 day school week into a 5 day school week will cause students to become overwhelmed and more stressed out . Most students have duties helping taking care of responsibilities within their home such as taking care of siblings, work, taking care of the house, ranch, animals, and many more duties. People that live at least 70+ miles have to drive more than 300 miles and have to spend way more money on gas, just to come to school. By the end of the week students and teachers are mentally, physically and emotionally drained from school. Making a 5 day week of school can make attendance affect their future. The 4 day school week really helps students stay focused, calm, organized, and maintaining a regular schedule. Staying on a 4 day week can also really help athletes with practices and games on Friday. My opinion for changing a 4 day week to a 5 day school week, I strongly disagree. I myself feel drained by the time Thursday comes. Some students have to wake up at 4 am just to get ready for school. In advance, thank you for taking the time to read my opinion.

Thank you for your consideration

Gianna Apachito

12th grader

Student at Magdalena School District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gianna Apachito". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

To Whom it May Concern at New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

I think it is very unfair and a bad choice to force all schools to have a 5 day week. It would not work with anybody's schedule and would stress out the students. At our school we have ranchers that often work a lot on weekends and if we have a 5 day week that's taking away from time to work on the ranches. Even with a 4 day week students are burnt out and stressed having a 5 day week makes it even worse. And we have to pay for gas to go to school every week and adding another day will make us spend even more money on gas. We still need our rest days and we don't need to be stressing about school for even longer. Even though I think that school is important mental health is equally important. After hearing all of our complaints we hope you change your mind about this.

Sincerely

Abrielle Barela

7th grader

Student of Magdalena School District

Abrielle Barela

Hello members of the PED, as a parent with a student in The Cimarron Municipal Schools in the Colfax large rural area.

I am quite appalled at the fact our school district and others are forced to move to a 5 day school day. Since 1972 schools that were rated 'The Legacy of Excellence' were able to have 4-day school weeks.

Our Students in the Cimarron School District from Eagle Nest Elementary/ Middle School, Angel Fire's Moreno Valley High, and Cimarron's Elementary, Middle and High school have proven the 4-day school days excelled in their curriculum and many graduated school with an Associate Degree in College. The students that do not that student chose to continue on other elective classes.

The cost to the School Districts in The Cimarron Schools is \$52,682 PER DAY, with the new rules of the PED, our children will not have the 7 classes per day and elective classes will no longer be available. The changes will increase the school district cost to \$1.6 million with no fund increase from the state.

Please don't take these opportunities of excelling away from our students.

Thank you for your time,

Jarred Johnson parent of student in Cimarron High School

Hello members of the PED, as a parent with a student in The Cimarron Municipal Schools in the Colfax large rural area.

I am quite appalled at the fact our school district and others are forced to move to a 5 day school day. Since 1972 schools the were rated 'The Legacy of Excellence' were able to have 4-day school weeks.

Our Students in the Cimarron School District from Eagle Nest Elementary/ Middle School, Angel Fire's Moreno Valley High, and Cimarron's Elementary, Middle and High school have proven the 4-day school days excelled in thier curriculum and many graduated school with an Associate Degree in College. The students that do not that student chose to continue on other elective classes.

The cost to the School Districts in The Cimarron Schools is \$52,682 PER DAY, with the new rules of the PED, our children will not have the 7 classes per day and elective classes will no longer be available. The changes will increase the school district cost to \$1.6 million with no fund increase from the state.

Please don't take these opportunities of excelling away from our students.

Thank you for your time,

Kellie Johnson parent of student in Cimarron High School

Alicia J. Pettigrew
44 Hwy 127, PO Box 309
Eagle Nest, NM 87718
(575) 447-0281
LeashRox@icloud.com

New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

December 5, 2023

To Whom It May Concern, in regards to 2024-2025 School Calendar Requirements:

I am a resident of Colfax County, New Mexico. I have lived in Eagle Nest for 7 years with my 10-year old daughter. She attends 5th Grade at Eagle Nest Middle School which is part of the Cimmaron Municipal School District; House District: 40; Senate District: 8; Congressional District: 3; Public Education Commission District: 8.

This letter is to express my concern and disappointment with the proposed change to our school schedule by moving to a 5-day school week under HB 130. The 4-day school week may not work for other areas, but it is absolutely necessary for our rural district.

When I schedule doctor's appointments for my child, I choose Mondays and I take the day off work because the minimum round-trip driving time is 2 ½ hours; weather and traffic permitting. Often it is to Santa Fe and back which is 5+ hours just spent in the car. I have a shared child custody arrangement with my daughter's father that has been in place for over 4 years and was structured around Monday being a non-school day.

In the Winter, most kids join Ski Team, which practices every Monday at Angel Fire Resort. My 10-year old can ski better than most adults and that is no exaggeration. During the warmer months, our church hosts kid-camps and educational events on Mondays that cost nothing and welcome all who want to participate.

These types of activities are fundamental to our happiness. This area of New Mexico is not an easy place to live, but it is my little slice of paradise, and I have worked and continue to work very hard to build a beautiful life here. Our 4-day school week is not a political bargaining chip! It is part of what makes our way of life possible, and by changing that, you will cause irreparable damage to the developmental experiences of our children. Shame on you!

I hope you take into consideration the cause and effect of your actions and come up with a better solution.

Thank You for your time.



To Whom It May Concern at The New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

I think that a five workday week will be more stressful and make me tired. i'm already tired with a four day school week. Adding one more day would make me exhausted. If we had that schedule it would take more time away from being with our families. The gas would be more expensive because living in Socorro, 30 miles away where lots of students travel from or students who live in Datil. This would increase their gas costs for something that is a necessity. One extra day would be an added expense.

Honestly I could not function with a five day school week because my brain needs some time to chill. I could not. It's already tiring getting up at 5:30 every morning and I really dislike it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kailee Torres". The signature is written in a cursive style with a checkmark at the end.

Kailee Torres
8th grader at Magdalena School District

To Whom it May Concern at New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be

Five day school will be the end of all students. When we have four day school weeks we are more productive, we get more work done, and we don't have any bullying. I used to go to a five day school and it was terrible! We had no energy by the time the weekend was over and at least half the class was either beating people up, getting beat up, or sleeping. I have seen very low grades due to tiredness of a five day week. I have seen people quit school because of tiredness. Their mental health has also depleted making it hard for kids to continue to help their parents out with chores around the house. In summary, students' lives could completely change due to this, so please continue our education to a point where we can actually attend without having to give up our lives.

Sincerely:



James Cosentino

7th grader

Student of Magdalena School District

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 should it be chosen.

I think what NMPED is trying to do is unfair, by making a five day week for every school in New Mexico. I think it's wrong that this is happening, it will negatively affect my family, because my parents work on Fridays, who's going to take care of my siblings? I wake up at 5a.m every morning Monday- Thursday, to help get my siblings and I ready. I even have to go to church every Sunday, so that means I only have one day of freedom on weekends. Another reason is that we have to pay for gas money since I live like 30 miles away from our school. I really don't understand why the extra costs to each family has not been taken into consideration. The school will also to pay everyone extra money for another day of work and for water, electricity, food, and bus drivers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elia Cleveland". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elia Cleveland

10th grader

Student of Magdalena School District

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

I am writing on behalf of the students of Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

Changing the scheduling of the school week by adding another day that we must attend school can greatly impact many students from our school. It can impact many of us in many ways, it might even cause more stress and anxiety for the students after having the same school schedule their entire life, which more than 60 percent of the students at our school have gone their entire lifetime since the age they could go to school. It might hurt some of the students that go home and help out their families on the weekends and after school.

I am a former student of Sarracino Middle School. We, as a student body there, had 5-day weeks and I think as a former student of Sarracino Middle School whom is still in contact with several students that still attend, we can definitely agree that 5-day weeks are draining, not just physically but mentally and emotionally. My time spent in Sarracino was mentally and emotionally draining as the 5-day weeks spent there had made me constantly tired and those effects from the mental drainage still affect me today. The 5-day weeks I had spent there were to me, long, cumbersome, and heavily impacted my well-being as a whole. I do not wish for any schools to have 5-day weeks because if we are under this rule, then I know my well being will worsen as a whole. I am a type 1 diabetic and need to manage my illness and juggle it with my school work and studies, this as a whole is extremely mentally exhausting and makes me extremely upset to think about. The 4-day weeks I experience here at Magdalena Municipal Schools actually give me time even if just a little to manage my mental health, emotional wellbeing, aswell as physical health. As my mother had commented to me "Magdalena is still a rural area despite efforts by Santa Fe officials to ignore that. In rural areas kids have responsibilities that kids living in cities do not. Agricultural needs like ranching have always required whole families including kids, to participate and help out in order for the way of life to continue." "Even NMSU allowed agricultural based freshman to live outside dorms with an exemption because the lifestyle allowed them to mature faster and they had different requirements to live. I grew up in Datil, I went to high school in Quemado. My days started at 5 am with feeding animals and ended at 10 pm. The 3 day weekend was necessary to live the way we did. I wish everyone could experience that life."

My mom Doshia Lozano had gone to 4-day week schools her entire life, she was a rancher and had juggled school with her farm life and knew that the 3 day weekend was necessary for her to do her work correctly. She had gotten up early and always made sure everything was in order. Her father, my Grandpa was also a rancher for the majority of his life. They had owned a gas transport and a few stations around Socorro and Catron county. They

delivered fuel to all of the outlying areas and ranches. Rural kids grow up differently and need less support in their lives because of the responsibility of actual life experiences they get when they are young. A 4 day week allows these experiences to happen. As a concerned student just not for myself but for the wellbeing of others around me including teachers, ask of you to please rethink the 5 day week so the mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing of everyone around me can not deteriorate. I have witnessed and experienced the harm that can be done by the 5 day weeks, so please, if you truly do care about your students well being, please rethink it.

Kadance Lozano

11th grader

Student at Magdalena School District

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition to HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023, so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, creating a rule that negates the existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico Education.

Furthermore, as published by you, the NMPED, in the 2023 NM Vistas report on November 14th, 2023: 4-day school week districts consistently perform higher than 5-day school weeks on reading and math scores, both in overall percentiles and growth. In addition to this, high school graduation rates are higher in 4-day-a-week schools than in 5, again published by you, the NMPED in the most recent NM Vistas Report.

Likewise, in the face of a critical teacher shortage that the NMPED itself has dubbed "one of the worst in history," removing the additional bargaining chip for rural New Mexico Districts to acquire educators is a massive step backward. These sensational educators are needed to ensure that you are educated and prepared to enter the world as adults. Moreover, the freedoms allowed by the 4-day school week for students to excel at extra--curricular activities such as 4H, FFA, NMAA-sanctioned athletics, and several other extremely beneficial activities are simply unmatched.

Conclusively, the 4-day school week allows New Mexico educators to mold high school graduates that have proven to be better-rounded, higher achieving, and more emotionally competent adults. Adults who are more adequately prepared to take their place as functioning and contributing members of New Mexico's society; and, to put it blatantly, is that not the goal?

Changing the scheduling of the school week by adding another day that we must attend school can greatly impact many students from our school. It can impact many of us in many ways, it might even cause more stress and anxiety for the students after having the same school schedule their entire life, which more than 60 percent of the students at our school have gone their entire lifetime since the age they could go to school. It might hurt some of the students who go home and help out their families on the weekends and after school.

I believe four-day school weeks are deficient and not necessary. A student, teacher, and staff's body and brain need a break from the week and Fridays are a great way to relax and unwind. A majority of students have sports and clubs that they practice and need time to improve on during Fridays. Personally, my Fridays are filled with Civil Air Patrol from 1:30-3:30 and occasionally we have aerospace which is from 12:30-3:30; Afterwards, I have swim team practice from 6:00-8:00 PM. My Fridays are already jam-packed and changing to Friday schools would disable me to get the practice I need for Civil Air Patrol and make it a hassle to attend swim practice after such a long week of schooling.

Sincerely,
A Concerned student,

Sara Owen
11th grader
Student of Magdalena School District

Dear New Mexico Department of Education,

I'm writing this letter with deep concern about the possibility of a five-day school week for the upcoming school years. The idea of a five-day school week brings great worry. For the past 40 years our little school in Magdalena has thrived under a four-day school week, and the students here are accustomed to it.

There are absolutely zero benefits that I can see for this abrupt change. What argument could possibly be made to force this decision upon schools and completely disrupt the livelihoods of children and families across the state? More instructional time? No, students under four and five-day weeks receive the same amount of instructional time, and it's statistically proven that students under 4-day weeks outperform students under five-day weeks. If the reason behind this push is to try and miraculously change the educational performances in our state, I can say with full confidence that it will have the exact opposite effect. Students struggle as it is, to attend four day weeks, whether it's due to family issues, transportation factors, or just pure lack of motivation. In rural towns like ours, the commute to school is no easy jaunt, and the majority of our students travel 30 miles or more to school each day. As a state we advertise the importance of mental health and safety, and claim it to be a huge priority, but if state officials truly cared about the well-being of students, they would put more thought into this decision. I can't imagine what a five-day week would do to the mental health of students, attending school five days a week would leave kids who don't participate in any extra curriculars or religious affairs with TWO days to recover from the exhaustion of a school week. But kids who do participate in sports or other activities and attend church on Sundays, would pretty much have ZERO days to rest and recover from the previous school days. Not to mention the increased safety risk of having kids drive and carpool to and from school an extra day a week. While I realize that many schools operate under the five-day week schedule, rural schools are completely different from city schools as far as lifestyle, travel, and homelife go. I can only imagine how this would completely drop our attendance rates, and no, consequences and threats do not solve this issue, they only set kids up for complete failure.

Let's also not forget the fact that our state is full of major farming and ranching communities, and it takes extreme labor and the contribution of all family members to keep these family businesses and operations running. The livelihoods of many of our students revolve around agriculture and that comes with great work and sacrifice. Students in our state help and partake in the work that it takes just to keep major operations like family farms and ranches afloat and Fridays have a huge part to play in that. Fridays will just be yet another day that students will miss and have to suffer the consequences for.

Even if we were to completely put the student aspect of it aside, and talk about pure logistics as far as time and money, five-day weeks still make no sense. Five day-weeks would require a major increase in funding, with the extra electricity, resources, and food that would be used. It's also another day that buses would have to travel long routes, and another day that students would be driving long distances to school. Families like mine would have to spend so

much more money on fuel, not to mention the extra wear and tear that it would put on our vehicles.

I live and work on my family's ranch and the commute to school is thirty miles of rough and dangerous dirt road. I also participate in many extra curricular activities, and therefore have an extremely busy lifestyle. Fridays allow me and my family to squeeze in one more branding, fence job, or gathering before having to go back to school, they also allow us to tend to any appointments or business that we have before a crazy upcoming school week, and on the rarest of occasions Fridays make time for normal kid activities. Things like maybe sleeping in a couple extra hours, eating a real breakfast, cleaning my room, going shopping and maybe even when I'm lucky, spending genuine quality time with my family and friends. As someone who is a current student in New Mexico I have great interest in the well-being of students across the state and I truly want what's best for my peers and siblings, and I ask that you please put careful thought into the decision you're about to make, and not only think about a handful of city kids but also of us rural kids who already often get put on the backburner as it is. I love school, I love my teachers, and I'm grateful for the education that I'm able to receive, but I can whole heartedly say that if this outrageous proposal is to be made, I will find an online program and disenroll out of school. I speak on behalf of many other students who feel the same way and I worry for the ones who won't go as far as to become homeschooled, but instead completely drop out. A change like this may seem minor and even inconsequential to some, but trust me when I say it will have huge effects on communities like mine, none of which will be positive. I understand that letters like this usually have no effect whatsoever, but all I ask is that you please consider walking a day in our shoes before making a decision that will completely change our livelihoods.

Sincerely,
Jorianne Mirabal

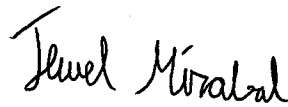
Dec 6, 2023

Dear New Mexico Education Department,

I am writing this letter concerning the change of our school schedule to a 5-day school week. There are two sides to the argument regarding this proposal. However, I disagree with this topic for many reasons. To start off, school attendance is always a big problem in New Mexico. I feel that increasing the number of school days would increase that problem. I am going into high school next year and if we go 5 days a week, I would choose to be homeschooled because just in a 4 day week, with sports, rodeo, and all I have going on, I will be extremely exhausted by Friday. Kids that live on ranches in our small communities spend a lot of time traveling, and I couldn't imagine how I would feel, much less how the other kids would feel that travel even further to get to school. After having conversations with my peers, we all agree that homeschooling comes to everyone's mind. The thing about Magdalena is that the student families are spread apart, and some students already spend roughly an hour driving to school. School is something that gives some kids a lot of stress and they have a lot of problems and school adds on top of that. Adding an extra day to the schedule would increase family expenses, such as gas, travel time, and school-related expenses. Going an extra day of the week will add a lot more expenses for the school as well, including more food, electricity, money to pay employees, and more. That means there will be less money for our school to do and get things that they want and need, and we will struggle to get the supplies we need for the extra school activities. The enrollment will drop in our school if this change takes place. As a ranch kid myself, I already miss a lot of school to take care of our cows, but I will be missing more because on Fridays I help gather and feed with my aunt and grandma, they can't do it all by themselves, it takes a lot of people to get the job done. Lastly, sports is a huge thing in our community, as it gives kids things

to do and look forward to. With games, practices, and travel time, kids are exhausted. We look forward to the weekend to rest our minds and bodies. We still don't escape our chores, but we need the Fridays to catch up on homework, ranch work, appointments, and rest. We always look forward to a 3 day weekend to get everything caught up and finished. I would greatly appreciate you considering my concerns and the concerns of other students regarding your decision in this matter. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jewel Mirabal". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Jewel" and last name "Mirabal" clearly distinguishable.

Jewel Mirabal

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN AT THE NMPED,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my email/letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico education.

FROM THE STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE :

Most teachers and students like me have stuff going on on the weekends, and Friday is one of their only days to spend time together with their families. Older students such as juniors and seniors work on those Fridays that we get off. If we were to take those free days away, it would interfere with what those students already have planned for the weekend, which would take away more of their educational time rather than giving them more.

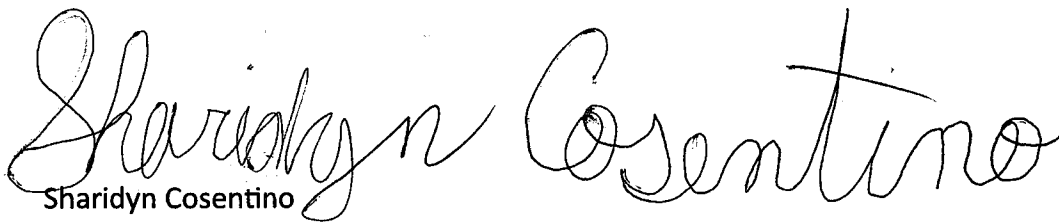
As for me personally, I am educationally doing better now in the 4-day school week here in New Mexico than I had been in a 5-day school week in Texas. It takes off a lot of pressure of having only two days to get a major project done and instead having three days to get it done. It makes my responsibility for my own learning a whole lot easier. It gives me more time to think about my education right now and for the future. Magdalena's four-day week schedule works out better for me now because I have activities going on not just throughout the weekend, but throughout the whole week itself. Adding another day of school to my week would put more stress on my shoulders to get assignments done and follow through with those activities I have already committed to.

According to NWEA, research indicates that the extra day off of school gives younger students the ability to be cared for and to engage in family responsibilities, such as farming or ranching. Further research shows that bullying and other fighting-related incidents have been significantly reduced, helping students feel more secure. If we add another day to our week, we

don't know how it will affect behavioral traits in me and my peers. Furthermore, teachers who have second jobs will be a lot more tired than they usually are due to the lack of the extra rest that they have already been provided with. Students with more than one extracurricular activity will be just as tired because they will find it hard to balance school and the activities they love to do, making it harder for them to focus and get good grades in class.

In conclusion, if we were to take away 4-day weeks, it could interfere with student's home lives and potentially even school time. I'm sure kids like me would agree that 4-day weeks give them more freedom to relax and spend time with family and friends at home rather than worrying about what's due on Monday or how they're going to make up extra school hours missed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharidyn Cosentino". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Sharidyn Cosentino

9th grader

A Magdalena High School Student

To Whom it May Concern at New Mexico Public Education Department,

I am writing on behalf of the Magdalena Municipal School District in Magdalena, New Mexico in direct opposition of HB 130. I give consent for my letter to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18, 2023 so should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB 130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, state law 22-2-8.1 does not mandate a minimum amount of days, only hours. In conjunction, state law 22-8-23.14 clearly and specifically allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of local children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing state law creates a terrifying precedent for New Mexico Education.

Furthermore, as published by you, the NMPED, in the 2023 NM Vistas report on November 14th, 2023: 4-day school week districts consistently perform higher than 5-day school weeks on reading and math scores, both in overall percentiles and growth. In addition to this, high school graduation rates are higher in 4-day a week schools than in 5, again published by you, the NMPED in the most recent NM Vistas Report.

Likewise, in the face of a critical teacher shortage that the NMPED itself has dubbed "one of the worst in history," removing the additional bargaining chip for rural New Mexico Districts to acquire educators is a massive step backwards. These sensational educators are needed to ensure that New Mexico you are educated and prepared to enter the world as adults. Moreover, the freedoms allowed by the 4-day school week for students to excel at extra-curricular activities such as 4H, FFA, NMAA sanctioned athletics, and a number of other extremely beneficial activities are simply unmatched.

Conclusively, the 4-day school week allows New Mexico educators to mold high school graduates that have proven to be better-rounded, higher achieving, and more emotionally competent adults. Adults that are more adequately prepared to take their place as functioning and contributing members of New Mexico's society; and, to put it blatantly, is that not the goal?

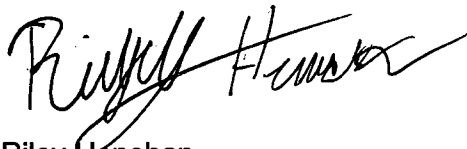
For these reasons I think a 4 day week is better for us all, because it can help with student's mental health. I, myself, was born in Aubrey, Texas, where I had a 5 day school week up till 3 years ago. During that time I struggled with depression and the 5 day school week only worsened my mental health, in turn causing my physical health to decline. On top of that I had a ton of stress due to the longer school week, once I moved to Magdalena, the stress of the school week stopped being as harsh.

Therefore 5 day school weeks, did not help me since I took care of the house and some ranch work. Next January I will need to get a job, per my mothers advice, and I would like to have work on the weekend. In order to pay for whatever I may, I will need availability and I would like my job to be on a Friday. I take care of the house due to my parents working long

hours, and it would only make it more difficult for me to keep up with my many responsibilities and chores if we were to have school another day.

I also see how the extra day will stress the schools budget. The electricity bill, the water bill, the costs of the feeding all of the students, the teachers, bus drivers, and assistant teachers pay will all increase. I feel these are all factors to think about. I want to also consider the people that drive from long distances, from either Socorro or other places. There are even students that need teachers to drive them here. Has any of this been taken then into consideration? This may well affect many people, not just the children who have to attend school an extra day.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Riley Henehan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Riley Henehan
10th grader
Student of Magdalena Municipal High School

From: [Angela Martinez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Change to 4-Day School Weeks
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 6:39:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Angela Martinez*

From: [Lisa Owens](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 7:25:43 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

Our grandchildren attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Lisa and Jeffery Schnapp.

From: [Jorge Serrano](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [ACT ATF](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 7:33:47 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

I am a teacher at West Mesa High School, I understand the urgency of finding solutions to the educational problems New Mexico faces. We are last in performance in a nation that is last in public education performance, when compared to its peers. And, this is the system that my students have to navigate. One that has been proven racist and completely biased towards the poor.

If we want to really fix our system, please look to the private education system already in place here in New Mexico. By the way, one of the finest in the nation. Let's copy what they do and create classrooms with low teacher-to-student ratios. Let's copy them and provide school meals with actual nutritional value. Let's copy them and make sure that our classrooms have teachers and not just substitutes. Let's copy them and make sure that teachers in public schools can have dinner with their families, like the ones in private schools, who's workloads are normal.

Please, let's really fix the problem!

--

It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.

Frederick Douglas

Jorge E. Serrano

West Mesa High School

Community Reference Learning Program Teacher

Google Voice # (575) 518-4348

From: [Bonnie Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback on rule
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:03:29 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in regards to the upcoming rule intending to add school hours and limit 4 day school weeks. I have 18 years teaching experience and the students have become increasingly troubled. I ask that you use data to help make this decision as suicide rates, depression and anxiety have continued to rise. Students addiction to technology has increased while maturity, decision making and interpersonal skills have decreased. I implore you to spend time in our classrooms to see what our children need. The educational system is antiquated and more of the same will not solve our problems. With AI and technology finding information is faster than ever before; therefore we don't need more time in classrooms. Students can find information but have trouble making personal connections, solving problems and regulating their mental health. Our children today don't need more hours of school and time in classrooms but more time being children. With the pressures of society, social media and more and more testing, kids are feeling too much day to day stress. Yes, our educational system needs revision, but more hours is not the solution. Children today have not had free play where they learn to make decisions and solve problems. They have a hard time making friends in person. They have a hard time making eye contact and having conversations. They don't know how to problem solve and handle stress. The educational field is already short teachers and adding more hours without compensation will exacerbate this problem as well. Most educators would agree that smaller class sizes are needed, more counselors and social workers are needed and more time letting kids be kids is needed. Please look at data when making this decision and look at other states to see what is working and use common sense to make changes that are good for our children. They are too unhappy as it is. Thank you,
B. Smith

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ruben Barela](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day Weeks
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:06:38 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Ruben Barela*

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jennifer Long](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:12:48 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom this may concern
This is in regards to Feedback: 6.10.5NMAC

My children were at Loving NM schools when they were 5 days a week. They were also there when it switched to 4 days a week. As a stay at home mom I loved and hated the change. But then I noticed the change in my children. Their crappy attitudes started to get better. They were getting more rest and I wasn't having to stay on them as much about their work. They began having less homework because they were completing their work at school. I was able to schedule doctor visits and they didn't miss school as much. Being able to travel without it affecting their attendance was a huge relief. I have one child who has since graduated and one who is about to graduate. But I also have a younger child who I did have in Carlsbad for a while. But since he has ADHD, I saw benefits to moving him to loving. (We do live in Loving but I put him in Carlsbad since I work in town) Now I have a child who struggles to make it to Wednesday. But on Tuesday night when he asks when his days off start. I tell him to just wait for 2 more days and he will have 3 days off. I don't think he would be quite so easy to get to school if I had to tell him there was 3 more days and only 2 days off. He didn't do well and he needs the extended break. I can tell you that he would miss more school because we always have to go out of town for doctors appointments. It is almost impossible to get doctor appointments around here in a timely manner. I have to take my husband and I out of town regularly for doctor appointments. This means that scheduling them on Fridays would no longer be a priority if it were to go back to a longer week.

Attendance will be less of a priority when there's no way to work around school. Also the mental health of our children will deteriorate over time and it will be difficult without that much needed extra day of rest or extra work if the need arises.

Please as a long time parent of this school district I beg you to leave the 4 day school week in place.

Jennifer Long
575-689-7268
Jlong2102@gmail.com
317 N 7th St
Loving NM 88256
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Franciszka Medina](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Mesa Vista School week change
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:14:20 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NMPED

The proposed calendar mandate strips away the essential element of local control, undermining our ability to make decisions that best serve the Mesa Vista Schools. Our schools are small, and our needs are unique; we deserve the right to make decisions specific to our community. Local control has allowed Mesa Vista Schools to flourish, ensuring that decisions about our school calendar remain in the hands of those who know our community best — us. We are making gains and should be allowed to continue guiding our schools through our unique calendar.

Sincerely, Franciszka Medina

From: [Nicole Keener](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5)
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:23:03 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Nicole Keener

From: [Legacy Galaxy](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:26:15 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hi there, I'm sending this email as feedback to the recent rule to go into effect as I believe it should NOT be put into place as it would put lots of extra stress that teachers and KIDS already have. Instead of stressing your students and staff out even more than they already are, consider better ways of teaching your curriculum. This will only cause more pressure and stress on people's lives only making it harder for people to focus in classroom. I hope you take this feedback into consideration.

Thanks.

From: [Sylvia Gurule](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMPED Letter
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:08:19 PM
Attachments: [Letter to NMPED.docx](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

NMPED Staff:

Please see the attached letter.

Sylvia

December 14, 2023

NMPED:

The reason that I write this letter, is in **Opposition** to the Proposed Calendar Change that will be voted on soon.

We, The People complain about how We are losing many of our rights in this the great country of the United States of America. This new change would FORCE (TAKE AWAY **OUR RIGHTS**) our school district to move from a four-day to a five-day school week. We stand United in preserving the sovereignty that has allowed Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools to become a successful school district.

Decisions about our school calendar SHOULD remain in the hands of those who know our community best — us.

Our Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools students and staff are united in voicing our concerns to protect the UNIQUE 4-DAY SCHOOL CALENDAR that has been contributory in helping our school be successful.

"The proposed calendar mandate strips away the essential element of local control, undermining our ability to make decisions that best serve the Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools."

"Our schools are small, and our needs are unique; we deserve the right to make decisions specific to our community. Local control has allowed Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools to flourish, ensuring that decisions about our school calendar remain in the hands of those who know our community best — us. We are making gains and should be allowed to continue guiding our schools through our unique calendar."

As you get ready to vote on this Proposed Calendar Change, I strongly request that you Vote Against the 5-Day School Calendar for our students, staff and parents sake!

From: [Sylvia Gurule](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMPED Letter
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:08:19 PM
Attachments: [Letter to NMPED.docx](#)

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NMPED Staff:

Please see the attached letter.

Sylvia

December 14, 2023

NMPED:

The reason that I write this letter, is in **Opposition** to the Proposed Calendar Change that will be voted on soon.

We, The People complain about how We are losing many of our rights in this the great country of the United States of America. This new change would FORCE (TAKE AWAY **OUR RIGHTS**) our school district to move from a four-day to a five-day school week. We stand United in preserving the sovereignty that has allowed Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools to become a successful school district.

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"Our schools are small, and our needs are unique; we deserve the right to make decisions specific to our community. Local control has allowed Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools to flourish, ensuring that decisions about our school calendar remain in the hands of those who know our community best — us. We are making gains and should be allowed to continue guiding our schools through our unique calendar."

As you get ready to vote on this Proposed Calendar Change, I strongly request that you Vote Against the 5-Day School Calendar for our students, staff and parents sake!

From: [Naomi Gonzales](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:12:08 PM

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Hello, my email may not reach anyone, but it's worth the try.

I am a mother of 2 boys in 2nd grade, and 3rd grade. My children currently attend loving municipal school.

I also am employed there as a long term substitute. I know there's back and forth of why's and why not's about 4 day school weeks.

I feel they {4 day school weeks} help tremendously, our days over the past couple of years have slowly gotten longer at school to accommodate our instructional days/hours that have been put forth by the state. I can tell you as a substitute, I can clearly see the adjustment it took for our students this year from last school year, of the time difference we get out of school. I understand completely the lengthening of school hours per day to get our instruction times in. The benefits of a 4 day week is less stress on parents, teachers, and students. It gives time for everyone to plan their schedules accordingly, it helps those of us who, for religious purposes (i.e. my family being Jehovah's witnesses) when we have to travel out of town on Fridays when it comes to our conventions and assemblies. It helps that our kids don't have to miss a day of school. This also involves our students who are in sports, most of our games are played on a Thursday, following other schools who play on Thursdays, but because of our small rural school District, we unfortunately have to travel further than most schools have to just to compete in the sport with school districts the same size as ours. With that being said, that would be football teams coming in late after games on Thursdays, and possibly missing school on Fridays from being so tired. We as a State are trying to higher our education, but how can we if we have students absent.

Having Fridays off, and being a mom, helps so much. I can move all appointments to Friday, so my children do not have to miss school. It also gives me the chance to help my mom in Texas, to take her to appointments for cancer treatments so it doesn't all fall on the rest of my family and I can help out.

This all may not even matter honestly, but having 3 days off helps so much when it comes to personal things, not just for me and my family, but everyone in our little community.

Thank you so much and please reconsider any mandate coming up on Dec. 18th.

Thank you so much!

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From: [Laura Cella](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Change from 4 day week to 5 day week
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:49:23 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern,

As an employee at Alice King Community School, where our charter was founded on the focus of a 4-day week, am writing you to reconsider moving forward with the proposed changes. Our school has been a 4-day week with the intention of the fifth day to be one where families can spend time together and have the opportunity to help their children with school content and/or school projects. Our school has consistently performed above average compared to the rest of the State and we set aside twenty professional development days annually for our staff to build upon their professional development in areas such as inclusion philosophies, teaching methods, as well as the multiage model that is part of our school design.

With the increasingly high demands in all areas of life these days, the 4-day week supports families by giving them the time they need to support one another and gives the teachers time to receive *necessary* training to help support our population and the growing behavior challenges seen in students *nationwide*. It also gives our teachers time to plan, improve upon their practice, and receive some rest from the unending demands of being a public educator.

Our 4-day model shows to be good for staff morale and that we are still an effective school for children without having to need more instructional hours. While instructional hours are crucial to having the time for teachers to prepare students, the continuance of only increasing instructional hours and not focusing on other major issues that could be impacting student learning, does not immediately yield better results for a school.

I respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

I ask you to

Laura Cella
Business Manager
(505) 344-0746 ext. 122



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This electronic mail transmission and any attachment may contain confidential and/or legally privileged information intended for the named recipient(s) only. Any review, use, disclosure, distribution, copying or other action regarding the information contained in this transmission and any attachment by an unnamed recipient is strictly prohibited. Also, if you are not a named recipient, please contact the sender to arrange for retrieval and then delete and purge this transmission and any attachment from your computer system. Thank you.

From: [Natalie Shurter](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC rule change is a disaster.
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:06:03 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear, NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you today in regards to your proposed rule change. This change is extremely poor in character and overall does not benefit the schools of New Mexico. Though your intentions are pure and well minded the actions you are taking are haste and have negative consequences. According to the college board, In 2018-2019 the average number of highschool graduates was 20,000 students. On the other hand in 2023 the number of highschool graduates increases by a substantial amount, to about 21,000. So your program last year actually increased the amount of highschool graduates by 1000 kids, why change something that is working so well? Not only that but the participation percentage in the SAT also increased, which is important to take into consideration when looking at the test scores. In 2018 only 16% of all graduates participated in the SATS while in 2023 42% partook in the SATS. Over a 26% increase. This is what is most likely directly related to the overall decrease in test scores, it was just a substantial increase in average people taking the test which in return averaged out our scores. As a student-athlete in new mexico I am constantly busy, between balancing seven classes and sports as well as a job I have little to no time for homework which makes it extremely difficult to pass my current classes as it is. With the increase in taking another class I would no longer have any time for either a sport, job, or a social life, which would be extremely devastating. Fortunately, I can choose to work but for my fellow classmates who have to work in order to help provide for their family, the increase in classes may mean that they have to drop out of highschool. High School is exhausting as it is, you very well may know this. You have gone through it, the social, mental, and physical requirements it takes to have an enjoyable highschool experience often leave the average highschooler feeling exhausted. The American Psychological Association writes, "Many teens also report feeling overwhelmed (31 percent) and depressed or sad (30 percent) as a result of stress. More than one-third of teens report fatigue or feeling tired (36 percent) and nearly one-quarter of teens (23 percent) report skipping a meal due to stress." The stress of having to take on numerous classes and still maintain a social life is overwhelming, please do not make it worse for us. Many 9th and 10th graders look forward to having their first free period, a common high school experience. The ability to get lunch, go home, work on work for other classes, and even go to their job are both vital and a luxury. Since 2021 we have had a decrease in highschool graduates, why is that? In 2021 we reopened our schools so why is it that after we reopened our schools that the graduation rate actually decreased. Was it the increase in stress? Most likely. Please stop making teenagers act like adults. We should not have to kill ourselves at 15 to meet your requirements. There are numerous studies which show that teens do better under less stress and increased amounts of sleep. With your change of rules that would be affected. Stop killing us. The national institutes of health states, "The amount of stress and the perception that stress affects health interacted such that those who reported a lot of stress and that stress impacted their health a lot had a 43% increased risk of premature death." Stop killing us. High School students would not be allowed to take a free period. This means that we would need to add additional classes, teachers, or have larger class sizes to ensure all students are placed in 4 credit bearing courses each day. Which would in return decrease the student to teacher ratio and would overall not benefit the pupil. Stop killing us.

Not only does your rule change affect students but it also affects teachers. Teachers would no longer have time to prepare for classes and would have to take additional time after school hours to prepare for the coming days, as well as having to take time out of the time that they had off for the holidays. The abruptness of the rule change is extremely damaging to all participating members in the school system, it affects the teachers which directly affects the students. This is in no way beneficial to your students in New Mexico. With the lack of resources and pay many teachers are given, how can you expect them to want to put in more time and resources. Have you considered the potential increase of teachers quitting? You have already received much back-lash after last year's increase in days added to the year. So, please don't silence us.

Sincerely,
Natalie Shurter, a New Mexican student, peer, and friend.

works cited

American Psychological Association survey shows teen stress rivals that of adults. (2014, February 11). <https://www.apa.org>. <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2014/02/teen-stress#:~:text=Many%20teens%20also%20report%20feeling,a%20meal%20due%20to%20stress>.

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This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Richard Skolnik](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Skolnik, Richard](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:42:05 PM

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Dear NMPED,

The extraordinarily poor educational attainments of NM's students suggest that the manner in which math and reading are taught in NM is not at all effective.

This is despite the high levels of expenditure per student in our state.

In fact, the poor outcomes of our students should be seen as a statewide disgrace, since our poor schools deprive our children of later opportunities to be as productive as possible.

Rather than adding school days while continuing to teach in the same ineffective ways, I strongly suggest that the NMPED urgently seek to find approaches to teaching our diverse population of students in ways that are effective and efficient.

It is long past time for the NMPED and most school districts to stop hiding behind the "social determinants of learning" and focus, instead, on ensuring that our children, no matter their background, learn to be literate and numerate.

Richard Skolnik
White Rock, NM

--

Richard Skolnik
703-627-6646

From: [Naomi Gonzales](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:42:24 PM

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Please please reconsider your decisions and thoughts about changing school year hours to days. I know to many a 4 day school week being changed to 5 days doesn't seem like much, but to a community that has benefited from it for almost a decade, will be a drastic change. For a decade its been a wonderful for parents who are able to have a set schedule on their day to day lives, and everything that revolves around their loves. Loving municipal schools have had a chance at getting some of the best teachers hired on at the schools because of the 4 day school weeks.

My children have amazingly benefited some of the new teachers hired. Teachers who give their full time and attention because they are not overwhelmed and over worked. Where students aren't overwhelmed and over worked as well. That 1 extra day off helps students and teachers reset mentally for the following school week. Our little village of Loving truly appreciates these 4 days, it's more time for teachers to be with their families, and students to be home with their families more.

There's us always talk on the news about education in America and how much lower our education percentages are compared to other countries, and it's because they(other countries) take into consideration the health of the students mentally, physically, and emotionally. If New Mexico as a State is one of the lowest in America, don't you think changing what is working will make it all wrong again? There has been an increase of graduates SINCE changing to 4 days a week, for multiple communities who attend 4 day weeks. It's beneficial ESPECIALLY when end of the year testing begins, it helps the students not feel overwhelmed by testing for 5 days if that's what's placed. There are so many benefits to a 4 day school week. If New Mexico as a whole state moved to 4 day weeks, I'm sure of it that the education system in New Mexico would increase because teachers and students wouldn't be over worked, teachers wouldn't be underpaid for the MANY MANY MANY hours that they work. They don't just work at school for the 8 hours they're there. They work at home up all night, to finish work or grading papers to keep up with a schedule that is unrealistic. They work on the weekends, when they could be spending time with family, just to get ready for the next school week. Doing all that they only technically get 1 DAY to spend with family, because they're getting prepared on Sundays for the week.

America is loosing out on some of THE BEST teachers that would probably impact so many kids in this broken and scary world, and that is what WILL happen in New Mexico, teachers are leaving because of the unrealistic expectations the government officials are putting on them, and expecting them to stay at one of the lowest paying jobs. We need to make New Mexico a place people want to move to because of the education system we have, but instead we have many moving out of New Mexico to other states because of how poor our education is here.

Thank you for reading this if you took the time to!

From: [Kristen Martines](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; aftnmaction@gmail.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 10:43:30 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I teach third grade at Pinon Elementary School. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 188 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students from 8:30 to 3:30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In our school district, Wednesdays are half days, starting at 8:30 and ending at 12:00. Due to this abbreviated Wednesday schedule, our students are able to participate in community activities, clubs, sports, health appointments, and work on homework (and projects). On these Wednesday afternoons, teachers are given time for professional responsibilities like grading, planning, meeting, and collaborating. This average of 300 minutes of preparation time weekly is guaranteed to our teachers through our collectively bargained agreement and ensures that our educators can provide students with a high quality education.

The proposed 6.10.5.8 C 1 requires 180 instructional days per school year and would not include professional development time and the proposed 6.10.5.8 D would require that elementary school days be no shorter than five and a half hours. In order to meet these requirements, our elementary schools would have to discontinue our early release Wednesdays, which would be a problem for students because it would require a schedule change for afterschool programs and drastically change how families would need to plan for after school care. Another consequence for students could be that release times would change to being earlier on a daily basis, again creating a problem for after school care. This change would also be problematic for staff as they would have to deal with a schedule change in order to get the allotted average of 300 minutes of prep time weekly. Staff also have children who will be affected by this schedule change. An unintended result may be that teachers leave the profession due to the increase in demands of their time.

I ask NM PED to reconsider NMAC Rule 6.10.5 and to vote no.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kristen Martines

3rd Grade Teacher
Piñon Elementary School
Los Alamos Public Schools

Kristen Martines
3rd Grade Teacher
Piñon Elementary
90 Grand Canyon
White Rock, NM 87547
(505) 663-2706

This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in direct opposition of HB130 Amended notice of proposed rulemaking 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. I currently have 2 boys of my own, and 2 girls that I have guardianship of, that attend Magdalena Municipal School District, a 4-day school week. All 4 of my kids are currently honor roll students, and active in sports, spelling bee, declamation, 4-H, and Student Council. My family is middle class working family, my husband and I both work multiple jobs including full time day jobs and Agriculture production, however, I find that a 4-day school week is in the best interest of my children and family. If the school district goes to a 5-day school week, my children will guarantee miss more days of school than they currently do with a 4-day school week. All doctor appointments, dentist appointments, counseling, therapy, and other justifiable needs, which are over an hour's drive to services, are scheduled on Fridays allowing my kids to attend instructional hours at school. The 4-day school week allows my kids to help with the ranch and way of living in our rural community. This teaches our family traditions and allow them to engage with and learn from family members that they would not other wise be able to in a 5-day school schedule. Changing our school schedule is discriminating against our way of life and against small communities that are excelling due to 4-day school weeks.

In our community, we have a former teacher providing an alternative learning environment called the Science Café for kids on Friday's. This is a way for working parents to have their kids actively taken care of and still learning skills while they are working on Friday's. I agree that the 4-day school week doesn't work in all situations, but it does work here, and in many of rural areas in the state. I ask that you leave it to our school boards and local community to find what is best fit for us.

If the 5-day school schedule is forced upon our small community, us along with other families will turn to homeschooling as an alternative way of educating our kids and being able to keep the flexibility of our lively-hood and lifestyle.

I give consent for this to be read aloud at the open discussion on December 18, 2023.

Sincerely,

Tina R. Cason

Tina Cason

From: [D.brown](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4day school week support
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:24:13 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My children attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our children and family. The 4 day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our children's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5 day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its charter mission. This would include possibly remove 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department declined to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,
Daniel Brown - parent
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Raeden Robinson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment to keep 4 day school week.
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:26:44 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's needs as well as our own. It motivates my son to do well at school and he will not continue to attend Alice King without this accommodation.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Raeden Robinson
Concerned Parent*

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Yvonne Romero](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Alice King Charter School
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:26:47 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Yvonne Romero
Michael Wheeler*

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [leah.ordonez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] To whom it may concern,
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:00:58 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Leah L Ordonez*

From: [James Macklin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:48:07 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is James Macklin, and I am writing to express my opposition to rule 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements. As an educator for over 15 years, I feel very strongly that this rule would have the opposite effect that you are seeking.

While I believe that no educator denies that the pandemic had an effect on students, I believe that the solution lies not in more mandates and time, but more resources.

Post pandemic, we have seen a surge in education spending, but all of that money has gone to mandated programs. Meanwhile the biggest effect the pandemic has had on our students that I have seen has been in social emotional learning and behaviors from trauma. The kids can't learn if they can't regulate their emotions. We still also have a statewide chronic attendance problem.

I know myself and my colleagues have spent more time managing behaviors and teaching our students coping and social skills than ever before.

And yet post pandemic we still have the same number, if not less, of counselors, social workers and essential support staff as we did before, and that was already way too low.

Our HVAC systems are old and dying and breaking all the time and our students are forced to learn in classrooms with no heat or air conditioning.

Adding more time to the school year doesn't address these conditions. It just drags them out for longer.

When Governor Lujan Grisham took office, Lt Gov Morales talked about the time had come for the PED to support our schools and educators.

Now more than ever, we need a partner in our quest to give our students the best education possible.

I implore you—do not to implement this rule and instead focus your resources and money on giving us the the resources we need to help our students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James Macklin

Albuquerque, NM

From: [Angela W](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback on NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:09:51 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My children attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would negatively affect my children and family. The 4-day school week provides my family the opportunity to support my children's learning at home and for our children to go to very needed therapies to support their disability without missing critical instructional time. My children, who both have autism, require extensive speech and occupational therapy to function in their day to day life.

The proposed change would put my children into chronic absenteeism if they attend necessary therapy for their conditions. Alternatively, it would force my family to eliminate the therapies my children currently receive which would then impact their ability to function not only out of school but in school as well. It would also impact my ability to provide transportation to these services by making me utilize my sick leave to facilitate appointments, and potentially impact my professional rating in my evaluations as I would also be considered chronically absent.

I specifically chose for them to attend Alice King Community School to prevent these issues from occurring; the 4-day model allows my children to receive appropriate services not only in school through special education and additional ancillary services, but also attend outside therapy without conflict.

There is no current Educational provision which allows for absences or tardies for needed care for students with disabilities.

The new rule would create an impossible choice; to choose between being in compliance with the laws regarding attendance or being in compliance with providing my children with their needs according to their disabilities. It puts tension on my job and ability to provide, my family's ability to function, and my children due to their needs as students with disabilities.

The proposed rule change would be harmful to AKCS's community

learning model and every family who utilizes our four day week to support student learning and functionality outside school on Fridays.

In addition, there is little evidence increasing the number of days attended increases student outcomes. In According to the Institute of Educational Sciences' 2014 article, authored by the American Institutes for Research, increasing learning time only minimally impacts student literacy and math scores in elementary, and negatively affects literature scores for middle school.

This is based on a meta-analysis of studies, arguably the "best standard" of research which reviews a multitude of data in order to draw conclusions.

If this study, facilitated by the federal government through the Department of Education and National Center for Educational Evaluation (among others), did not find a consistent benefit among the over 7,000 studies considered, then I would hesitate to say that the Public Education Department is able to reasonably justify to students, teachers, and families the benefits of their proposed rule.

Students need the chance to "reset" from school during the summer break of 6 weeks, and engage in play-based learning. Play-based learning has been shown to not only increase performance in reading and math, but also increase social-emotional skills development which is critical to our students post-pandemic. Play allows the brain to make multisensory connections, reduces systemic stress in children, and promotes the processing of complex situations.

Denying students access to time to decompress and socially interact is not only counterproductive to learning but potentially sets them up for failure when they cannot function under the rising stress. Society continues to have adult expectations for children; as a result, reported student stress levels are at an all-time high as are mental health diagnoses. There is too little counseling and social work staff to process the current level of need in our schools. Why would the state knowingly add to student distress?

I respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Angela Rios

From: [Algene Wall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:16:20 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Rule feedback

Please be aware that I am strongly against rule NMAC 6.10.5

I do NOT wish to return to the 5 day week! Our school has one of the highest academic scores in the state with a 4 day week!

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [dawndri chacon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PLEASE KEEP 4 DAY WEEK
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:19:32 AM

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NMPED:

My name is Dawndri Munoz.

I am writing as a concerned parent from the Loving Municipal Schools in Loving NM. I am writing in regard to the NMPED abolishment of 4 day week and implementation of 180 days. I am opposed to this .

My husband and I are both 2005 graduates from Loving High School. My husband is in the Oil and Gas industry, while I am a Registered Nurse. We have 1 son currently in 2nd grade , and another son a Sophomore at the Loving Schools.

I have had the privilege of growing up , and raising my family in Loving. This school district is my home. I've seen the ups and downs , and changes throughout the years .The changes have always been for the better of our kids in our schools.

This is the first time I have ever felt I needed to say something. This issue got personal instantly .

We are trying to fix something that is not broken.

We all know the statistics to support the success of the 4 day week for our kids . But what we don't have is the reality of what could happen... we can't reference that because it's unfathomable.

We are looking at decline in our success.Why you ask ? It's simple, teacher incentives . If we can't get teachers to stay, we can't provide a good education for our kids , period .

Our village is now surrounded by the oil and gas industry and it's booming.

Our teachers work so hard to get their degrees to make a decent living , but what they don't tell you is that their 4-8 year education degree puts them in the same pay bracket as the graduates they are helping to get their high school degree. That's right , that 18 year old leaving Loving High can walk on to an oil rig , and make just as much. This is both a blessing and a curse in itself. I've seen with my own eyes teachers of all ages leave for oil field jobs. Do we blame them ?

While the oilfield is great for our economy, it's bringing children from different states and countries, and it's just not attracting teachers. Our state is struggling to keep teachers in general ,and now we are making it even harder trying to change school year requirements. A handful of the teachers we currently have ,commute from Carlsbad to Loving daily , about a 20 minute drive.They could easily find a job in the Carlsbad District if we switch back to 5 days. Let us keep our teachers. Every district has their own issues.!Let each district decide on its own how to help their districts successfully thrive . Let them choose, do not make that choice for them . Please don't pull the chance from our kids to have a good education . Our Village, and our future depend on this .

Dawndri Munoz
PO Box 456
Loving NM 88256
Phone : 575-725-9542

From: [Cindy Roybal](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:58:30 AM

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I struggle to find the logic and theory that adding additional days to the school calendar will help student achievement, especially for rural 4-day week schools. Currently 80% of NEW MEXICO 4-day schools are either excellent or spotlight. What other data are you looking for? What other states are doing (or their successes or failures) cannot compare to NM! What about parental involvement, or the lack thereof! What about chronic absenteeism in public schools, who is being held accountable? You want more days to improve student attendance...if you can't get them there in the first place how in the world do you think adding more days will help?

What about teacher shortages? How many long-term subs are teaching our kids because no one wants to teach in NM! Talk about pushing excellent rural school teachers and administrators into retirement!

How will NM pay for this? Oh wait, it's in our SEG! Can it be sustained...NO!

Adding one more day to rural schools will cost more than what the SEG can handle! Look at the data and the successes of 4-day schools in rural New Mexico, maybe your eyes will be opened to what is really working in this State, OUR state.

As a taxpayer, stakeholder, and employee of a NM public school I STRONGLY oppose this rule change!

Cindy Roybal

From: [Cj Kinsolving](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130 5 day school week
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:16:09 AM

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I'm writing this letter in response to the legislature's upcoming vote on whether to mandate a 5 day week for all of New Mexico's schools. I believe it can be summed up very easy in that it should be left up to the individual school districts, to decide what they deem best for them. Santa Fe in general wants to make rules in a one size fits all manner and this is not a good idea. The department of education thinks huge schools in Albuquerque should be run exactly the same as the small, rural 1A schools? Give the power to the local school boards where it should be.

CJ Kinsolving
Tatum School District

Note: When submitting feedback, we kindly request that you specify which rule(s) you are submitting feedback for. This is especially helpful when the Department is accepting feedback for multiple proposed rules at the same time.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Holly Hogue](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:35:53 AM

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>
> To whom it may concern,
>
> School hours should be counted over days and should be allowed to be decided district by district not a state level. What works for some school district doesn't work for other. The 4 day school program allows kids in our school district to get life experience and real world experience that wouldn't be able to happen with a 5 day school program.
> Please vote to keep the hour vs days requirement.
> Holly Reid
> Sent from my iPhone

From: [Coby Reid](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:42:43 AM

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Please vote to keep an instructional hours based calendar and NOT a mandatory 5 day school week. Vote to conserve our family values. Enough government intervention. Let communities make the decisions that our right for us on an INDIVIDUAL BASIS.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Michelle Negrette](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Alice King Community School - 4-day school week
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:58:19 AM
Attachments: [logo.mn.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

Additionally, Charter Schools should have the ability to determine their days/schedules in order to served the charter and mission needs. The purpose of Charter Schools is to provide an alternative to the traditional learning environment. By removing the ability of a Charter school to set their daily schedule while still meeting the state standards and instructional time requirements, sets an unwise precedent that could begin to erode the capacity and effectiveness of charter schools to offer viable and proven learning environments. I have selected a school with a four day week because it benefits the needs of my family and my students. My four children have benefited and continued to benefit from being in school for a concentrated 4 days with 3 days to spend with family. Our children are all academically strong. Our oldest has graduate from high school early and received a large scholarship to a university in Chicago. Our high schooler was well prepared for her freshman year. Our two youngest who are at Alice King Community School currently, have straight A's and look forward to going to school every day. We use the longer weekends to enjoy our time together, travel, ski and participate in sports, theater, dance, etc. Three of our children struggle with ADHD and sleep issues, the shorter week helps with maintaining attention, focus, and getting much needed

sleep. The longer school year benefits us economically, as with less time off in the summer, we spend less on childcare. With four children, summer care is a huge burden on our family.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Michelle

Michelle Negrette
Strata Design, LLC
505.710.4221



Kristi Collins
Executive Director/Principal

Alice King Community School
8100 Mountain Rd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110
Ph: 505-344-0746 Fax: 505-344-0789 www.akcs.org

December 14, 2023

Kristi Collins
Alice King Community School
8100 Mountain Rd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Proposed Rule Change to Instructional Time Requirements

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed rule change to the instructional hour requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) to revoke this proposal.

Alice King Community School's charter was approved in 2005 and a 4-day school week was at the heart of the charter. The charter was started by a group of parents who home-schooled their children and the 4-day school week was paramount to their ability to continue to support their children's learning at home. The school has successfully operated with a 4-day school week since it opened in August 2006. Our students consistently perform the same or better overall on state summative assessments (NM-MSSA, NM-ASR) than our authorizing district, Albuquerque Public Schools, as well as the State of New Mexico. Moving to a 180-day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods. Families and staff appreciate the 4-day school week for many reasons. Staff report that students are better rested on Mondays and are ready for school. We expect a lot from our students and utilize every minute that they are at school for rigorous instruction. The 3-day weekend gives them the opportunity to spend time with their family, work on homework and school projects, and reset before school starts again the next week.

Moving from a 4-day school week to a 5-day school week would be a huge transition for our entire school community. This proposed rule change does not allow for the autonomous spirit of charter schools and would limit our ability to develop a schedule that is best for our school community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that the PED will carefully consider the implications of the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Kristi Collins
Executive Director

From: [Melanie M](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Hours: Rule Feedback
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:17:53 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

While I applaud the efforts to increase student achievement in New Mexico, I believe the current proposal to add school days/hours would be ineffective.

The added hours do not address parents and legal guardians ensuring their students attend public school. At this time, there are no consequences at all for students not attending school. We have an attendance crisis.

I am offering four solutions to these problems:

- 1) New Mexico needs to **make attendance compulsory**. Parents/Legal Guardians need to be held accountable. Currently, as a teacher, if I call CYFD, they will only do a wellness check. There are no consequences.
- 2) Require New Mexico students who miss more than 10 days of school to attend **summer school**, regardless of grade level.
- 3) Stop wasting money on online curriculum. Students need **instruction from an actual, highly-qualified teacher, not a computer**. Person to person interaction activates the emotional centers of the brain which impact retention, memory, and learning.
- 4) Remove the current PD days, and replace them with **instructional days for students**. The month of November for 2023-24 had very little continuity. The truth is, most teachers are highly educated. While some PD is important, students need instruction more.

I am confident that if you will enact the above solutions, students will be more successful in our state. If you would like to discuss these solutions with me, I can be reached at 505-515-9090. I am a Level 3 Instructional Leader for the State of New Mexico. I currently teach for Albuquerque Public Schools.

Respectfully submitted,
Melanie A. Meyer

From: [Daniel Kidd](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:18:37 AM

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6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements

I have yet to come across an educator who thinks that adding five extra days to the school calendar will in anyway remotely come close to fixing a broken system, which has been broken for decades now. This is exactly what lawmakers do however; they come up with band-aid solutions to try and cover wounds that have severed arteries. Students are chronically underachieving, curriculum is getting dumbed down, kids are getting passed through on “alternative” paths, the number of special education students continues to rise, and students are graduating without even being able to read. But, yes let’s add five academic days to the calendar; that should fix it. Let’s make our, rural, four-day-a-week schools, who are some of the highest achieving, move to five days a week. Then everything will be fine. Asinine!!

Teachers are leaving the profession and new ones aren’t replacing them. They are being replaced with underqualified “warm bodies” who have no interest in student achievement and who just want a paycheck and summers off. The whole “fake it, till you make it” idea has become the motto for many who are placed in “teaching” positions. They aren’t really held accountable either, because who is going to replace them? They pretty much have tenure in their first year because no one is knocking down the door to replace them.

The root of the problem is what happens at home. If respect isn’t learned at home, it will not translate into the classroom. If education isn’t valued in the home, it will not be valued at school. If parents aren’t held accountable for how their children act, then the school has no power to make them act right. The school/teacher/coach can only do so much to try and motivate a child to want to learn, and if its not reinforced at home, it won’t matter. It has become a teacher’s “job” to be the parent to the children in their class. It is no longer the parent’s job to read to their children. It is no longer the parent’s job to play games with their children. It’s no longer the parent’s job to instill character into their children. That has all been passed off onto teachers.

It puzzles me to think about the education I received twenty years ago, or what my parents received fifty years ago, or even what my grandparents received seventy years ago. These are all people who went to public school (some only till eighth grade). They

are/were intelligent, hard-working, successful people. So, the question you must ask yourself is what was wrong with their education? They didn't start school until Labor Day and they were out of school by Memorial Day. During certain times of the year they were let out early so they had time to harvest their fields before dark. Often times they only went four days a week. So, I ask again, what was wrong with their education? Why did it work for them? They all understood that formal education can only get you so far. It's hard work and good character that will make you successful, and those are two things that are no longer of much value in our society. It's all about, what can the government do for me? How can I get some free stuff?

So, no, adding days to the school calendar is not going to fix any problems. It's not going to make anything better. It's not going to improve any test scores. It's not going to do anything other than add more to a teacher's plate that is already filled to the brim and overflowing. You will take away a teacher's prized three-day weekends that are so necessary for mental health. You will take away teacher's extra planning and preparing time, and you will take away positive parent meeting opportunities. You will spend countless unnecessary extra dollars and put undue stress on our already fragile school districts. There is absolutely NOTHING good or positive that could come from this!

I hope this does not fall on deaf ears.

Sincerely,

Concerned educator, citizen, and parent

From: [Katrijn](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:28:33 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I fully support this rule change.

Regarding the proposed new calendar options, as a parent of an APS student I would like to express my deep concern for the lack of instruction and true class time my child has received this year, and give my full support to extending the school year at the beginning and end of the year for the 2024-25 term.

As a working parent, the amount of and length of the breaks from academia so far this year have been outrageous. There is simply no good reason to justify having less than full school weeks, excess “free time” and ridiculously long breaks from instruction. This is not only an unnecessary burden on parent now having to find and pay for child care, but it is detrimental to the academic success of my child. The focus has not been on the students and their needs. Young children especially need structure and dependable, stable environments. Taking them out of school for extended periods of time serves no one.

I would like to respectfully request to **please institute this rule change that puts students first, learning first and supports teachers and families.**

Thank you,
Katrijn Eaves

Noel Núñez
Director
Deming Cesar Chavez Charter H.S.
315 E. 1st St.
Deming, NM 88030

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke the aforementioned proposal. Calendar reform was only recently debated by the legislature and has been implemented in schools for six months. There was great debate on the calendar reform legislation in the 2023 legislative session. That debate led to compromise on legislation that was signed by the Governor. We acknowledge the department's commitment to enhancing educational outcomes. However, given the recency of the new legislation and Department's lack of statutory authority to execute this rule as proposed, we request that PED revoke this proposed rule and go through the legislative process to meet these requirements.

State law clearly states that rule cannot run further than statute: 14-4-5.7(A) "No rule is valid or enforceable if it conflicts with statute. A conflict between a rule and a statute is resolved in favor of the statute." Within the proposed rule, there are several new policies that lack statutory authority for PED to provide the mandates in the proposed rule:

- a. Statute clearly allows for school districts to meet statutory hourly requirements without regard to school days. In fact, NMSA 22-2-8 only allows for the Secretary to waive minimum requirements associated with school hours in certain circumstances. It's unclear where the authority for a maximum number of hours is allowed in law. The law does not provide for the Secretary to make mandates in our analysis either. Statute is silent on the length of school week except for language surrounding K-12 Plus funding (NMSA 22-8-23.14), which states that schools operating on a 4-day school week must have more than 156 school days to qualify for K12 Plus programming. This clearly provides for 4-day school weeks in law without any explicit authority for the secretary to mandate a length of school week. The proposed rule oversteps New Mexico school law by prescribing more than 50% of weeks to be five-day weeks. Further, the proposed rule mandates that schools must have 180 days to qualify for K-12 Plus funding, which directly contradicts statute. It is essential to align the rule with statutory provisions on flexible scheduling for districts and charter schools. Revisiting the law to provide authority for the Secretary is necessary to implement the policy.

b. The proposed rule introduces a maximum number of hours in a school day without explicit statutory authorization. It is imperative to identify the specific statutory provisions granting the Secretary the authority to establish such limits. Further, this section of the proposed rule would not apply to charter schools that exercise a nondiscretionary waiver associated with "Length of School Day" NMSA22-8B-5(c).

c. The rule mandates a 30-minute lunch period, which directly contradicts the 20-minute lunch period stipulated in statute (NMSA 22-13c-10). It is crucial to adhere to statutory limitations and recognize the bounds of PED's authority in prescribing lunch periods.

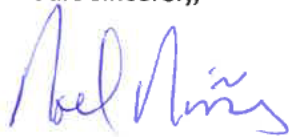
Moreover, the mandated requirement that secondary students shall attend a minimum of four courses per day (6.10.5.8(A) in proposed rule) poses considerable challenges for dual credit high schools. The potential impact on charter schools, exempt from course requirements through nondiscretionary waivers, also raises concerns about equitable application across all educational institutions. Should the proposed rule go through, this would be an area in which the state's public charter schools are exempt through non-discretionary waivers NMSA 22-8B-5(c).

You are aware of our charter contract here at Deming Cesar Chavez Charter High School. We serve our community in a different way. As a "Supplemental accountability model school," we take on a different kind of responsibility not for us, but for our community. We feel that as SAM's school, we will never get a fair assessment of what we do for our community. I implore you to seek alternative methods to evaluate our type of schools throughout the state and give us the autonomy to continue to make strides and gains.

In light of these concerns, we urge the PED to reconsider the proposed rule and pursue calendar reform through the legislative process and focus on leading New Mexico's communities in getting our kids to school on a regular basis. This approach would provide the necessary statutory clarity and allow for comprehensive stakeholder engagement to address the diverse needs of our educational community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that the PED will carefully consider the implications of the proposed rule and work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop solutions that prioritize the best interests of our students and educators.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Noel Núñez", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Noel Núñez
Director

From: [Dianne Zachek](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:33:34 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern Regarding 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements:

Most would not disagree that change is needed to better serve the academic needs of our students and address New Mexico's educational ranking, but increasing instructional days will, in all likelihood, have the opposite effect. As a state and a profession, we need to look for solutions that do not translate to student and teacher burnout.

One of education's big wins in the state are the early college high schools and the CTE programs offered in high schools. Early college high schools have proven that through small class sizes, targeted academic interventions, and personalized education plans, first generation college bound students, including Emergent Bilinguals (in some early colleges), are earning associate degrees or gaining significant credits towards a bachelor's degree. These are the kind of results that the state can be proud of! These students, beginning their sophomore year, are taking rigorous college courses that follow a college calendar. What will the unintended results be of adding more instructional days to these students and how will it impact the academic gains of these students?

Recent statistics of post-secondary graduation rates in New Mexico colleges range from 29% to 50% (six-year graduation rate for the 2016 cohort). Emergent Bilinguals currently have lower post-secondary graduation rates than that of their English-speaking peers. Research has shown that one of the primary methods of increasing college-readiness for first generation college bound students is through the development of strong reading skills.

Perhaps the educational solution the state is looking for can be found in the state that, like New Mexico, was recently ranked near the bottom, but has enjoyed notable gains in educational rankings and in particular literacy in their 4th-8th grade test scores—Mississippi. While some articles have questioned their results, the consensus seems to be that “the state's educational improvement appears to be legitimate and meaningful” and “there's little if any evidence the results are artificially inflated ([Mississippi saw big gains on the NAEP. But why? - Chalkbeat](#)). Mississippi has implemented comprehensive early literacy policies with teacher training on the “science of reading”, where the focus is not just on phonics and pronouncing words but understanding the meaning of words.

In sports there is a ceiling on what athletes can accomplish if they do not have solid fundamentals, the same holds true for students. Please consider implementing a

comprehensive early literacy policy to ensure academic success at the secondary and post-secondary levels, trade school and the workforce. To be clear, elementary school educators are doing an excellent job with our elementary students. The focus should be on how we can support them better. More days in school, more resources spent on education have yielded limited results. The solution is better not more.

Respectfully,
Dianne Zachek

From: [Board School](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments Regarding Rule 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:59:24 AM
Attachments: [Comments Regarding Rule 610.5.pdf](#)

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Please see the attachment below with Portales Municipal School comments.

Comments Regarding Rule 6.10.5

The Portales Municipal School Board is in opposition to this rule being promulgated as written. The Board takes special exception to 6.10.5.8 B, C & H. These paragraphs provide for remote instruction and the number of days and hours that students may participate in this type of instruction, creating a minimum number of days that every school in the state must place on its calendar, and providing that Districts may not embed any professional work hours within the 1,140 hours. This Board does not believe these paragraphs are supported in statute or legislation.

During the 2023 Legislative Session, both houses of the Legislature had an opportunity to review, debate, and amend House Bill 130 that changed the number of hours each school district must provide to students in an academic year¹. This bill also defined how a school district could become a K12+ school district if it chose to do so³. The bill does not require a school district to participate in K12+ and, to the contrary, only sets regulations that require all schools must provide at least 1,140 instructional hours for all students except half-day kindergarten, where they are required to provide 550 hours of instruction per year². There is no mention of a minimum number of days that any school district must be in session other than if a District chooses to participate in K12+. Here it states Districts wishing to be considered K12+ schools, a five day per week school must provide over 180 days of instruction and a four day per week school must provide over 155 days of instruction². There is no language in the original bill before amendments or after that state any school must have a set number of days, only that they must provide the prescribed number of hours, unless they wish to be considered K12+ schools.

The statute, 22-2-8.1, establishes the number of instructional hours that every school must provide⁴. It does not establish a set number of days that any school must create within its calendar. In accordance to HB 130, the statute provides for 1,140 hours of instructional time for all students except half-day kindergarten, which must have 550 hours. This statute, also defines the number of hours that a District may embed within its calendar as professional work hours for staff. Both the legislation and statute provide that up to 60 instructional hours per school year for elementary grades and 30 hours of instructional time in middle and high school may be embedded during the course of a normal school day. Both define professional work hours to include: 1) home visiting or parent-teacher conferences; 2) educator training or professional development; 3) mentorship, coaching and collaboration between school employees.⁴ Neither HB 130 or 22-2-8.1 NMSA 1978, provide any authority for the Public Education Department to create rules that would preclude the use of this embedded time or that would force school districts to have a set number of days instead of hours unless that District chooses to become a K12+ district. In fact, the proposed rules paragraphs C & H are in direct contradiction to HB 130 and 22-2-8.1.

Furthermore, the Department cites 22-22-1 NMSA, 1978 as providing further statutory authority to create this rule. This statute seems to be added to simply throw as many statutes as possible as authority in hope that one sticks. This law defines the creation of variable school calendars and provide local school boards with authority to create a school calendar that operates “beyond a nine-month period in any calendar year.”⁵ This statute, 22-22-4 is very clear that in order for a school board to establish a variable school calendar it must “demonstrate substantial community support for implementation of the variable school calendar.”⁵ The current rule, which this one would replace, states “While department approval is not required, any local board planning to

operate under a condensed year or variable school calendar shall justify a decision to implement such a calendar based upon the results of public input and other considerations as set forth in this section.”⁶

In order to approve paragraphs C and D of 6.10.5.8, the Department must, by default, be declaring the new rules creates variable school calendars. Yet, they seem to ignore that to create these calendars a school board must have “substantial community support.” This will most likely not come from communities who have long established four-day school calendars. So, by citing 22-22-4 as authority, is the Department trying to write even more law contrary to statute or is it considering the 180 day calendars a variable school year?

The Secretary of Education released an Op-Ed on December 8, 2023 in which he defends the new rule. In his defense, he states that rule had established 180 day calendar as the “minimum standard for schools with 5 day per week calendars in 2011-2012.” He fails to note that the same rule, 6.10.5.8 B 1⁷, provides for districts and charter schools operating under a condensed year calendar “shall operate under a calendar consisting of at least 150 full instructional days per year exclusive of lunch and any release time for in-service training.” The next paragraph, 2, does indeed state that schools operating on a regular or variable calendar shall create a calendar with 180 instruction days. This rule is in agreement with 22-2-8.1 (2009)⁸ that creates a minimum of 180 instruction days for regular school calendar years and 150 instructional days for variable school year calendars. Although, as he states in the Op-Ed the rule was not strictly enforced, it did not create law that would force 4-day week schools to go to 180 day calendars.

Regardless, state statute was changed in 2023. The new law (22-2-8.1) does not specify a set number of days that any school district must comply. This law simply states that “students shall be in school programs, exclusive of lunch, for a minimum of one thousand on hundred forty instructional hours per year, except half-day kindergarten, which shall have five hundred fifty instructional hours per year. Since the legislature changed the law in 2023, then the current rule 6.10.5.1 through 6.10.5.9 is obsolete and no longer supported by statute. Therefore, it would appear that the new rules to replace these are not valid as the changes to the rule are not supported by new statute or legislation. The Department cannot make rule simply because they think it should be that way, they must follow the law as written.

Although this District is a 5 day a week school district, this new rule will have a profound affect on 4 day a week school districts. Most 4-day school week schools are rural and have a difficult time attracting teachers and staff. The four-day week, with longer days, is an attractive schedule for many teachers and staff. Having the extra day allows for them to make the commute on their days off for doctor’s appointments, for shopping, or some, just to return home where they live permanently. The four days also allow for parents who also live in very rural locations to have these days for travel to and from town for appointments. It also allows for their children to have an extra day to help out with the family business as they grow older. Many people choose to teach in these schools and send their children to these schools because the 4-day weeks fits in with their livelihood and schedules. Many, if not most, of the 4-day week schools perform better than their 5-day week counterparts. They should not be forced to change something that has been working for many of them since the 1970s because the Department want to standardize a school week across the state without getting a great deal more input from these Districts.

Already, school districts in New Mexico are having great difficulty with attendance. It is very obvious that the attendance laws in this State are not working. Attendance is probably at an all time low since recovering from the COVID disaster. Does the Department actually believe that adding additional days to the calendar will entice kids and families to come to school more often? Kids who do not want to be in school with the current calendars and families who ignore the truancy of their children will not decide overnight that making the school year longer will miraculously change attendance rates. On the contrary, attendance will probably become even more of an issue as even more students become disengaged as vacation breaks are shortened and their summer time is taken away.

Another issue every District in the state is dealing with is the shortage of teachers. As of now there are still several hundred teaching vacancies in the State. This District has positions it cannot fill. Already, over the past several years, New Mexico has made laws that have made the teaching profession less desirable. The state now requires teacher and staff must work 30 years before retirement. School staff who are not at least 55 years of age are unable to receive their subsidized insurance benefits that they have paid into for 25 and 30 years until they reach the age of 55, even though they went to work believing this benefit would be there upon full retirement at any age. Getting into the profession is becoming more cumbersome requiring additional roadblocks for advancement through levels, and then the Department wants to add even more days as a great incentive to come into the teaching profession. If the state wants the best science and math teachers, indeed any teacher, creating more official work days is certainly not the answer. These people can go to work in the private sector and receive a higher wage without the stress of everchanging rules and regulations and longer calendars, especially if school years are going to be lengthened so as to not make being a teacher an attractive profession.

Every year new changes come from the Department and the Legislature. This year is probably the first year since the COVID closures that there is some normalcy in the schools and we see students doing better. The new law requiring 1,140 hours of instruction time is not even a year old, yet the Department is ready to force that to days instead of hours. Most likely every District in the state had to revise their calendars in some manner to meet the requirements of the law. This District made some huge changes that it believes will be good for kids. The new rule would not allow for the changes made this year to continue and anything good that has come from this year's calendar would be lost as Districts once again have to go to the drawing board and come up with new plans. Change every year, especially when the current changes have not had time to develop and be tested, does no one any favors.

Finally, as stated before, and obvious throughout these comments, the Portales Municipal School District School Board is not in favor of adopting this rule. The arrogance of the Department to believe that they can change rules to meet their vision of school operation is blinding. The legislature, in their wisdom, chose not to create a law that would force all Districts to create 180 day calendars. They did not pass a law that would basically destroy the 4-day a week school districts in this state, in fact, HB 2 makes allowances for those districts that are already on a 4 day a week calendar. HB 130 makes no attempt to force any District to change their calendars to 180 instructional days, instead it incentivizes those who want to do so with additional funding. Should the Department be allowed to force this new rule into code, it does not consider the wisdom of 89 School Boards who know their communities and understand what their citizens

want. New Mexico is a huge state with many different cultures and communities and is not just Albuquerque, Santa Fe, or Las Cruces. Every community, including the larger cities, have issues unique to them, and do not need non-elected bureaucrats dictating to them what is best.

The Portales Municipal Schools' Board of Education respectfully requests that this rule not be adopted and that the Department seek guidance and collaboration with the legislature and school boards around the state before making unpopular decisions that affect more than a few.

¹ *AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE; CREATING THE K-12 PLUS PROGRAM; PROVIDING ADDITIONAL PROGRAM UNITS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT INCREASE THE NUMBER OF INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS BEYOND ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY DAYS FOR A FIVE-DAY SCHOOL WEEK AND MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-FIVE DAYS FOR A FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK; DEFINING INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS AND PROFESSIONAL HOURS; REPEALING THE K-5 PLUS ACT AND EXTENDED LEARNING TIME PROGRAM UNITS.*

² *"22-2-8.1. SCHOOL YEAR--LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY-- MINIMUM.-- A. Except as otherwise provided in this section, students shall be in school programs, exclusive of lunch, for a minimum of one thousand one hundred forty instructional hours per year, except half-day kindergarten, which shall have five hundred fifty instructional hours per year.*

³ *SECTION 3. A new section of the Public School Finance Act is enacted to read: "K-12 PLUS PROGRAM UNITS--ADDITIONAL PROGRAM UNITS.-- A. A public school operating on a five-day calendar that provides more than one hundred eighty days of instruction, and a public school operating on a four-day calendar that provides more than one hundred fifty-five days of instruction, shall be considered a "K-12 plus school". Each school district or charter school with a K-12 plus school shall be eligible to receive program units for students in that public school.*

⁴ **22-2-8.1. School year; length of school day; minimum. (Effective January 1, 2024.)**
(Current statute does not include paragraph G which becomes part of law 1/1/204)

A. Except as otherwise provided in this section, students shall be in school programs, exclusive of lunch, for a minimum of one thousand one hundred forty instructional hours per year, except half-day kindergarten, which shall have five hundred fifty instructional hours per year.

B. An instructional hour is a period at school during which students receive instruction aligned to academic content and performance standards and includes:

- (1) a school program set forth in Sections [22-13-1](#) and [22-13-1.1](#) NMSA 1978;*
- (2) enrichment programs that focus on problem solving and cognitive skills development;*
- (3) content that provides technical knowledge, skills and competency-based applied learning;*
- (4) research- or evidence-based social, emotional or academic interventions; and*

(5) *instruction that occurs at the same time breakfast is served or consumed in accordance with the breakfast after the bell program or federal requirements.*

C. Up to sixty instructional hours per school year for elementary grades and thirty instructional hours for middle and high school grades may be used for professional work hours, which may be embedded during the course of a normal school day. A "professional work hour" means time during which a teacher participates in professional work aligned to challenging academic content and performance standards, including:

- (1) home visiting or parent-teacher conferences;*
- (2) educator training or professional development; and*
- (3) mentorship, coaching and collaboration between school employees.*

D. Nothing in this section precludes a local school board from setting a school year or the length of school days in excess of the minimum requirements established by Subsection A of this section.

E. The secretary may waive the minimum length of school days in those school districts where such minimums would create undue hardships as defined by the department as long as the school year is adjusted to ensure that students in those school districts receive the same total instructional time as other students in the state.

F. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, provided that instruction occurs simultaneously, time when breakfast is served or consumed pursuant to a state or federal program shall be deemed to be time in a school-directed program and is part of the instructional day.

G. Every general election and regular local election shall be a school holiday for students and staff at each public school in this state

⁵ 22-22-1. Short title.

This act [[22-22-1](#) to [22-22-6](#) NMSA 1978] may be cited as the "Variable School Calendar Act".

History: 1953 Comp., § 77-22-1, enacted by Laws 1972, ch. 16, § 1.

22-22-2. Definition.

As used in the Variable School Calendar Act, "variable school calendar" means a calendar for school or school district operations extending over a ten, eleven or twelve-month period or portions thereof in excess of nine months, which permits pupil attendance on a staggered schedule.

History: 1953 Comp., § 77-22-2, enacted by Laws 1972, ch. 16, § 2.

22-22-3. Purpose of act.

The purpose of the Variable School Calendar Act is to create an opportunity for public schools or school districts to operate beyond a nine-month period in any one calendar year in order to achieve optimum and maximum use of school facilities and personnel.

History: 1953 Comp., § 77-22-3, enacted by Laws 1972, ch. 16, § 3.

22-22-4. Variable school calendar.

The local school board may operate a public school or the school district under a variable school calendar. The state board [department] shall develop criteria for the establishment of a variable school calendar in a school district. Those criteria shall include a requirement that the local school board demonstrate substantial community support for implementation of the variable school calendar.

⁶ 6.10.5.8 REQUIREMENTS:

While department approval is not required, any local board planning to operate under a condensed year or variable school calendar shall justify a decision to implement such a calendar based upon the results of public input and other considerations as set forth in this section.

⁷ 6.10.5.8 REQUIREMENTS: (Current-2009)

While department approval is not required, any local board planning to operate under a condensed year or variable school calendar shall justify a decision to implement such a calendar based upon the results of public input and other considerations as set forth in this section.

A. Approval procedure: *To operate under a condensed year or variable school calendar, the local board shall, at a duly noticed public meeting held prior to the condensed year or variable school calendar's implementation date, declare in a detailed written resolution its intention to operate under a condensed year or variable school calendar.*

(I) *The local board's approval procedure shall include the following:*

(a) *an identification of the schools, by grade level, to be operated under the calendar;*

(b) *public input at a public meeting on how student and school achievement and financial issues would be impacted by the proposed condensed year or variable school calendar;*

(c) *public input at a public meeting on the anticipated impact of the proposed condensed year or variable school calendar upon the school district, charter school, family and community;*

(d) public input at a public meeting on the impact of the proposed condensed year or variable school calendar on: facilities, capital needs, operational budget, transportation services, personnel needs, staffing patterns, and instructional programs within the school district or charter school;

(e) verification of substantial community support for implementation of the proposed condensed year or variable school calendar; and

(f) public input at a public meeting on how the proposed condensed year or variable school calendar will ensure that a school year will consist of the minimum number of full instructional days required by Paragraphs (1) and (2) of Subsection B of 6.10.5.8 NMAC.

(2) Any resolution adopted by the local board to implement a condensed year or variable school calendar shall contain an assurance that each of the criteria set forth in Subsection A of 6.10.5.8 NMAC have been satisfied.

B. Length of school day beginning with the 2011-2012 school year:

(1) Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, school districts and charter schools operating under a condensed year calendar shall operate under a calendar consisting of at least 150 full instructional days per year exclusive of lunch and any release time for in-service training. Specifically, students shall be in school-directed programs, exclusive of lunch, for a minimum of the following:

(a) if in kindergarten for half-day programs, three hours per day or for full-day programs six hours and thirty-six minutes per day;

(b) if in grades one through six, six hours and thirty-six minutes per day; and

(c) if in grades seven through twelve, seven hours and 12 minutes per day.

(2) Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, school districts and charter schools that operate on a regular or variable calendar, shall operate under a calendar consisting of at least 180 full instructional days per year exclusive of lunch and any release time for in-service training. Specifically, students shall be in school-directed programs, exclusive of lunch, for a minimum of the following:

(a) if in kindergarten for half-day programs, two and one-half hours per day or, for full-day programs, five and one-half hours per day;

(b) if in grades one through six, five and one-half hours per day; and

(c) if in grades seven through twelve, six hours per day.

(3) School districts and charter schools may establish a school year or length of school days in excess of the minimum requirements established in this section provided that they

do so only after holding a duly noticed public meeting at which public input is permitted. Charter schools shall not be required to obtain permission from their authorizer to extend their school year or length of school days but shall provide them with written notice of the proposed change prior to implementation. Budget implications should be carefully addressed when consideration is given to exceeding the minimum requirements.

⁸ 22-2-8.1. School year; length of school day; minimum. (2009)

A. A school year consists of at least one hundred eighty full instructional days for a regular school year calendar, exclusive of any release time for in-service training. A school year consists of at least one hundred fifty full instructional days for a variable school year calendar, exclusive of any release time for in-service training. Except as provided in Subsection D of this section, days or parts of days that are lost to weather, in-service training or other events that are not school-directed programs shall be made up so that students are given a full instructional school year.

B. Except as otherwise provided in this section, regular students shall be in school-directed programs, exclusive of lunch, for a minimum of the following:

(1) kindergarten, for half-day programs, two and one-half hours per day or, for full-day programs, five and one-half hours per day;

(2) grades one through six, five and one-half hours per day; and

(3) grades seven through twelve, six hours per day.

C. The department shall provide for the length and number of school days for variable school year calendars in accordance with the Variable School Calendar Act [[22-22-1](#) NMSA 1978].

D. Up to thirty-three hours of the full-day kindergarten program may be used for home visits by the teacher or for parent-teacher conferences. Up to twenty-two hours of grades one through six programs may be used for home visits by the teacher or for parent-teacher conferences. Up to twelve hours of grades seven through twelve programs may be used to consult with parents to develop next step plans for students and for parent-teacher conferences.

E. Nothing in this section precludes a local school board from setting a school year or the length of school days in excess of the minimum requirements established by Subsections A and B of this section.

F. The secretary may waive the minimum length or number of school days in those districts where such minimums would create undue hardships as defined by the department as long as the school year is adjusted to ensure that students in those school districts receive the same total instructional time as other students in the state.

History: 1978 Comp., § 22-2-8.1, enacted by Laws 1986, ch. 33, § 2; 1993, ch. 226, § 4; 2000, ch. 107, § 1; 2003, ch. 72, § 1; 2009, ch. 276

From: [Hal Marshall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:06:47 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Re: NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"

What is going on? Why are these rules being rushed in?

These rules have unintended consequences that will limit critical staff planning time and would be disruptive to our secondary schools. We are concerned that the consequences of this rule change have not been fully considered. NMPED is failing to give districts adequate time to prepare for this unexpected change that dramatically impacts our students, teachers, and families.

Please put me down as very concerned with NMPED's actions.

Please have a good day, but please put this terrible mess on hold until it is better vetted. Please seek input on a new plan from the schools. Take your time to get this right. First do no harm.

Thanks.
Dr. Hal Marshall
Los Alamos

From: [Giovani Miranda](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Do not force schools to 180 day calendar
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:07:16 AM

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With regards to 6.10.5 NMAC, i am writing to urge that you NOT force all NM schools to adhere to a 180 day calendar.

Local school districts and charter schools can best determine what calendar will work for their communities.

It is an overreach of your authority to force this change through your propsed rule making.

Thank you!
Giovani Miranda
Rio rancho resident

From: [Ashley Gray](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:08:45 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I am reaching out to comment on the proposed change in calendar requirements to mandate 180 instructional days. I am opposed to this change and what it means to educators. Educators consistently are not treated with the same respect as other professions. We are highly educated professionals and yet are expected to work outside of contract hours to complete job functions such as grading, mandatory annual training, and now with this change, conferences. Any other profession is compensated for this time off contract or outside of normal work hours. We not only are not given this opportunity but are also faced dealing with a population who are not in the schools and do not understand what our job entails.

Anyone who worked in schools pre pandemic does not understand what our current working conditions are. Furthermore, changing the laws surrounding educational/calendar requirements every year does not give our students and their families a chance to succeed. If the state really wants to improve our education they should provide more staff to schools, more advanced training, and develop action plans to create real social changes. Increasing the calendar days does nothing to remove the barriers our students face with poverty, transportation to school, trauma, and lack of resources. The same families we saw struggle last year are still struggling this year. Calendar requirements do not ease the burden on families or students. I am extremely disappointed to see yet another example of PED not working with current educators and students.

Thank you,

--

Ashley Gray, MA
School Counselor
Montezuma Elementary School

505-260-2040 ext.22314

Request to see Ms. Ashley: <https://forms.gle/akx66fU48LR9oMfX6>

New Mexico Crisis Line

1-855-662-7474

From: [Hal Marshall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:09:11 AM

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Re: NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"

What is going on? Why are these rules being rushed in?

These rules have unintended consequences that will limit critical staff planning time and would be disruptive to our secondary schools. We are concerned that the consequences of this rule change have not been fully considered. NMPED is failing to give districts adequate time to prepare for this unexpected change that dramatically impacts our students, teachers, and families.

Please put me down as very concerned with NMPED's actions.

Please have a good day, but please put this terrible mess on hold until it is better vetted. Please seek input on a new plan from the schools. Take your time to get this right. First do no harm.

Thanks.
Dr. Hal Marshall
Los Alamos

From: [Cathy Kroll](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:09:39 AM

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Hi,

I have been a social worker since 1989, arriving to New Mexico from Ohio supported by a 14000. decrease in pay.

The education my family received in Ohio is far superior than what we as a State provide.

However, adding school days and seat time is not the solution.

APS or the entire state needs to be gutted to transform our state.

Too many Students don't want to learn. Parents do not care. Educators struggle to educate. Colleagues do not show up for work and no one notices.

How do we inspire others to engage when so much pain, sadness and limited empathy is the norm? Adding days and seat time will not motivate the 10th grader who cannot read. It will not motivate the child who is taking care of their siblings. My client of THREE years who was stabbed 10 times then threatened to kill me at Valley High School was so wounded and is now fathering children. Last week an 8th grader i serve revealed his sexuality struggles. He is the primary parent to his 1 year old sister. He wants to do well, but has so much pain and trauma and is now managing his sister. The work so many of us do is exhausting and not about school. And I love my job.

School while once a safe haven cannot compete with the norms of video gaming, poverty, absent parents and social media.

Schools need to ban all electronics and go back to pen and paper. Return to dress code so I do not see a thong or areola. I wore school uniforms 1-12 grade. If anything it would protect the staff and student and potentially increase morale. Have consequences for parents who don't care. Grades need to reflect competence. Special ed students need to be pushed out of sped when they are near grade level not harbored in sped. Three of my students need reg ed and they want to stay in sped because it is easier. We are hamstringing our children to underperform.

Then you have rigor amongst colleagues. It is too variable. What our the standards employed to hire and fire.

Who is preparing our colleagues to work? Professionals show up in shorts, yoga pants and scrubs to model and prepare children to be respectful and engaged while their breasts hang out. The other ill is colleagues who don't show up for work. period. Hang nail surgery during the school year or as my social work colleague Barbara Purcella at AHS doesn't come to work for days every week. I have put that in writing countless times. A student on her caseload will have to die before AHS and APS take action. It's disgusting. And it's an adult Modeling what for her colleagues and her students. No one wants the burden of corrective action.

Who has the authority to affect such needed change in APS, in New Mexico?! We are not preparing our children to persevere. Instead we enable, we look the other way.

I am grateful I am almost done with APS. I love so many of my colleagues and my students. So many of us show up with 100% as the goal, as the plan. Adding more days to what I do is not sustainable.

Thank you for listening.

Cathy

Cathy Kroll, LCSW

She, Her (why? <https://www.glsen.org/activity/pronouns-guide-glsen>)
CCTS-F, ADHD-CCSP, CCATP, ASDCS

9 in 10 Parents believe their child is at or above grade level. Most are not aware their child is behind. Learning Heroes, Caravan Survey.
29% are at or above grade level reading. 26% are at or above math. Arne Duncan

Albuquerque High School 505-843-6400, ext 20325 Portable N31

**Monday & Friday all day, Thursday- depending on need and schedule, AHS FAPE:
Serving IGS, VI, Cross Cat, GI**

Jefferson Middle School 505-255-8691, ext. 20566 Room 101

**Tuesday & Wednesday-all day, Thursday depending on school needs & schedule, JMS
FAPE: Cross Cat, District VI, GI**



Parent Vue Instructions (grades, assignments,

attendance) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POxIVzgTOSo> FERPA

states that student information that is transmitted electronically is treated with the same care as traditional student records. This message and its attached files are the property of Albuquerque Public Schools. It may contain information that is privileged or confidential and is intended for the sole use of the named addressees.

From: [Karen Holmes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: "NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:27:40 AM

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Additionally, more school hours and days do NOT equal more "education." More time spent at school equals more bullying, more disrespect towards teachers, more wasted class time, more opportunities for kids to abuse the system.

AND it means more burden on teachers to work harder for unreasonable pay, more time and energy trying to figure out how and when to do their planning...

This is NOT the answer!!! Before you pass this law, every single one of you needs to spend at least a week or 2 in classrooms across the state and SEE what the reality is. Oh, you don't have time for that? Thats too burdensome? How are you supposed to do that when you have other obligations? Welcome to the world of teachers and administration trying to figure out how the heck they are going to implement these new restrictions in time for next year and actually make them work in today's school environment.

This rule is a bad idea and you need to go back to the chalkboard and find a way to *support* the people in the classrooms and not make it worse.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Dec 14, 2023, at 1:20 PM, Karen Holmes <kanslinger@gmail.com> wrote:

>

> Please DO NOT pass this rule!!! Kids do NOT need more time in school. Have you been in the classrooms?!? Teachers need to be able to make better use of the time the kids are *already there* but they cannot because of lack of discipline, excessive screen usage, lack of teacher planning time, and lack of instructional aide support.

>

> Take all that money you would spend paying teachers and schools for the extra days and increase teacher and IA salary *now* and figure out better discipline strategies to help teachers be empowered when kids are disrupting classrooms.

>

> Please DO NOT pass this rule!

>

> Karen Holmes

> Los Alamos

>

> Sent from my iPhone

From: [christine baker](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:33:21 AM

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As a parent of a student in New Mexico public schools, I am requesting that the PED does not adopt NMAC Rule 6.10.5.

My significant objection is related to how teacher development would longer be part of instructional hours. Continuing education is critical for honing skills and keeping teachers excited about teaching.

I am also unenthusiastic about the mandates on the number of credit bearing classes each day and requiring students be in school five days a week, which eliminates an early release option for elementary students.

I appreciate that PED is continually working to improve the quality of public education in New Mexico but in this case, more is not better, more is just more.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss.

Thank you,
Christine Baker
505-309-1567

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Laura Eberhardt](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar Requirements--Cimarron
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:35:34 AM
Attachments: [Eberhardt4dayschoolweekletter.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NMPED,

Please see my attached letter with a plea for Cimarron to continue having four day school weeks. As a highly qualified educator who has taught in both rural and urban communities, I ask that our rural voices be heard.

Sincerely,
Laura Eberhardt

NBCT
Band Director, Cimarron Municipal Schools
Education Coordinator, Music from Angel Fire



Dear NMPED,

I write to you regarding the push to move our rural communities to a five day school week. I grew up in Albuquerque, attended UNM for Music Education, and taught for six years in Santa Fe before I found my forever home teaching sixth through twelfth grade band in the small towns of Cimarron and Eagle Nest. I was invited to teach at a band camp in Cimarron several years before I moved here, and I noted back then how incredibly polite, well-rounded, social, hard working, and high achieving the students were. There was something magical about the students here. When the position to teach band came open, making the move to the mountains was the easiest decision I have ever made. The kids up here are different—most of my band students are also athletes, in FFA, in Scouts, in the broadcasting program, in student council, are skiers and snowboarders, go hunting, fishing, and camping, are in internships, tutor their younger peers, work on their ranches and farms, and are involved in community events and their families.

I know many folks have already written letters with the data, including the concerns about how an additional day will increase our funding needs drastically and how our students have been achieving at or above level in testing compared to the rest of NM. For my part, the Cimarron High School Band has won the State Band Contest Title for twelve years, all while competing up against 2A and 3A schools. Ten percent of my high school band made our district honor band, competing against larger schools such as Santa Fe and Los Alamos. I have one student who graduated last year who is currently playing in the Wind Symphony at the University of Rochester. Another student who graduated three years ago is already a journeyman plumber, another graduate is working on wind turbines, and another is about to graduate university with a degree in Music Education. This is just a small snapshot of the success our students have had out in the world after being on a four-day school week.

Please support our students' way of life and what makes them successful. Our one additional day off affords kids the opportunity to be with their family, on the ski team, teach snow sports, do an internship in a specialized field, be a fishing or hunting guide, learn how to run the family farm, or to work some extra hours to save for college. Our families are important players in their kids' education and this extra day gives students opportunities that reach beyond the classroom. On the practical side, families also use this day to schedule medical appointments (most of which are at least an hour away), get firewood ready for the winter, leave our food desert to purchase healthier and less expensive food, and purchase clothing for their quickly growing kids.

I'm from the city, and it is difficult to understand exactly what it is like to live out here in such an isolated environment without living this life. I implore you to listen to rural voices and make decisions that take our special circumstances into account. Our students need your support and their voices heard.

Sincerely,



Laura Eberhardt, NBCT

Band Director, Cimarron Municipal Schools
NMMEA Music Educator of the Year, 2022

From: [Adriana Pavlik](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:45:11 AM

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Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC

My name is Adriana Pavlik. My daughter Miriam is currently in 2nd grade in Loving Elementary School. She is in Loving School since Kindergarten and loves every minute and moment of it! Teachers became her friends because of loving and friendly attitude and attention they give to each student and child. My daughter doesn't leave school at the end of the day till she hugs all of her teachers current and past and principal on the way out. With such a positive and friendly but at the same time professional and safe environment I see my daughter grew in every aspect. She is reading fluently chapter books, she is enjoying math and science. With 4 days school week it allows her to work hard during those days and rest and have fun on 3 day weekends. Since school started she has not missed a day of school because she always gets plenty of rest. Loving schools always go to school even on Columbus Day, Presidents' Day, Martin Luther King Day. Carlsbad school district took a day off on Friday because on Saturday is Veterans Day. This would never happened in Loving Schools! Carlsbad schools are taking 31 days off this school

year for Holidays and Parent teacher conferences and Loving schools only 18 days in total off! Carlsbad schools have half day on Monday (which is totally unfair towards parents) and shorter days! Total waste of time and so much harder on working parents! To me it seems that Carlsbad schools spend less time in schools compared to Loving schools. And in foggy morning Carlsbad was home 3 days in a row. Loving schools are growing and it is a small friendly community and we enjoy to be part of! The schedule is great, kids are doing very well with 4 full days in school. Why change something what is good and works well? Fix and change what is broken and not mess what is good and works for kids, parents and teachers!

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Polly Riede](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:45:23 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Good morning,

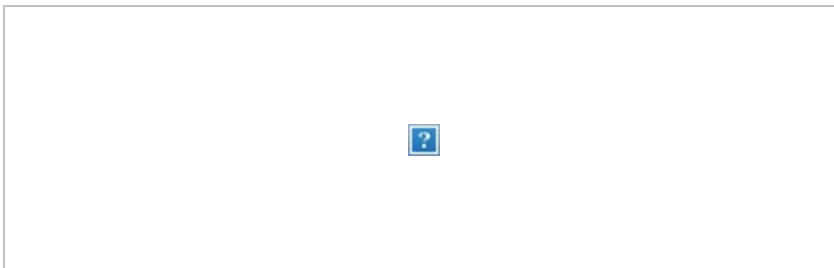
I am writing in strong opposition to this proposed rule of adding days to our current school calendar.


1. NM is currently in a teacher shortage. By adding days and hours to the calendar, more teachers and staff will be needed. How does PED propose solving the teacher shortage in addition to adding more staff with an extra workload? I predict that teachers will leave if this rule is passed, creating an even greater gap in the need for staff.
2. Students are already overworked and exhausted. Adding more hours and days to the school calendar will not increase academic performance, but will increase student stress. What students need is actually more time for creative and physical activities outside of school parameters.
3. Instead of spending money on additional staff for additional school days, why not put that money back into NM communities? Teachers already know that unless students are fed, as well as feel loved and safe, no learning can occur. Why not invest in early childhood activities that promote these things so that students come to school ready to learn? This will yield a much higher investment in student learning instead of more classroom hours.

On a personal note, this is my first year teaching in NM as we have moved from SC. SC has implemented many of these proposed rules and teachers are leaving in droves. SC is still at the bottom of the education "race". These changes have not improved learning outcomes in SC.

Thank you for taking the time to read emails and I truly hope this law will not be implemented.

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 This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Mariquita Rael](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Proposed rule NMAC6.10.5 School calendar requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:49:55 AM

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On another note: by having Friday's off, our school saves a lot of money on cafeteria staff, food for students, utilities, and bus transportation. Friday's allows students to participate in sports, which is good for student mental health, and also allows our High School students to attend and participate in UNM College classes, which is beneficial for them to get a jump-start on their career. With a 5-day schedule, we will have shorter days which affects the schedule that teachers have at the High School. Teachers will have shorter time per each class, which is hard to get learning and work accomplished. Friday's allow for teachers to have Flex Fridays, which can accommodate for fun student learning, tutoring, and picking up of grades as needed. We have students ride the bus from over an hour away, and will have to leave at 5:30-6:00am to get to school on time. If you extend days and hours, even till 5pm, those students as well as staff who live far will get home around 6:30pm! Imagine 3, 4, and 5 year olds having that long of a day! 12 hours for 5 days a week!

Mariquita Rael

From: [Melissa Landess](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:53:03 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Matt and Melissa Landess*

From: [Shawna Kibuta](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [ACT ATF](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on Rule 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:54:18 AM

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Good morning,

I would like to share my thoughts on the contemplated changes for Rule 6.10.5 NMAC.

I object to changes for the following reasons:

- **Impatience:** The changes implemented for this school year (SY 23-34) and new funding are not even a year old yet and they are already expected to bear beautiful fruit. That is illogical from a horticultural standpoint, and it certainly is from an educational perspective. The educational issues in New Mexico are decades (really, centuries) in the making, and the pandemic did not help. They will not be solved in 4-5 months by a few changes and some new money, watered on a tree starved for years.
- **Lack of consistency and persistence:** A common problem in this country, and certainly in this state, and even in my district and school, is a lack of consistency and persistence. Everyone wants rapid change and short term gains. Our problems are long-term. Unfortunately, we jump everywhere like rabbits with some new initiative or another, rarely giving the ones that we have tried the time to show real results. Maybe if we tried things for more than a semester or two, we could see if they really worked. Most initiatives would need at minimum 2 years, and most likely more, to show their value or lack thereof and most, no matter their quality, would need adjustments along the way to meet local/community needs.
- **Disrespect for educators:** Educators have been working incessantly this year, including myself. Change is hard for everyone, but we have done our best under the circumstances. I know that I have worked many hours more than my contract stipulates to make things the best I can for our students. To imply that the problem is with us, rather than with systemic issues with the country, historical background of NM, social issues, past lack of funding for education, and many other factors is disrespectful.
- **Summer schedules for parents and educators:** I am both an educator and an APS parent. Having a much shorter summer would be difficult both for educators and for parents. Students have summer programs and some visit their other parents in families of divorce, sometimes living out of state, over the summer. Other families have summer trips. Many educators are parents and have the same parent issues. Rio Rancho is discussing year-round school, but even that proposal would have much longer breaks throughout the school year, whereas this plan would not.
 - Some educators have summer jobs, often also related to helping children.
 - Yet other educators are students as well as being educators. I am a doctoral program student at UNM. I need to take classes in the summer. Having a substantially shorter summer would make that very difficult for me and other educators who are students. It may set us back in our graduate programs.
 - Greater burden for school counselors - school counselors work 5 days more than do teachers. The shorter summers for teachers would be even a week shorter for counselors. That would further exacerbate the concerns I mentioned above.

Pay concerns: This rule change would not, it appears, come with an accompanying raise in pay for educators. If we are expected to work more days with the same salary, that really equates to a pay cut. That sounds like punishing educators for factors outside of their control.

I am sure there are other things that could be said, but these are the things that stand out to me about why a rule change at this time is ill-advised. Please take these concerns into consideration.

Sincerely,
Shawna Kibuta

From: [Mariquita Rael](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Proposed rule NMAC6.10.5 School calendar requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:56:20 AM

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On another note: by having Friday's off, our school saves a lot of money on cafeteria staff, food for students, utilities, and bus transportation. Friday's allows students to participate in sports, which is good for student mental health, and also allows our High School students to attend and participate in UNM College classes, which is beneficial for them to get a jump-start on their career. With a 5-day schedule, we will have shorter days which affects the schedule that teachers have at the High School. Teachers will have shorter time per each class, which is hard to get learning and work accomplished. Friday's allow for teachers to have Flex Fridays, which can accommodate for fun student learning, tutoring, and picking up of grades as needed. We have students ride the bus from over an hour away, and will have to leave at 5:30-6:00am to get to school on time. If you extend days and hours, even till 5pm, those students as well as staff who live far will get home around 6:30pm! Imagine 3, 4, and 5 year olds having that long of a day! 12 hours for 5 days a week!

Mariquita Rael

From: [Lindsay McAfee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment: NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:56:57 AM

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I am opposed to the changes NM PED is attempting to make to HB 130. The negative impact that these changes will have on both teachers, students, and families has not been addressed by PED. As a teacher I am also concerned about student success in school, but the answer to the issue of student success in New Mexico is much more complicated than just adding days to our school year. We don't need a longer school year if we are not going to be given the extra support of having more counselors, more planning time, and more pay (just to name a few). The teacher shortage continues in our state and these proposed changes will not make it any easier to retain or acquire new teachers. This change should not be made, especially so quickly after already changing our school year requirements less than a year ago.

From: [David Fobes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:58:47 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

I strongly object to the proposed rule changes to NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements". These changes focus on quantity of school days and school hours and do very little to address quality of education while in school, which in my mind is a much more pressing issue than keeping children in school longer. Furthermore, these changes are likely to cost districts a disproportionately large amount of money compared to the additional instruction hours it will supposedly bring. Please focus instead on improving instructional quality by, e.g., developing initiatives for attracting talented and passionate teachers and support staff.

Sincerely,
David Fobes

From: [PHILLIP HUGHES](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Extending 4days to 5days
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:58:48 AM

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To Whom it May concern

Hello Folks, I wish to comment on this issue, as a student who road a bus for over an hour every day, till my senior year. It was taxing, frustrating and enabled mischief.

There are children spending twice that here in Quemado. Who in their right mind, would believe there might be some advantage to add an extra day of travel on a bus. Adolescence is difficult enough to get through, without adding extra difficulties. Not to mention an extra day of chores when they get home late, as most rural kids must do.

Travel time is but one small disadvantage of adding another day each week, family time is shorted by a day, and less time for instructors to prepare for class time, not even considering added cost to our school. We are blessed to have a productive school here, please do not alter the success.

Thank you

Phillip Hughes
31 Henderson Way
Quemado NM

Sent from my iPad

From: [Matthew Allen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; aftnmaction@gmail.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:14:29 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I teach 4th grade at Aspen Elementary School in Los Alamos. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 188 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students from 8:30 to 3:30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In our school district, Wednesdays are half days, starting at 8:30 and ending at 12:00. Due to this abbreviated Wednesday schedule, our students are able to get a much needed mid-week break and participate in extracurriculars. On these Wednesday afternoons, teachers are given time for professional responsibilities like grading, planning, meeting, and collaborating. This average of 300 minutes of preparation time weekly is guaranteed to our teachers through our collectively bargained agreement and ensures that our educators can provide students with a high quality education.

The proposed 6.10.5.8 C 1 requires 180 instructional days per school year and would not include professional development time and the proposed 6.10.5.8 D would require that elementary school days be no shorter than five and a half hours. In order to meet these requirements, our elementary schools would have to discontinue our early release Wednesdays, which would be a problem for students because it would require a schedule change for afterschool programs and drastically change how families would need to plan for after school care. Another consequence for students could be that release times would change to being earlier on a daily basis, again creating a problem for after school care. This change would also be problematic for staff as they would have to deal with a schedule change in order to get the allotted average of 300 minutes of prep time weekly. Staff also have children who will be affected by this schedule change. An unintended result may be that teachers leave the profession due to the increase in demands of their time. New Mexico already has trouble staffing its schools with quality, certified educators, and this rule would make it even more difficult.

I ask NM PED to vote no on NMAC Rule 6.10.5.

Thank you for your consideration,
Matthew Allen

4th Grade Teacher
National Board Certified
Aspen Elementary
Los Alamos Public Schools



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Gianna Delorey](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Stop rule change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:14:30 AM

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Hello,

I am a parent of two LAPS students. I have been hearing about a potential calendar change adding more school days. Honestly, you all just changed the calendar and it has been a mess. Now this change for what? Is the current change not working?

I want NM students to have academic excellence but our entire system is broken. Fix the system, pay teachers more, smaller class sizes, early interventions, more counselors, more nurses, more enrichment activities, know your community and help your community.

From: [Tia Rhodehouse](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; aftnmaction@gmail.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:20:32 AM

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Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I am the librarian at Pinon Elementary School in the Los Alamos School District. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 188 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students from 8:30 to 3:30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In our school district, Wednesdays are half days, starting at 8:30 and ending at 12:00. Due to this abbreviated Wednesday schedule, our students are able to participate in a variety of after school activities. On these Wednesday afternoons, teachers are given time for professional responsibilities like grading, planning, meeting, and collaborating. This average of 300 minutes of preparation time weekly is guaranteed to our teachers through our collectively bargained agreement and ensures that our educators can provide students with a high quality education.

The proposed 6.10.5.8 C 1 requires 180 instructional days per school year and would not include professional development time, and the proposed 6.10.5.8 D would require that elementary school days be no shorter than five and a half hours. In order to meet these requirements, our elementary schools would have to discontinue our early release Wednesdays, which would be a problem for students because it would require a schedule change for afterschool programs and drastically change how families would need to plan for after school care.

Another unintended but significant consequence for students could be that release times would change to being earlier on a daily basis, again creating a problem for after school care. This change would also be problematic for staff as Wednesday afternoons are currently designated as teacher prep time and the only time that our district can fit in the allotted average of 300 minutes of prep time that our collective bargaining agreement guarantees. If we lose our early release Wednesdays as a result of NMAC Rule 6.10.5 passing, teachers will be asked to perform at the same level and complete all of the same tasks as previous school years but with less time to prepare. Yes, our district can reformat our elementary schedule, but why would that be beneficial for students when our current schedule works for our students, families, and staff? Furthermore, our current schedule does not inhibit our students' growth.

Staff also have children who will be affected by this schedule change. An unintended result may be that teachers leave the profession due to the increase in demands of their time.

I ask NM PED to vote no on NMAC Rule 6.10.5.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tia Rhodehouse
Librarian
Piñon Elementary School
Los Alamos Public Schools

This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

[6.10.5_Exhibit 1819](#)

From: [Grady Ripley](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@aftunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:36:16 AM

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I am deeply disappointed that the PED has decided that they should go against the State Legislature and rule by edict. I have had enough of the Executive branch of government thinking they do not have to follow the will of the people.

The proposed changes to this state law place a hardship on educators across the state. More classroom time has not been shown to increase test scores but smaller class size have. Districts across the state need teachers but these unilateral and unfair changes to our working conditions are driving teachers out of education. Eliminating prep time from teachers does not help us teach more effectively, in fact it is just the opposite. Without adequate prep time our lessons are not as effective and robust. More class time does not address the root causes of New Mexico's educational issues. This is blaming educators for society's ills.

Grady Ripley

From: [Bonnie Schoenberger](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] proposed rule changes
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:40:38 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

I am reaching out with concern after reading through the proposed rule changes being considered. I strongly believe these rules would only put undue hardship on the district without any evidence of how it would better support students. Our district already provides 6.5 hours of instruction 5 days per week (at the mid school and high school) with a calendar that runs from early Aug. until early June. Students already have a huge demand placed on them and express high levels of anxiety (which I hear about on a daily basis in my job as a special education contact). Adding more to their plates will not allow them the down time they need to refresh and come to school ready to learn. Our stats at Los Alamos Public Schools speak to the fact that we do not need this. Our graduation rates are high (and have continued to improve) the same with our reading and math scores. This is not the answer to the learning loss that occurred during the pandemic. It was a mistake to stay virtual for such a long period of time but this is not the way to make up for it.

My biggest concern is the proposals for high school graduation requirements. How on earth can you propose to add 8 credit hours additional starting next year? This exceeds the average credit requirement for most states in the country. If there is data to back up how additional credits lead to better post-secondary outcomes then I would like to see it but also see a gradual increase in credits required. The current high school students absolutely should be grandfathered in. In fact, any changes to requirements for hours, credits, number of classes per day/year needs to take place gradually over time so that the changes can be well thought out and carefully planned for.

Our schools are already short staffed and even if we could find qualified personnel to take on the additional teaching loads your rules would require, where would we put those teachers? We are already so short on space we struggle to function. Are you going to build new schools by next year? Please explain how these rules are supportive of teachers and students?

~Bonnie Schoenberger (educator and parent)

--

Bonnie Schoenberger, M.Ed.
LAMS Special Education Campus Contact
505-663-2381

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This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Dani Carver](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:42:34 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Dani Carver and I am a teacher at Albuquerque Public Schools. This year marks my tenth year in the teaching profession—all of which have been taught at APS. I have been lucky enough to have taught almost all grade levels, kindergarten through fifth grade. With that, I have been able to teach a diverse group of hundreds of students all with different needs, home lives, backgrounds, beliefs, and so much more. I am endorsed in visual arts, language arts, and TESOL. I am the Union Fed Rep for my school. I have held many different leadership roles throughout my time as a teacher. With my extensive experience being a teacher, I hope this helps you understand my voice—loud and clear. Please take the time to read this message in full so my voice is heard.

When I heard the news that the PED is planning to change a law by doing so in a roundabout, and frankly, sneaky way, I was overwhelmed with many emotions—two of which being frustrated and hopeless for the future of education in New Mexico. Our nation has a broken public education system. New Mexico has a broken public education system. The fix to this broken system is not mandating more days and more hours. Part of finding a solution is listening to the teachers that are the front line of our education system. Instead, we are listening to non-educators who are inexperienced in the field of education. We, as educators, understand that students are struggling. We, too, want to find a solution. The solution is not more days, more hours, more work, and less support for us as professionals and for our students.

As an educator, who is on the front lines of education in New Mexico, I believe we can solve the issue at hand differently than adding additional days to our already heavy schedule. First off, we need to provide support to our most vulnerable populations. This support comes in many forms. One of our biggest issues is absenteeism. Students that do not have the support at home are simply not going to have the support to get to school every day or even make it to school on time. Teacher's lessons are not effective when students are not in school. Even with additional days, there will still be the same students missing the same percentage of school because there is no accountability of guardians to ensure their child is in school. Adding more school days to the year for students to miss is not the answer. On top of the ever ending struggle of absenteeism, we are now faced with an inconsistent school schedule. APS's current school schedule

has many flaws—one being the constant weeks that have two or three school days. Teachers are provided with mandated curriculum that is written for five day school weeks. Our teaching is becoming inconsistent because of the inconsistent school schedule. School districts need to hold students and guardians accountable for ensuring children are in school. Families are in need of resources and support that will help prioritize education in their households. Another resource we need to ensure students are in school is having reliable buses and bus drivers—so many of our families rely on these services because of a lack of a family car. Last I heard, APS couldn't even pay the bill for buses and drivers with our current schedule, so how are we going to fund even more days? Our families need to be supported with before and after school programs. Many of our families have difficult work schedules and feel a lack of support from the schools to ensure their child has a place to go before and after school. If we have funding, use it to provide families with parenting classes to help with consistent absenteeism and other needs of the community.

Secondly, we are in dire need of teachers. Almost every school that I can think of has at least one long term substitute. I am thankful that there is a warm body in each classroom to ensure safety of students, however, respectfully, substitutes are not teachers. Anyone with a few college credits and a background check can become a substitute. Schools are in need of substitutes for IEPs, sick days, and personal days—we are being forced to use support staff to cover classes because substitutes are being used long-term in classrooms that need to have a certified teacher. Teachers are running for the hills because of the lack of support, lack of respect, overbearing workload, and terrible student behaviors. Veteran teachers are finding other jobs where they will be treated like the professionals they are. We are professionals who have earned college degrees in education. We have endured many years of classes, lectures, practicum, assignments, assessments, and student teaching just to be told what to do by people that have never stepped foot in a classroom. And better yet, our peers are being replaced by substitutes that do not have any formal training in education because our peers are leaving the teaching profession. This year's schedule has exhausted us. We have had repetitive professional development that is centered around testing and data collection—nothing to actually improve our teaching. Professional development has been poorly planned, unorganized, and frankly, a waste of time. What would be more beneficial is for teachers to have time in their classrooms where they can plan quality lessons, collaborate with grade level teams, and find professional development that actually supports the learners in each of our classrooms. Providing teachers with a selection of professional development to choose from would allow teachers to work on goals and the needs of their current students. Schools need support for students with behavioral and social emotional needs—full time counselors and nurses should be at EVERY SCHOOL. Schools need support for students who need extensive interventions in math and reading. Schools need support for their special education programs.

Teachers need the respect and cooperation of our school communities and this support cannot come from adding to our already full plates. Extending our contract to 194 days to include parent teacher conferences and more poorly planned professional development, is not the solution to the issue at hand. Overworking, already exhausted, and at wits-ends educators, is asking for more and more teachers to leave the profession. Teacher shortages are what school districts are already struggling to fill. Funding should be put in places where we can retain and hire teachers, full time counselors, full time nurses, full time social workers, and support staff—all at a livable wage. Educators are searching and longing to be respected and find a love for this profession again.

I hope that you take my thoughts into consideration as this important decision is made. Teachers are advocates and we will advocate for ourselves and this profession to be what it was intended to be. We will advocate for student success. As a state, we need to work together towards student success and to find solutions to the real problems happening in our schools.

Dani Carver
Fifth Grade Teacher
Union Representative
Oñate Elementary School



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From: [Dani Carver](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:46:06 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Dani Carver and I am a teacher at Albuquerque Public Schools. This year marks my tenth year in the teaching profession—all of which have been taught at APS. I have been lucky enough to have taught almost all grade levels, kindergarten through fifth grade. With that, I have been able to teach a diverse group of hundreds of students all with different needs, home lives, backgrounds, beliefs, and so much more. I am endorsed in visual arts, language arts, and TESOL. I am the Union Fed Rep for my school. I have held many different leadership roles throughout my time as a teacher. With my extensive experience being a teacher, I hope this helps you understand my voice—loud and clear. Please take the time to read this message in full so my voice is heard.

When I heard the news that the PED is planning to change a law by doing so in a roundabout, and frankly, sneaky way, I was overwhelmed with many emotions—two of which being frustrated and hopeless for the future of education in New Mexico. Our nation has a broken public education system. New Mexico has a broken public education system. The fix to this broken system is not mandating more days and more hours. Part of finding a solution is listening to the teachers that are the front line of our education system. Instead, we are listening to non-educators who are inexperienced in the field of education. We, as educators, understand that students are struggling. We, too, want to find a solution. The solution is not more days, more hours, more work, and less support for us as professionals and for our students.

As an educator, who is on the front lines of education in New Mexico, I believe we can solve the issue at hand differently than adding additional days to our already heavy schedule. First off, we need to provide support to our most vulnerable populations. This support comes in many forms. One of our biggest issues is absenteeism. Students that do not have the support at home are simply not going to have the support to get to school every day or even make it to school on time. Teacher's lessons are not effective when students are not in school. Even with additional days, there will still be the same students missing the same percentage of school because there is no accountability of guardians to ensure their child is in school. Adding more school days to the year for students to miss is not the answer. On top of the ever ending struggle of absenteeism, we are now faced with an inconsistent school schedule. APS's current school schedule

has many flaws—one being the constant weeks that have two or three school days. Teachers are provided with mandated curriculum that is written for five day school weeks. Our teaching is becoming inconsistent because of the inconsistent school schedule. School districts need to hold students and guardians accountable for ensuring children are in school. Families are in need of resources and support that will help prioritize education in their households. Another resource we need to ensure students are in school is having reliable buses and bus drivers—so many of our families rely on these services because of a lack of a family car. Last I heard, APS couldn't even pay the bill for buses and drivers with our current schedule, so how are we going to fund even more days? Our families need to be supported with before and after school programs. Many of our families have difficult work schedules and feel a lack of support from the schools to ensure their child has a place to go before and after school. If we have funding, use it to provide families with parenting classes to help with consistent absenteeism and other needs of the community.

Secondly, we are in dire need of teachers. Almost every school that I can think of has at least one long term substitute. I am thankful that there is a warm body in each classroom to ensure safety of students, however, respectfully, substitutes are not teachers. Anyone with a few college credits and a background check can become a substitute. Schools are in need of substitutes for IEPs, sick days, and personal days—we are being forced to use support staff to cover classes because substitutes are being used long-term in classrooms that need to have a certified teacher. Teachers are running for the hills because of the lack of support, lack of respect, overbearing workload, and terrible student behaviors. Veteran teachers are finding other jobs where they will be treated like the professionals they are. We are professionals who have earned college degrees in education. We have endured many years of classes, lectures, practicum, assignments, assessments, and student teaching just to be told what to do by people that have never stepped foot in a classroom. And better yet, our peers are being replaced by substitutes that do not have any formal training in education because our peers are leaving the teaching profession. This year's schedule has exhausted us. We have had repetitive professional development that is centered around testing and data collection—nothing to actually improve our teaching. Professional development has been poorly planned, unorganized, and frankly, a waste of time. What would be more beneficial is for teachers to have time in their classrooms where they can plan quality lessons, collaborate with grade level teams, and find professional development that actually supports the learners in each of our classrooms. Providing teachers with a selection of professional development to choose from would allow teachers to work on goals and the needs of their current students. Schools need support for students with behavioral and social emotional needs—full time counselors and nurses should be at EVERY SCHOOL. Schools need support for students who need extensive interventions in math and reading. Schools need support for their special education programs.

Teachers need the respect and cooperation of our school communities and this support cannot come from adding to our already full plates. Extending our contract to 194 days to include parent teacher conferences and more poorly planned professional development, is not the solution to the issue at hand. Overworking, already exhausted, and at wits-ends educators, is asking for more and more teachers to leave the profession. Teacher shortages are what school districts are already struggling to fill. Funding should be put in places where we can retain and hire teachers, full time counselors, full time nurses, full time social workers, and support staff—all at a livable wage. Educators are searching and longing to be respected and find a love for this profession again.

I hope that you take my thoughts into consideration as this important decision is made. Teachers are advocates and we will advocate for ourselves and this profession to be what it was intended to be. We will advocate for student success. As a state, we need to work together towards student success and to find solutions to the real problems happening in our schools.

Dani Carver



From: [VALERIA SERRANO-MARQUEZ](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Implications of proposed PED rule changes to LAPS
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:46:46 AM

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I think it is enough with all the classes we have, plus the homework we have to do. Us students use free periods to catch up in classes. Free periods aren't for chilling at all. Some of us students have a job, we take advantage of our free time to do our homework (we use our time wisely). I don't understand why the NMPED wants us to spend more time in school. More time in school means more homework. This means no more time for family or the job. If the NMPED wants to increase school time why don't they decrease homework.



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From: [HENRY GANS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:48:32 AM

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This is an awful idea. Taking away free periods makes NO SENSE. If anything, it's the best way to LOWER our scores. I've heard teachers tell me that anyone taking at least three AP credits NEEDS a free period. Without free periods, we wouldn't have enough time to do our AP work, and we wouldn't be able to take as many AP classes. Please don't pass the law.

Everyone I've talked to about it hates it.

Henry Gans, student



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Brooke Nowak-Neely](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED Rule Making and Desert Willow Family School
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:49:15 AM

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Good afternoon,

I am a parent of two elementary students and a constituent of this state. I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the PED's attempt to ban the 4-day school week. There are numerous reasons this ban should not be imposed, but my focus is ensuring that the weekly schedule of Desert Willow Family School remain unchanged, namely that the 4 days in school and 1 day homeschool remain the same. This would apply to Desert Willow's sister school, Coyote Willow Family School as well.

If you are not familiar with Desert Willow and Coyote Willow, I will briefly explain their unique character. These two APS magnet schools serve grades K-8. There is a homeschool component requiring parents to formally serve as co-educators. Desert Willow students homeschool on Mondays. My children are in the 80% program so attend Tuesday -Thursday 8:00-3:00 and Fridays 8:00-12:25. The teachers work in school on Monday developing curriculum (and are available to parents and students as well) while we homeschool that day. Parents meet with teachers at least once a month for curriculum development during the evening for 1.5 to 2 hours. The principal at Desert Willow is also a teacher at the school and integral in the continual refinement of curriculum development.

This collaborative effort and unique schedule yield big results. Desert Willow has the **highest math proficiency score, 73.2%, in all of APS** and shines state-wide. Coyote Willow has the **highest language arts proficiency score ,78.7%, in APS**, with Desert Willow also scoring high at **73.8%** . The average Language arts proficiency in the state is about 34% while math is just 25%.

This stellar performance is nothing new for Desert Willow as its students historically perform very well. See this Legislative Education Study Committee newsletter showing Desert Willow to be the **only APS school in the top five for math and science in 2019 in New Mexico**. [LESCJun22.pdf \(nmlegis.gov\)](#).

Please include the homeschooling component as instructional time. **I implore you to exempt Desert Willow Family School from changes to our weekly schedule and homeschooling component.** The PED should look to schools like Desert Willow as an example of what is going right. Desert Willow is the model for high math and reading proficiency. Please prevent the destruction of this school model with a one-size-fits-all change. Perhaps look closer at this model and see how this model can be expanded to help more students feel the pride of success in learning.

Please feel free to contact me for more discussion.

Thank you kindly for your time,
Brooke M. Nowak-Neely
Attorney at Law

From: [Monica Chlastawa](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [ACT ATF; Monica Chlastawa](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:55:22 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

**With all do respect, we do not need more days of school.
What we do need:**

- **More social workers** to help families with the support they need so the families' only worry is getting their children to school on time.
- Provide money so that every elementary school is a community school. **Community school coordinators** do an amazing service to the school and the community and if the school doesn't have money in the budget we can't get one.
- **More school psychologists** to help get these very troubled and mentally ill students in programs that are appropriate for them instead of staying in a regular classroom where the teacher spends most of their day dealing with violent behavior.
- **More school counselors.**
- **Mandatory classes for parents and students** on the importance of education and what happens (short term and long term) when students miss school.
- **Daily physical education** in every elementary school. Studies show physical activity can help you think, learn, problem-solve, and enjoy an emotional balance. It can improve memory and reduce anxiety or depression.
- **Daily Art and Music.**
- **More respect for educators** in the form of listening to concerns, pay, autonomy.
- **Give us back what has been taken away** for so many years. EA in the work room so teachers don't have to make copies, laminate, cut, glue etc., Sick time pay for all the hours we don't take during our career. Technology teacher to help teachers with technology in the classroom. Technology teacher to teach students how to type and navigate the internet.

Thank you for your time,
Sincerely,

--

Monica Chlastawa

Physical Education Teacher

Union Fed Rep

*SAFEZONE

Barcelona Elementary School

505-877-0400 Ext 52033

Monica.chlastawa@aps.edu

"The function of protecting and developing health must rank even above that of restoring it when it is impaired."

Hippocrates

From: [Joaquin Martinez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback for School Calendar Change.
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:56:52 AM

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Your proposal stinks of racial and financial prejudice. You would think that after the Yazzie-Martinez case, you would be trying to level the playing field and making things better for disadvantaged kids. In your wisdom, you're doing the opposite.

If a 12th grader does not have a free period, then, if they are not financially advantaged, how will they be able to work to pay college expenses and/or help their family stay housed?

You guys are so out of touch it's a joke. Want to change something, start with firing yourself.

J. Martinez

From: [Rose schiowitz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [ACT ATF](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:58:56 AM

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I am an APS educator, ATF union member and APS parent. I believe the PED proposal to extend the school year calendar is misguided for the following reasons:

- Educators have shouldered the increases of instructional and professional development hours implemented this school year, but we can't continue to do more with less support.
- To give students effective instruction, we need instructors in the classroom. Making unilateral changes to educators' working conditions without our input is a proven way to drive educators out of the profession.
- This proposal is a disruption of educators' and students' lives.
- Adult learning = student learning. That's what the current law (HB 130) is based on. This PED proposal does not include Parent Teacher conferences or any time for adults to learn together and work together.
- Changing law through rule is unacceptable and is an overstep of the executive branch. This is reminiscent of the tactics used by Gov. Susan Martinez and her Sec. of Ed. Hannah Skandera.
- This is a false solution to a complex problem. Students need more than additional seat time to succeed.
- Our students are affected by chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. Staffing our schools for the whole child means that every preK-12 school has a specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) team—composed of licensed school social workers, licensed school psychologists, certified school counselors, licensed school nurses and other highly qualified personnel—who work with teachers and parents to address barriers to educational success, ensure positive conditions for learning, and help all students achieve academically and ultimately become productive citizens.

Professionally,
Samantha Rose Schiowitz
2/3 Bilingual Educator
Eugene Field ES
MA in Multicultural Pedagogy

From: [Amanda "Mandy" Ferran](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; aftnmaction@gmail.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:06:41 AM

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Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I teach kindergarten at Piñon Elementary School. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 188 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students from 8:30 to 3:30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In our school district, Wednesdays are half days, starting at 8:30 and ending at 12:00. Due to this abbreviated Wednesday schedule, our students are able to attend extra curricular activities like scouting, dance, private music instruction and other forms of enrichment. On these Wednesday afternoons, teachers are given time for professional responsibilities like grading, planning, meeting, and collaborating. This average of 300 minutes of preparation time weekly is guaranteed to our teachers through our collectively bargained agreement and ensures that our educators can provide students with a high quality education.

The proposed 6.10.5.8 C 1 requires 180 instructional days per school year and would not include professional development time, and the proposed 6.10.5.8 D would require that elementary school days be no shorter than five and a half hours. In order to meet these requirements, our elementary schools would have to discontinue our early release Wednesdays, which would be a problem for students because it would require a schedule change for afterschool programs and drastically change how families would need to plan for after school care.

Another unintended but significant consequence for students could be that release times would change to being earlier on a daily basis, again creating a problem for after school care. This change would also be problematic for staff as Wednesday afternoons are currently designated as teacher prep time and the only time that our district can fit in the allotted average of 300 minutes of prep time that our collective bargaining agreement guarantees. If we lose our early release Wednesdays as a result of NMAC Rule 6.10.5 passing on Mondays, teachers will be asked to perform at the same level and complete all of the same tasks as previous school years but with less time to prepare. Yes, our district can reformat our elementary schedule, but why would that be beneficial for students when our current schedule works for our students, families, and staff? Furthermore, our current schedule does not inhibit our students' growth; our students' math and reading proficiency scores are increasing and are currently some of the highest scores in the state.

Furthermore, many of our teachers are stretched thin already. Some have said they would quit if this becomes the rule. Can we really afford to lose more teachers?

I ask NM PED to reconsider this rule change and vote no on NMAC Rule 6.10.5.

Thank you for your consideration,
Amanda Ferran

Kindergarten
Piñon Elementary School

Los Alamos Public Schools

--

Mandy Ferran
National Board Certified Teacher
Kindergarten - Piñon Elementary School
90 Grand Canyon
Los Alamos, NM 87544
505 - 663-2695



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From: [AMELIA SINTAY](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:07:32 AM

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Hello! As you can probably tell, I am a student in New Mexico. These education requirements would have negative impacts on my and my peer's schooling. I understand that this is well intentioned, but I believe that the consequences of this action were not thought through.

The proposed changes would get rid of student free periods, due to the raise in the number of classes per day- and per graduation. Free periods are important for students to study in. This would also make it so seniors would have to take many more classes.

Thank you for reading this email, and taking it into consideration.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Terilynn Schofield](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Changes to 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:12:16 AM

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Having recently moved to the United States to teach in New Mexico, I am grateful for the 4 day school week. It allows me the time I need on Friday to plan and prepare adequately for the week ahead and still have some time on the weekend to rest. As a newcomer to the State, this was an enticing factor that contributed to my decision to relocate and teach in New Mexico.

From: [Rebecca Simons](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Do not elongate the school year
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:15:47 AM

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I am an overworked, exhausted teacher. I'm so tired and overwhelmed sometimes, I feel sick. The amount of extra work and time I have had to spend at school is part of the reason I feel the way I do. It is only my 13th year teaching, and if I could do anything else and make the money I'm making, I'd seriously consider doing it. The stress and workload is too much. The extended year would only contribute to these issues. I am one of many teachers that has voiced concerns and feelings such as mine. The one thing I can always count on, is time off in the Summer so I can recharge, before I have to get ready to move the ship out of port again at the beginning of the school year. It's one of the only perks as a teacher.

If you're going to elongate the year, we had better get more than one personal day a year, and we had better get vacation time. One personal day a year isn't going to cut it, if we are in school for longer periods of time.

In addition, it is so hot in my classroom in the summer months that I feel sick, get headaches and students can't concentrate. Now you want to elongate the year at the hottest times of the year? We can barely keep everything going for the time we are in school, let alone adding more days to the calendar.

The reality is this: Students who don't want to come to school, still aren't going to come to school if the year is elongated. They're just going to miss more school and our statistics are going to show way more absences. Students and their parents are already taking time out of school to go on vacations. You elongate the year, and there will be more absences, not fewer. If you want to combat the issues surrounding public education, wage a war on poverty, and put some teeth into the absenteeism rules. Hold parents and students accountable for their absences. Don't allow them to make up work for whatever reason, no matter how many absences they have. That alone, will help the graduation rate.

Students who want to do well in school and those who have parents that value education, do well in school. Those who don't, won't. Not even if you add days of school. More isn't necessarily better. Quality is better than quantity. Just because you add extra school days, more kids aren't going to magically show up. In fact, there will be less students in school during those extra days. Those who want to learn and succeed will. Those who don't, won't. If you want to improve things, hold parents accountable for student behavior and work. Why should teachers be held accountable for all of the problems facing our students today, when the parents have to take zero responsibility for their own kid?

More school is not the answer. Public Schools are not businesses. Students aren't

numbers. Statistics only show part of the student, not all of the student. Students need time to digest information and for time for their brains to catch up. They need time to mature. Some of that has to happen without school.

More school is not the answer. Better support for teachers, less administrative work for teachers, less emphasis on evaluations, and more support from parents-and holding students and parents accountable-is what needs to happen. If you don't want to have a teacher shortage, don't elongate the year.

--

Rebecca Simons

505.999.7363

From: [Michelle Bane](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:20:25 AM

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To whom it may concern:

Thank you for allowing public feedback regarding the proposal to increase instructional time effective 2023-2024 SY. I am concerned with the prospect of yet another drastic and rapid proposed change. Again, as last year, there isn't much time to prepare and think about all possible ramifications to this proposal. I am writing as both a parent (I have two high achieving high school sons, grades 9 and 11) and I am a School Social Worker with 20+ years experience in New Mexico.

It is unacceptable that students (such as my sons) who have been diligently and conscientiously working toward their educational goals to meet previously agreed upon requirements are now suddenly going to be required to have more time in class. For example, my older son is a junior at Los Alamos high school and is currently working toward his private pilot license. He is a Cadet 2nd Lieutenant with the Civil Air Patrol and aspires to attend the U.S. Air Force Academy following high school graduation. He also attends dual credit college classes for Robotics at UNM-LA. Next year, under the current high school graduation requirements (24 credits), he only officially needs one required (English) class, though he is choosing to take both AP Pre-Calculus and AP Physics along with his UNM LA dual credit classes. Additionally, he is applying for an internship at the National Laboratory. He is a varsity level cross country athlete with requirements to train with the team after school daily. The new approach would hinder his ability to achieve his goals of gaining on the job training beyond the classroom learning environment. Potentially, this may also impact his ability to be as competitive in seeking placement at the U.S. Air Force Academy. There are already time restraints on his schedule due to the limited offerings of classes at UNM-LA; therefore, ensuring every school day would equate to exactly the 6.5 hours between class time, varsity cross country team practice, and internship is going to be an extreme challenge.

Per the proposal,

"All students shall be in instructional hours, exclusive of lunch, lunch recess, and lunch passing periods, for a minimum of 1,140 instructional hours per school year. Secondary students shall attend a minimum of four class periods per instructional day, unless a secondary student provides evidence of participating for an equivalent amount of time in an apprenticeship, a work study program, or in employment."

If students are allowed to be in a job or internship to equal the time required in class, how would that translate to credits earned at the high school level? Is there an increase from 24 to 32 credits required?

Please consider

*allowing students who are currently in high school (through graduating year 2027) to continue to achieve the previously agreed upon requirements in terms of credits and time in

class.

At the very least, current junior upperclassmen who are so close to completion should be allowed to continue per the previous requirements. Increasing credit requirements and changing the rules so late in their high school career is unfair and not responsible. Trying to hit a moving target is difficult for anyone to achieve. It negatively impacts resilience and engagement.

The proposal for increased instructional hours/ days is coming right on the heels of last year's increased days and time which forced an additional 10 days to the school year calendar. Now, school employees are being asked (again) to drastically increase our contract time because of the stipulation to not allow professional development toward instructional time. It is well known that people are leaving the education field in high numbers every year because of annual increased demands without input or say. Respectfully, I ask you to consider the possible deleterious mental health effects of these repeated increased demands (on both staff and students) given how closely they follow the previous year's mandate. Without even a full year to assess efficacy of the previous increase, this is too much, too soon. I also worry that many students will choose to drop out of school without graduating because they feel hopeless to have to add so much more time in the classroom. Currently there is a teacher/ educational assistant shortage. Adding more class time will only increase student to teacher ratio and make classes over-crowded.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Bane, LCSW
PED level 3 School Social Worker, New Mexico

Michelle Bane LCSW

LAMS School Social Worker
505-663-2408

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This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [IRIS PURTZER](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:23:40 AM

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Hello! Just wanted to say as a current high school student that this is an awful idea. We cannot mentally handle this, and teachers need the time being taken away to better their lesson plans. Don't go through with this. DONT. We will riot.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [amanda barry](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:27:55 AM

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Hello,

I am a parent of a Los Alamos High School sophomore student. I am concerned about the sudden change in requirements. I am also deeply concerned that the rule would be at odds with the law. I believe that this rule has unintended consequences that will limit critical staff planning time and be disruptive to our secondary schools. The NMPED is failing to give districts adequate time to prepare for this unexpected change that dramatically impacts my student.

In Los Alamos, we already have high performing students who do not need more stress of added credit requirements and the loss of a free period. They do not need more time in school. Please work on supporting our teachers and students and not continually undermining them. Please DO NOT ENACT THIS RULE.

Amanda Barry

1930 Camino Uva, Los Alamos, NM 87544

From: [Janette Darlington](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:28:21 AM

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To whom it may concern,

The new purposed school hours are not what our children need. I understand that some schools may be failing to have enough hours but all study's show that children need less hours at school and more hours to play and rest. There is absolutely no need to change the schedule.

As a mother of a kindergarten with another child going to kindergarten next year, my 5 year old gets out of school and is completely and totally drained. Adding more hours will just make this worse which will leave her more vulnerable to sickness and stress and cause her to miss more school.

Please reconsider this change for the good of the students. Remember they are children and need time to not be in a classroom.

Thank you,

Janette

From: [Tevita Funaki](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.15 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:28:37 AM

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This is silly.

--

Tevi Funaki



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Cheryl Kennedy](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Reference rule number NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:28:45 AM

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I strongly disagree with increasing the number of school days. I do not believe that this is a solution to any of the problems we face in public education. I believe there are many ways we could increase the rate of learning for our students, but none of them would require extra days.

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From: [Joseph Chandler](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:30:48 AM

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Hi,

I just wanted to write in and let you know we are not in favor of current rule changes under consideration.

This rule has several changes that will impact our schools in Los Alamos County.

1. The new rule would require districts to provide 1140 hours of instruction AND a minimum of 180 days each school year. This is a change from legislation that allowed districts to count hours NOT days.
2. The rule no longer allows the district to include professional development as a part of the required instructional hours. This means that we would most likely have to add additional days to the teaching contract to maintain professional development time provided through the collective bargaining agreement.
3. The rule will require that students are in school 5 days a week for at least 5.5 hours a day at the elementary and 6.5 at the secondary schools. This would eliminate the ability to have early release Wednesdays for elementary teacher planning and prep. We would have to consider releasing elementary students earlier each day to meet teacher planning requirements. We are still learning how this would impact advisement and testing days at the secondary level.
4. The rule requires secondary students to take 4 credit bearing classes each day (8 classes each week). Currently, LAPS secondary schools use a block schedule that has 3.5 classes each day for a total of 7 classes a week. This means that we will have to change the master schedules at LAHS and LAMS.
5. High School students would not be allowed to take a free period. This means that we would need to add additional classes, teachers, or have larger class sizes to ensure all students are placed in 4 credit bearing courses each day.
6. LAHS students would complete a total of 32 credits. Graduation requirements are for students to complete 24 credits.
7. The rule change would go into effect for the 24/25 school year. The new calendar and class schedules would need to be finalized, approved, and submitted before the budget is submitted in April.

Please focus on content of programs that are being taught and quit trying to make things about contact hours.

Thanks,
Joe

From: Atgudar
To: afmaction@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED i
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:31:26 AM

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- Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I am Educational Assistant at Aspen Elementary School. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 188 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students from 8:30 to 3:30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In our school district, Wednesdays are half days, starting at 8:30 and ending at 12:00. Due to this abbreviated Wednesday schedule, our students are able to do professional training and try to keep up with our work load. On these Wednesday afternoons, we help teachers are given time for professional responsibilities like grading, planning, meeting, and collaborating. This average of 300 minutes of preparation time weekly is guaranteed to our teachers through our collectively bargained agreement and ensures that our educators can provide students with a high quality education.

The proposed 6.10.5.8 C 1 requires 180 instructional days per school year and would not include professional development time and the proposed 6.10.5.8 D would require that elementary school days be no shorter than five and a half hours. In order to meet these requirements, our elementary schools would have to discontinue our early release Wednesdays, which would be a problem for students because it would require a schedule change for after school programs and drastically change how families would need to plan for after school care. Another consequence for students could be that release times would change to being earlier on a daily basis, again creating a problem for after school care. This change would also be problematic for staff as they would have to deal with a schedule change in order to get the allotted average of 300 minutes of prep time weekly. Staff also have children who will be affected by this schedule change. An unintended result may be that teachers leave the profession due to the increase in demands of their time.

I ask NM PED to reconsider this new rule. I am voting no on this rule.

Also, just for thought. We already have trouble trying to hire qualified teachers and other staff. If this new rule is implemented this situation will become worse. You will see a lot of staff retirements and teachers leaving the education field. It won't be because we don't love our jobs but because of all the added stress of our jobs. We don't get paid a lot of money in our profession.

Thank you for your consideration,
Name: Annie Trujillo-Garcia
Position: Educational Assistant
School Site: Aspen Elementary School
District: Los Alamos Public Schools

Annie Trujillo-Garcia

From: [INNA BOHN](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback on NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements" from a LAPS employee
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:31:53 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am opposed to the proposed rule and its implications. If the NMPED chooses to implement this rule next year, I will quit my teaching job and pull my three children out of the public school system. Increasing school hours will NOT solve the problem of poor quality of public education in NM. You are already taking precious time away from families and stressing out both the teachers and the students.

Inna Bohn

ELL teacher and case manager LAHS

"To have another language is to possess a second soul."

Charlemagne



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [aj.S.](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED Change to school hours
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:32:27 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

This proposed ruling is not only illegal, but would be a serious setback to learning in New Mexico. In addition, it is being implemented way to quickly without regards to budgets and classes in the 24/25 school year which have already been planned. It is going to cause mass chaos for school districts through the state and will eventually be nullified by the court system because it is illegal causing even more chaos to undo the stupidity. Clearly this is a loose/loose for the kids of New Mexico.

Please make it go away before it starts.

Sincerely,
Andrew Saunders
2887 Woodland Rd.
Los Alamos, NM 87544

From: [David](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:35:04 AM

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Support this ... if only to upset the current status quo which is dragging down the whole educational system in NM.

From: [Joshua Delgado](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:35:18 AM

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After reading this proposal I am completely against this. I have children in elementary and high school and we moved from Texas to NM to get away from this kind structure. My kids did poorly in that environment and greatly affected their mental health negatively. Since moving to NM, the current rules and schedules have greatly improved my kids' health, grades, and performance. They still have the same workload as they did with the stricter TX rules, but they now have the time and resources they need to get them done and pass them without the negative mental health impact. I believe if the new rule change goes into effect, you will see a massive negative impact on children's mental health, poor grades, overworked staff, and god forbid, more school violence. DO NOT implement this change. You are better than this

From: [Matthew Allen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule changes
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:38:17 AM

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This rule change is not productive at all and a bad idea. We need better school in New Mexico not longer days or years or more credits. This is a poor rule change. Thanks.

Matt

From: [aj S.](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:38:49 AM

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To whom it may concern,

This proposed ruling is not only illegal, but would be a serious setback to learning in New Mexico. In addition, it is being implemented way to quickly without regards to budgets and classes in the 24/25 school year which have already been tentatively planned. It is going to cause mass chaos for school districts through the state and will eventually be nullified by the court system because it is illegal causing even more chaos to undo the stupidity. Clearly this is a loose/loose for the kids of New Mexico.

Please make it go away before it starts.

Sincerely,
Andrew Saunders
2887 Woodland Rd.
Los Alamos, NM 87544

From: [Pete Day](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] It's a good rule
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:39:16 AM

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I believe the students in Los Alamos don't get nearly enough instruction time and have way too many days off and it has been a detriment to their learning.

Thanks,

Pete Day

From: [Annie Marquez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule change 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:41:02 AM

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To Whom it May Concern:

New Mexico Public Education is important to me and my family, as we have two young children in the school system. A lot of effort is being focused on the amount of time kids should be spending in school.

I really think more effort needs to be spent on quality of education rather than quantity. Kids and parents need time for after school activities and time as a family. More time spent at school doesn't mean that kids will be learning more. There is point at which the kids ability to focus and absorb the information is at its limit.

A question needs to be considered, "What recharges the mental and emotional batteries of students, teachers, and parents?" Not leaving time for those people to "recharge" will exasperate the issue rather than improve it.

Some issues that will begin to arise if more days/hours are added are :

- 1) More absences due to exhaustion both mentally and physically
- 2) Further slip in grades due to feeling overwhelmed
- 3) Further loss of educators who do not want to spend more time at work at the expense of their own children and families. They will take their degrees to private schools or workplaces.

Please slow down and consider all options before proceeding. A problem that has been growing over the last decade will not be solved in a short few months.

Sincerely,
Annie Marquez

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Cynthia Martinez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed change to 24-25 school year
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:45:00 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

I am NOT in support of these changes being proposed for next school year.

Our children are already stressed and barely have time to be kids.

Teachers and school are already struggling.

I do not at all understand how these changes help anyone?!

Parents cannot keep up with the demand of what is being proposed and I do not think that this should take place.

Our children's summers are shorter, there homework is ridiculous.

Instead of making changes to the schedule. You should be focusing on curriculum that is being is being taught in our schools and whether or not the teachers are doing a good job. If kids are having support that they need.

Our kids are falling behind because more and more is expected of them from them. The curriculum has only worse. Parents don't even understand the work so unable help them. They are not being taught that will actually benefit in the real world. Instead they continue to fall being in the things that matter such as reading, math, and writing because teachers are not being held accountable for their role in making sure these kids succeed. Our children don't know things they need to know to make successful in all aspects of their life.

Respectfully,

Cynthia Martinez

From: [Rudi Thornburgh](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:47:39 AM

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I am profoundly disturbed and disheartened to be put in a position to advocate for the basic dignity of our educational staff and that of our young learners.

To attempt to circumvent any informed discourse on the subject of educational improvement or reform, specifically bypassing the input of educators and use of contemporary educational research as a means to unilaterally and punitively enforce an policy unsupported by data which ultimately serves to dehumanize the children and educators involved is absolutely unforgivable.

The proposed increase to instructional hours, specifically unpaired with any concurrent increase to staff or professional support for present staff is an offensive proposition which will serve only to drive teachers such as myself, as well as prospective younger and out of state teachers further away from the profession.

Our community requires and deserves the benefits which would result from schools which are properly staffed with regard to both quantity and quality.

Our students deserve to be educated by highly trained professionals who continue to receive professional development in order to best address the psychoeducational needs of our student population whose needs hardly resemble those children five or ten years ago.

More of what isn't working is, quite frankly, an embarrassing proposition to have to challenge. We can do better, and we must do better.

Sincerely,

Rudi Thornburgh

--

*Rudi Thornburgh, M.A.S.E.
IEP Specialist
Arroyo del Oso Elementary
Longfellow Elementary
Montezuma Elementary*

From: [KALLISTA WOODALL](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The New Changes 2024-2025
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:47:44 AM

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To whom this may concern,

Good morning and I hope you are well today.

A little while ago I read the school changes that will be taken into effect as of next year. I am going to be a sophomore next year and some of these changes will not affect me, although, the one issue that did in fact catch my eye was that us highschoolers will no longer have free periods. I will not be taking a free period as of next year, but I believe the ability to take a free period will be important to upperclassmen. Think about it, juniors and seniors will be applying to college and you do take a free period under circumstances, right? Many in these grades that I know are taking a free period and do use it for college preparation, or they use this opportunity to get work done in school hours before they have to work; people do have jobs, especially those of ages 17+ who are usually juniors or seniors. Another issue that has risen for me is the fact that elementary teachers will no longer have their Wednesday planning day. For years Wednesdays off have been a usual yearly thing for teachers, and this will put so much more stress on teachers and their students, especially because they are so young. Overall these changes, from what you should be able to see, are incredibly dramatic. This will just bring stress on students, stress on teachers, and stress on everyone. Another period? We were doing just fine before. Don't change it, it makes no sense, keep it the same.

Thank you for reading, and consider this email, please.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Mitsi Pair Willard](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:50:39 AM

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As a parent of 4 children in Los Alamos Public School, I am writing to voice my concerns about the major changes to the School Calendar that are being considered.

I am **against** NMAC Rule 6.10.5. Our students already have substantial time spent in school each day. All of my children participate in extra curricular activities after school, as well. Their teachers need time for planning, conferences, and grading, all of which would be made more challenging through passing this rule. Children and families need a balance of out-of-school time for rest, mental health, and emotional growth.

The past several years have been very difficult for families, children, and educators. Let's ease up on placing new requirements year after year that place even more stress on educators and families.

Thank you-
Mitsi Pair Willard

--

Mitsi Pair Willard, Ph.D.

Executive Director



Family Strengths Network

3540 Orange St.

Los Alamos, NM 87544

505-662-4515

From: [Elaine Galbizo Haroz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:51:11 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

We DO NOT support the adoption of the proposed rule change, especially with this sudden unexpected change that will dramatically impact our families and our teachers.

This proposal needs time to be fleshed out, to be discussed in the best interest of our students.

Elaine Haroz
Los Alamos Public School Parent

From: [Olivia Dong](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:52:24 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I strongly object to the proposed rule changes to NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements". These changes focus on quantity of school days and school hours and do very little to address quality of education while in school, which in my mind is a much more pressing issue. Adding more time in school is only taking away time for students; especially those who are advanced, to seek advancement or enrichment afterschool.

Furthermore, these changes are likely to cost districts a disproportionately large amount of money compared to the additional instruction hours it will supposedly bring. Please focus instead on improving instructional quality by, e.g., developing initiatives for attracting talented and passionate teachers and support staff.

Instead of focusing on increasing days and hours in school, it is more important that school time is actually used efficiently and effectively for student teaching and learning. Quality over quantity will be more beneficial to students, staff as well as district finances.

Sincerely,
Olivia Dong

From: [Nuria Ortiz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:59:25 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

As an educator for 19 years, I am unable to work any harder without impacting the well-being of my own family. Please be aware that this is a false solution to a complex problem. I am against this ruling.

Sincerely,

Reading Interventionist
MA in ASD

Christine Duncan Heritage Academy
1900 Atrisco Dr. NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120
(505) 839-4971 Ext.156
(505) 831-9027 fax

“And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.”
— Paulo Coelho, *The Alchemist*

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From: [Katie Wurden Higgins](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:00:12 PM

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To those it may concern:

As a parent, I have concerns regarding *NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"*. We just underwent significant calendar changes in our district late last spring that made planning after hours childcare and parental leave for a household in which both parents work full time challenging. Our school district did a nice job soliciting feedback and incorporating comments and did the most it could to allow families to plan. However, the new proposed rule seems rushed and may have unintended negative consequences. Stability is really important when we plan as a family, and this will significantly alter the current district calendar, plus there are concerns it won't let our overworked teachers adequately prepare for all that is required by them. Given the timeframe and the significance of proposed changes, I do not support the new rule as drafted.

Katie Higgins,
Los Alamos, NM

From: [AUGUST JAMES](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Student feedback on NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:04:46 PM

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Hello

I am a senior at Los Alamos High School, and I am very opposed to the adoption of Rule 6.10.5. The rule will not affect me directly but I think it will only detriment students in the New Mexico Public Education system. More hours of school does not necessarily lead to more learning. Increasing the quantity of education without increasing the quality will only lead students to resent school even more than they already do, which is counterproductive to the goal of increasing the quality of public education in New Mexico. Resentful students are bad students. This is not even mentioning teachers, who would have to teach more and larger classes under the new rules, which would also be counterproductive. Overworked teachers are bad teachers.

Thank you for your time and consideration

August James



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Timothy Sawyer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:06:31 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

In regards to the rule change that would lead to more instructional hours and more professional work hours, I would like to say that this is a foolish and short-sighted proposal, for the simple reason that teachers need to have more time to prep for their classes, not more instructional hours, and they need to have smaller class sizes in order to be able to reach every student in their classes. Simply throwing more instructional hours at teachers and students is not likely to lead to improvements in literacy and math scores. Think instead of adding quality, not quantity.

Thank you.

Tim Sawyer
Special Education Teacher
Milagro Middle School

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From: [Ronda Trujillo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:08:35 PM

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To the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing because our school district has shared some proposed rule changes by you, the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED). I feel very strongly the change to 6.10.5 would negatively impact Los Alamos Public Schools current schedule (where my children are educated), in addition to likely EVERY OTHER district in the state, not to mention the negative health implications of sitting longer all day long for even more school days.,

You are all missing the mark, putting kids in classrooms longer is not the answer and it may not even be legal. This is 2023...the entire education system is archaic...putting youth in chairs all day long 5 days a week is not the answer to pick up New Mexico's poor scores. Why don't you challenge each one of your employees to do that...do you think you'll be more successful?

Figure out how to build up the youth. Adopt meaningful and simple standards. Maybe start with changing meaningful graduation requirements. Algebra 2 is used in adulthood by less than 5% of the population in America...start with cutting it out of your high school graduation requirements. Make our youth successful in things they'll use every day in real life, including being a real person, rather than a trained animal to sit at a desk all day, five days a week. How come balancing a checkbook and very basic accounting aren't important to you? Every person in this world that has money has to figure out how to budget it...consider starting with requiring that instead of Algebra 2 and make Algebra 2 an elective only class before you say to sit in a seat longer every day and every year.

Maybe you should consider and advocate for four-day school weeks FOR EVERY SINGLE DISTRICT in the state and start the school year after Labor day and end it at Memorial day. Let kids be kids, let families be families. Be realistic, not a continued part of the problem. Listen to teachers, listen to parents...listen to kids. Stop making things so difficult for our youth to be successful.

A VERY STRONG NO to longer school days and longer school years!

Sincerely,
Ronda Trujillo

From: [DIEGO PACHECO](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:11:22 PM

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Good Afternoon!

Earlier today, I got an email regarding the "NMAC Rule 6.10.5 'School Calendar Requirements'." One of the changes would take away free periods from Highschoolers. Although I will not have a free period next year, if I had free periods my Junior and Senior year, I would have used those to work a job, so that I could get into college. Due to this rule, I now have no choice of getting a free period, so I will have a harder time getting into a college of choosing.

Please reconsider your decision.

Thanks.

| *Diego Pacheco*



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Teresa Klumpp](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed NMPED rule change 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:11:29 PM

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To the lawmakers discerning the proposed rule
6.10.5

Good afternoon!

As a voting member of Los Alamos School district and a mom with two children in the school system, I am deeply concerned about the proposed rule change 6.10.5. In particular I believe that replacing the hours of instruction requirement with days of instruction requirement limits the ability of the local school district to make a schedule that works for the community. Every community is different in it's needs, strengths and weaknesses, and culture. It doesn't make sense to have a one size fits all policy with regard how each district meets educational requirements.

This proposed policy shows a concerning distrust at the highest level in the ability of local government to make the best decisions for its people, which is undemocratic and unlawful. I ask lawmakers to consider carefully the law, and more importantly consider the negative impact on local communities and governments with this proposed rule change. Taking power away from local school districts is not the answer to New Mexico's education crisis. What is needed is more cooperation between the state and local government not less, so that education can be better catered to the community. It's harder to be sure, but it is the way to ensure all communities are treated with fairness and respect. This is our law. Let's work together to make it work for NM.

Thank you for taking the time to read and ponder my comments.

Teresa Klumpp

From: [Rebekah Archuleta](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:11:37 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

NMED,

I am a parent of a high school student in Los Alamos public school district. I am not in favor of the new proposed *NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"* which would require students to have additional instructional time compounding, the instructional and professional development that the teachers have as a requirement which would prolong this this coming school year. with the recent changes students have already given up some of their summer vacation and breaks for the additional instructional time.

I am satisfied with the current instructional hours imposed by the New Mexico education department for our school district in Los Alamos. I feel with the given curriculum my student has demonstrated and applied her knowledge in her current level and LAHS curriculum in English, science and math departments are the best in the public school sector.

Please take into consideration the concerns we parents have before making an informed decision that would affect our students lives. My child has extracurricular activities and sports. This would only cause her to drop out of those activities to focus on her academic and the longer daily schedule.

Rebekah T. Archuleta

From: [Pete Day](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:19:49 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Pete Day** <peteday124@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Dec 15, 2023 at 11:39 AM
Subject: It's a good rule
To: <rule.feedback@ped.nm.gov>

I believe the students in Los Alamos don't get nearly enough instruction time and have way to many days off and it has been a detriment to their learning.

Thanks,

Pete Day

From: [Mandie and Gabe Segura](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:24:40 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Best,

Mandie Segura

Sent from my iPhone

From: [ELYAS DEZENDORF](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Voting No
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:25:09 PM

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To whomever it may concern:

I am STRONGLY against this rule. As a student, 4-period days allow me to more easily pace my homework, learn more in classes, and experience less stress. Please do not change our schedule from 4 to 8 periods per day; I believe it will only have negative impacts on my learning and mental health.

Sincerely,

Elyas



This email has been sent from a verified [laschools.net](#) user.

From: [Carrie Talus](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] my feedback on NMAC Rule 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:27:18 PM

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To whom it may concern,
I'd like to give my feedback on NMAC Rule 6.10.5, School Calendar Requirements.

I do not agree with this rule requiring districts to provide 1140 hours of instruction and a minimum of 180 days each school year that you are imposing on the Los Alamos public schools and how that rule will impact our schools.

I do not think this is a good idea as this rule does not allow districts to include professional development as part of the required instructional hours.

I do not agree that the students are required to be in school longer. And I do not agree that secondary students should take more credit bearing class hours each day.

These changes you are proposing put too much of a strain on our school districts, our teachers, and our students.

These changes you are proposing means we will now have to most likely deal with larger class sizes - so each student will get less of the teacher's time and attention.

I do not agree that high school students should have more credits to graduate.

The students work extremely hard AND besides school work are busy with their sports, their dance, their band and orchestra, their performances, their lessons and everything else. They do not need even more required of them.

What you are proposing is wrong.

LAST, you are not giving the districts enough time to prepare for this.

But more importantly, I believe you should not make these changes in the first place.

You are using faulty logic if you think more time in school will lead to the state of NM increasing grades and performance - it is a more complex issue than this. This will not fix any problems. This will only create more problems.

I DO NOT think our school district should support or adopt these proposed rule changes.

Thank you,
Carrie

From: [Jamison Klagmann](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:32:07 PM

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To whom it may concern,

While I appreciate the attempt to add more rigor to my child's schooling, I am strongly opposed to this rule change. Lengthening the number of days a student needs to be at school does not equate to a better education. I am already heartsick that summer vacation is just a few short weeks, knowing that a properly educated child's time away from school, exploring the world, is of equal value and importance. My family had a tradition of camping for two weeks in the middle of August, once the heat has subsided, and learning from the natural world. This tradition, which was one of my most treasured, has already been ruined by the length of the current school year.

And so I am vehemently against any extension of the total number of days needed to make up a school year. Extending the total number of hours (such as increasing the length of Wednesday's instruction in my district to a full day) would have been acceptable, but not at the loss of professional development time for our teachers. Our teachers need this time to refocus, recoup, retrain, and continue providing our students with the patience and attention needed to be an effective teacher.

Therefore, I oppose any revision to this rule that adds hour or day requirements to our current schedule. I am the father of two elementary aged children.

Sincerely,
Jamison Klagmann

From: [Ryan Alexander Bloom](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on rule changes
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:32:44 PM

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Greetings

I am a public school parent and a public school employee and I recently reviewed the proposed changes. I have mixed commentary.

Positive: my district has early release days for students too young to be left home alone. These negatively impact parents work schedules or necessitate expensive daycare. The proposed 5 days a week and 5.5 hour minimum per day would eliminate or mitigate these early release days and lessen the undue burden on parents. Please DO implement this so that early release is curtailed!

Positive: Our district has block scheduling at grades 7-12 that has always been confusing and inefficient in my opinion. The new rules requiring 4 classes per day would require a restructuring or elimination of the block plan, which would simplify the scheduling and make more sense. Please make it so we can go back to normal 7 period days or a schedule that is easier and more efficient.

Negative: we redid the district calendar last year and added significantly more days to the year. The new proposal would add even more. Our summer break here is already scheduled to go down to just 7 weeks. Adding more days may reduce it to something like 6 weeks. That's not good for teachers or students. Teachers cannot recharge OR hold secondary jobs to supplement income. Students who play sports or activities with a summer component will feel as though they have no break at all. More days is absurd. When I was in school in another state we started school in September, got out in May, had fall break, thanksgiving break, December break, winter break, spring break, and all major holidays. Despite this, we consistently placed top 10 in academics in our state. More days doesn't necessarily mean more learning. Continuing to add more days (haphazardly) negatively impacts teacher contracts, student engagement, facilities budgets, etc.

Please do not add extra days to the year. I would rather have more hours per day than even more days per year.

Also, my district is extremely bad at calendar creation. For example the second semester is significantly longer than the first this year. This makes no sense. Please write the rules so that it's more predictable and uniform. Focus on using the days we have effectively (!) instead of just adding more days. My district's answer to everything is add more days. Instead we should have no early release, full days only, schedules that effectively use time, and calendars that are predictable and reasonable.

Thank you.

From: [Andrea K](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to School Days Proposal
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:41:27 PM

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Thank you for taking the time to listen to those who oppose the 180 school day ruling proposal. Many of us are in opposition because we know, as educators and parents, that our students are still burned out from Covid. We have yet to gain back what we have lost and there is a chance that we never will. Adding more days will not miraculously make it happen. Educators are tired, our admin teams are tired, our students and their parents are tired. We haven't had a chance to catch up to our new post-Covid reality because the rules keep changing.

Rural communities like mine appreciate the Fridays off for athletics, clubs, all the extracurricular activities that keep our students feeling fulfilled beyond a standardized test and expand their horizons for more collaborative, open-minded futures. Forcing the smaller districts who are currently successful in 4-day school models makes no sense. They are overall doing better than those of us with 5 day schedules. Why ruin a good thing and possibly something from which others could benefit?

Why say we need more autonomy in districts with local control then take it away? Yes, we do need to do better but adding a day to an already stressful situation may not be the best way. Wouldn't a 4-day work week be more of an incentive for teachers to come to New Mexico? We are already doing Professional Development, but at what point do we get time to digest what we learn and put it to good use? Where is the time for self-reflection? Should we add that to the long list of things we already do when off contract time? When do we educators get to be humans, too? Let us keep the autonomy and local control we need to be the best we can. It can be done without having to move the finish line yet again.

Thank you again for letting us speak. We know you hear us, but please listen as well.

Andrea Kiesling
Special Education Teacher
Clayton Municipal Schools

From: [Nicholas Seet](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Tianmei Seet](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:42:30 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am a resident of Los Alamos County, and father of four children that are in 10th grade (Anyia Seet), 8th grade (Maya Seet), Kindergarten (Charlie Seet), and day-care (Ellie Seet) respectively.

My wife, Tianmei Yang Seet is a Los Alamos Public Schools Special-Ed Math teacher at the High School.

It was with great consternation that I read over the NM PED proposal to change the school calendar requirements. While I am all in favor for a rigorous education program, having benefited from one in Australia, I am quite concerned about the further institutionalization of my children's education.

Yes, the additional hours could certainly help improve children's standardized testing, but my older children would have to give up their out-of-school engagements like riding or piano. Similarly, forcing all students to keep pace with a higher-standard would reduce the pleasure of being in an already stressful academic environment.

While I agree that college and the labor force have deservedly high standards for attention and performance, I also appreciate the uniquely humanistic touches that an education rich in extracurriculars can provide. Sacrificing those for improved aggregate test scores is a mistake. I kindly request that NM PED reconsider their school calendar change in the interests of our students and their families.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Seet
nik@seet.com
(310) 770-6450
nicholasseet.com

From: [E Sisneros](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:43:29 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To WHOM it May Concern,

This sudden rule change to keep our kids indoors and learning has its advantages, i.e., less kids out and about, kids kept indoors not getting exercise, and less time to devote to their crafts (sports, extra curricular activities, and family time). If this is the objective then well done!!

If the NMPED is asking this of thousands of Teachers and students then it would be fair to ask this of the committee. Anything willing to be imposed can be followed by the governing! That being said maybe the governing can pick up the added hours asked of the teachers and students! The committee needs to get hands on!

I do NOT agree with this sudden rule change! This is just a quick reaction email. To be continued...

From: [Katherine Jackson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:44:13 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern at the PED,

I am writing about my concerns regarding the 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements. I don't understand how we are still focusing on the quantity of school/education instead of the QUALITY of education.

I am not a teacher but a school nurse and a mother of children who attend APS. When I read about and listen to the Yazzie case against the state, I don't think that mother wanted more school for children (with the same unsupported, understaffed, and undersupplied classrooms) but an increase in the quality of education provided to her child. We face systemic issues at the school level that surpass the resources provided. Having said that, why not focus on increasing classroom support of teachers by providing qualified Educational Assistants in all the classrooms, a social worker at EVERY school who can service ALL of the students, and other licensed personnel such as school nurses, school counselors, behavioral health providers, Speech therapists, and Occupational therapists that can help to provide the supports that are actually needed in all of our communities.

You can add all the days you want to the schedule (as long as you pay us for them!) But, you will not see a rise in test scores, improved attendance, and improved graduation rates UNTIL we address the underlying problems at our schools which are under supported and poorly resourced classrooms and school campuses.

Katherine (Katie) Jackson, NP, RN

Pronouns She/Her (why? <https://www.glsen.org/activity/pronouns-guide-glsen>)

School Nurse

Bandelier Elementary School

505-255-8744

ext. 27411

katherine.marconett@aps.edu

Google number: 505-750-8102

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From: [Boris Gelfand](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:45:46 PM

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This is a horrible idea. More of what doesn't work, won't work. We need *less* school, but under different conditions. The rest of the world has less school time and better outcomes.

-bg

From: [JACK HARRIS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:48:05 PM

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I think that the new law changes will Hurt lahs in a very significant way. Our current daily schedule which has worked for as long as I have been in school is 3.5 daily classes. but even these 3.5 classes per day stresses me out as my goals are requiring a 4.0 gpa and if we have to do more classes to graduate this 4.0 gpa will not be possible if im taking so many classes. raising graduation requirements will make dropout rates higher because of the more difficult and rigorous plan to graduate. I've heard of many people teachers included who plan to strike if this law gets put into place



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Tiffany Hall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:49:45 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am adamantly opposed to the proposed new school calendar requirements. Los Alamos High School already goes to school more than other districts in the state. I have children who currently attend LAHS that have previously attended schools in other NM districts (and out of state). I have also worked in those school districts as a speech language pathologist. I still have contacts who confirm that other districts do NOT meet existing calendar requirements. Adding days/hours to the Los Alamos calendar will not make the rest of the state follow existing regulations or perform better! Adding extra time does not mean that the students will learn more. Those districts don't use their time wisely, as is! Besides, students are exhausted by the end of the day-particularly students taking advanced classes or students with learning disabilities/ADHD. They are kids. Let them have time to relax and just be kids. If they are burned out, no one benefits.

Furthermore, the Los Alamos district has harder classes than most of the state. The curriculum is college level for many classes. They are required to take Advanced Placement/Dual Credit classes to graduate--which is not the case throughout the state. They are already required to complete more credits than required in other districts. I know of students in other districts that are supposedly taking the same classes as my kids but their curriculum is much easier. Those students are studying materials my kids were expected to know a few years ago! Why make it even harder for Los Alamos students by requiring more credits? These students already have high expectations placed on them which severely impacts their mental health. If you implement these changes, you are only going to increase the amount of pressure they are under. Also, consider students with learning differences and disabilities. School is already difficult for them. The goal is for students to graduate with a good education--not drop out because of unreasonable expectations.

Changing graduation requirements when students are already in high school is unreasonable and unfair. When the bar keeps changing, students don't know what they need to graduate. Can you imagine the stress of realizing that the state may suddenly require more credits to graduate....when you are a junior? With no notice? Students who were on track to graduate, suddenly wonder if they will graduate on time. The pressure is already intense at Los Alamos High School. The state and school district claim to care about the well being of its students. If that is the case, please reject the proposed increase in credit requirements for students who are already in high school. Better yet, don't approve these changes for future students either.

In summary, please do not change the hours/days/requirements for any student who is already at the high school. Do not take away free periods that are often used to catch up on work--especially for students who have extra-curricular activities, work, challenging classes or special needs. Do not take away options for virtual learning. Some students truly need that option. The pressure in the classroom and the level of bullying in schools makes in-person learning untenable for some students. Don't take away their opportunity to learn.

Sincerely,
Tiffany Hall MS,CCC-SLP

From: [Fran Gelfand](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] *OPPOSE* changes to NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:52:52 PM

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As a parent to 3 public school students in New Mexico, I strongly OPPOSE the currently proposed changes to school calendar requirements. More time in the classroom will not improve outcomes for our children.

American students already spend more days and hours in classrooms than their peers in other countries, and those peers outperform American students across the board. Please focus on addressing SYSTEMIC PROBLEMS, rather than having students spend more time in poor-performing environments.

Fran Gelfand
Parent of a 7th grader, 9th grader, and 11th grader in Los Alamos Public Schools

From: [IAN CUNNINGHAM](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed School Hours Change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:53:06 PM

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I believe this amendment would be a poor choice due to the following reasons.

1. It would cause many seniors and other students to not be able to fulfill credit requirements by their 4th year causing them to be held back another year.
2. This proposal even with more money would heavily tax the current schools we have. It's not just about the number of teachers but also the infrastructure of the existing schools not being able to support the influx because of a lack of classrooms, or many other logistical issues.
3. It would force kids to not take honors or AP classes due to not having study periods so that they don't have time to keep up with the workload.
4. Many kids will feel even further pushed past what they feel they can do and they will not be able to handle the additional workload and stress causing them to break down under the extra work.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Taylor Carretti](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:54:44 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

I am a working employee of the district, as well as a new parent. I am writing to you after being notified by our LAPS Superintendent about the new rule being proposed.

Specifically, I believe that NMPED is failing to give districts adequate time to prepare for this unexpected change that dramatically impacts our students, teachers, and families.

Last year, with the calendar shift, everything felt very rushed and lacked thorough time for adjustments. These larger proposed changes should be given adequate time to plan. There are still "kinks" being addressed and systematic issues. It does not appear fair to propose another major change.

If you have been in the shoes as a teacher, school employee, parent, or related profession in the past, you should consider the domino effect that this causes.

Additionally, quantity does not always equate to quality.

Please carefully consider the impacts of this rule, specifically regarding the little advanced notice.

Thank you,
Taylor Carretti

--

Sincerely,

Taylor Carretti M.A., CCC-SLP

Special Education Contact Person T, W, TH

Speech-language Pathologist

Mountain Elementary School

Los Alamos Public Schools

Office Phone Extension: 2317

t.carretti@laschools.net

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This email has been sent from a verified [laschools.net](mailto:t.carretti@laschools.net) user.

From: [Paul Gessing](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements and 6.81.2 NMAC, Requirements for Nonpublic Schools and for Public Education Department Accreditation.
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:03:26 PM
Attachments: [12-15-23 PED comments.docx](#)

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Comment below and attached:

I write today on behalf of the Rio Grande Foundation, New Mexico's free market think tank, to express opposition to proposed rule changes being considered by the Public Education Department in two major areas: 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements and 6.81.2 NMAC, Requirements for Nonpublic Schools and for Public Education Department Accreditation.

On the issues of School calendar requirements, PED has proposed a requirement of 180 days of school. Simply put, there is no research supporting the idea that increasing the number of school days improves student outcomes. [According to a 2018 report](#) both Missouri and Kansas have had 4-day work weeks in place for dozens of rural communities.

A move (to four-day weeks) that originally began as a cost-saving measure has resulted in students having have 25 more instructional hours than before, and that's brought a couple added bonuses.

"Our ACT scores have really shown some improvement. If there was anything, that's one area we're up. The first four years, up every year, and five out of the last seven, they've been increased," said Lathrop School District superintendent Chris Fine.

Attendance has also improved for students and staff. According to one parent, "Mondays, we get all our doctor appointments in, orthodontist, so we don't have to miss school ever. That's my favorite thing."

I shouldn't have to remind you that New Mexico struggles badly with student absenteeism. The four-day week may not work for all districts, but it may work for some. There is no reason to eliminate it.

Secondly, I write in opposition to changes proposed for 6.81.2 NMAC, Requirements for Nonpublic Schools and for Public Education Department Accreditation

Requirements for Nonpublic Schools and for Public Education Department Accreditation. I am concerned about the dramatic changes to accreditation, annual reporting to PED, and to PED assuming authority to "observe the operations" of non-public schools. Considering the impact

of these potential changes it is hard to understand why neither non-public schools, nor their accrediting bodies were notified about these changes. This alone raises serious questions about the fairness and transparency of the process.

Per 6.81.2.8 (D) NMAC, the only authority given to PED regarding nonpublic schools reads; “The Public Education Department maintains a list of all nonpublic schools in the state and the list must include the school’s name, mailing and email addresses, name of the Head Administrator, phone number, and accrediting entity. Nonpublic schools accredited by educational accrediting agencies identified in rule, or since approved by the Division, shall be deemed to be acknowledged by the Department unless the accrediting entity’s accreditation status is suspended, limited, or terminated by the Department or unless the schools’ accreditation status is suspended, limited, or terminated by its own accrediting entity.

Currently, nonpublic schools are not regulated by the PED, which makes it unfair to impose rules and regulations through a rule making process that has not been well-publicized and was not done at the behest of the Legislature itself. In attempting to acquire authority to “observe the operations of non-public schools,” PED is overstepping its boundaries without any statutory oversight.

If PED were to allow tax dollars to follow students to the school of their choice, PED’s case for this significant increase in its own power would be more justifiable.

Paul Gessing
President
Rio Grande Foundation

--

Paul J. Gessing
President
Rio Grande Foundation
P.O. Box 40336
Albuquerque, N.M., 87196
www.riograndefoundation.org
505-264-6090

From: [Brandon Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:06:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hi,

I don't support the proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements for several reasons, but in short:

- o This is the (proposed) second rule/schedule change within a year. Too much and not necessary.
- o They remove control from local school districts.
- o Los Alamos Public Schools are doing well. There's no need to fix what isn't broken.
- o There is uniform opposition from AFT-Los Alamos, the LAPS School Board, and the LAPS administration. I trust all of these organizations.

Respectfully,

Brandon Smith
505 Quartz Street
Los Alamos, NM 87544

From: [LENA RONNING](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:06:59 PM

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Hello,

My name is Lena Ronning and I am currently a junior at Los Alamos High School. I have several concerns about the change in schooling requirements and I hope you can see my worries.

First of all, changing the graduation credit requirements would not be possible for people in the class of 2025. If we currently have a 24 credit graduation requirement, that means students take an average of 6 credits per year. If this was upped to 32 credits, current juniors who likely have about 18 credits would need 14 more credits in the course of a year, which is simply not possible.

Additionally, requiring more credits means more classes are needed. More classes needed means more teachers, which is not always available. The only options are to make teachers who are already overworked teach more classes, or hire more teachers(which is very difficult). The Los Alamos school district is one of the best and even though we have many difficulties hiring teachers, less prosperous school districts across New Mexico certainly have a harder time since they do not have the money that we do. Requiring Teachers to teach more classes would also not be beneficial since I have observed that all of my teachers with fewer classes are more involved, grade faster, and spend more time on an enriching curriculum. Requiring more credit hours just doesn't seem like a viable option.

Finally, this change to the rules would eliminate the ability for students to have a free period. Free periods may seem like a luxury, however as a student athlete with a 4.7 GPA, I can confidently say that free periods are a need. Many students are unable to complete work in AP and Honors classes because they simply do not have enough time. If they are not completing the work, then they are not learning. And after all, learning is what school is all about. A Free Period provides these students with time to get their work done, study, or take a break from school which allows them to come back with a more relaxed, open mindset.

Thank you for listening to my concerns and I hope you will consider the effects of this change in their entirety and how it would affect everyone in the long run.

Sincerely,
Lena Ronning

--

Lena Ronning
Class of 2025 Historian
2023-24 Swim Team Captain



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Danny Parker](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:10:08 PM

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Danny Parker (sent by email)
2202 W. Ray Ave.
Artesia, NM 88210

December 15, 2023

New Mexico Public Education Department
Rulemaking Feedback
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in opposition to 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. The first point with which I take issue is the manner in which the rule was developed. Stakeholders such as superintendents, parents (especially those in 4-day schools), and teachers and staff were not meaningfully consulted. The first time that most of us heard about the rule was when it was already written. I am afraid, just like the social studies standards debate—despite many voices of dissent, this rule will also be passed. This seems like an edict from on high rather than a well-informed rule with input from stakeholders.

One of the pieces of evidence of the petty games that are being played is in the rules of the licensure advancement program. The stated eligibility rules for advancing from Level 1 to Level 2 and Level 2 to Level 3 is that a person must (this is copied and pasted from the application for the APL program. It was on the website, [Advanced Program Level Micro-Credentials – New Mexico Public Education Department \(state.nm.us\)](#), but has been recently removed):

- Taught three full school years (160 days or more) with a Level 1 teaching license.

Interestingly and perhaps ironically, most 4-day schools and districts have 155-day school years. Why 160? Is five more days per year really that necessary for a teacher to be “good enough” to move to the next level? This looks bad, and it is a poor way to treat the families, the districts, the faculties and staffs, and ultimately—the students.

Second, when the NM Vistas website came out, many schools were named in recognition of their “above average” growth. A week later, we are being told that many of those “above average” schools were not effective because of research that said that those schools would not experience the same growth as their 5-day week counterparts. It is frustrating to lead those same stakeholders mentioned in the first paragraph to employ “research-driven” practices when the state leadership in our profession uses research as a means to an end. 4-day schools work. The data shows that. We

should celebrate those schools and staffs that have used out-of-the-box thinking to staff their schools, teach their children well, and tend to the unique needs of these communities. They have done what the Public Education Department is not doing—listening to their constituents.

The Artesia Public Schools has a school that is 50 miles from Artesia proper, Peñasco School, who employs a 4-day week. This school does an excellent job of educating their students while meeting the needs of a sparsely populated population. The general feeling in that community is that many will be forced to homeschool or find online alternatives for these students if they are forced to move to a five-day school week. We know that the best decisions for children are made the closest to the children. The Public Education Department is not closest to the child!

Third, to anyone who has read HB 130, it is abundantly clear what the intent of the legislature was. It was intended to go by the hours and not the days. It was intended to build in time that administrators and teachers desperately need to plan lessons that are based on assessment data and local expertise. It is clear that the intention was to allow local schools with their own governance to make these decisions that are best for their communities and not bow to the pretentious omnipotence of those in Santa Fe. Further, the legislature sought and used public input in the crafting of the legislation. We often wonder why the legislature is so prescriptive in their legislation. It is because the legislation is often twisted to the whims of those who feel little need to solicit meaningful input from students and their families.

I have great confidence in the NM Public Education Department. The people who work there are good people who want our New Mexico students to succeed. That is why it is very clear that this proposed rule change seems to be coming from some other direction. It seems likely that such a misguided rule will be met with much ire from those beyond Santa Fe and will likely set back much of the dedicated effort by teachers to recover post-Covid. The rule should be withdrawn, and the intent of the carefully crafted HB 130 should be followed as intended by the Legislature.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this feedback.

Sincerely,

Danny Parker
Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education
Parent

Cc: The Honorable James Townsend (townsend@pytn.net)
The Honorable Steven McCutcheon II (steven.mccutcheon@nmlegis.gov)
The Honorable Jimmy G. Mason (jimmy.mason@nmlegis.gov)

From: [GAVIN BENT](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:11:24 PM

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Hello,

On behalf of Los Alamos High School, I think that my, and almost every other student's opinions, should be voiced, that the proposed schedule change should not be passed. Adding an extra period and removing free periods would severely increase student stress levels, and in turn would do the opposite of the desired effect by worsening student performance. This stress can have other negative effects, such as decreasing student activity in extracurriculars, decreased sleep, and worsened mental health.

Sincerely,
Gavin Bent
Freshman at Los Alamos High School



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Ashleigh Eubank](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Bruhn, Johnna](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regulation 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:13:31 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this email in heavy opposition to the attempt to revise regulation 6.10.5 and remove the option for school districts to have a four-day school week.

I attended Mosquero Municipal Schools in the northeastern corner of New Mexico from Pre-K through 12th grade. After graduation, I attended New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology where I majored in Mineral Engineering and graduated with honors. After graduating with my undergraduate degree, I moved to Grants, NM for three years to work for Peabody Energy as a design engineer. I then made the decision to accept a job offer with Sundt Construction based in Tempe, AZ and after working for them for 7+ years I am proud to say I'm a Project Manager overseeing billion dollar construction projects in both AZ and NM.

As an alumnus from a four-day school week, I can assure you that the structure of our school week did not hinder my educational fortitude or ability to be successful in life. I can say the same for my classmates as 100% of my high school graduating class attended a postsecondary institution for a minimum of two years and each of them are gainfully employed.

I have many family members that are involved and actively engaged in the world of academia and all oppose this revision to Regulation 6.10.5. Please do your research before making the decision to restrict school districts from having a four-day school week and read the context of all studies before jumping to conclusions.

From a logistical and economical standpoint, rural school districts need Fridays to travel to town, go to doctors' appointments, get groceries, and help on their family's agricultural operations. Coming from a rural area, we do not have the luxury to get the basic necessities we need for life 10 minutes down the road. Growing up, I traveled 100+ miles for the dentist, primary care doctor, and the nearest Walmart. If you do the math, students will not be able to make their medical appointments during lunch hour. I would expect attendance rates to dramatically decrease.

In fact, many businesses are moving to a four-day work week because studies show higher productivity Monday through Thursday and a better sense of work-life balance and self-efficacy. Please consider moving forward as a state – not backward.

I highly suggest putting your trust in the local school districts to evaluate what makes the most sense for their students and teachers. One size does not fit all. The quality of time spent in a classroom far surpasses the quantity. Please be mindful of the long-term implications this decision could have on

our rural areas within New Mexico.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me via email or at 575-760-4929.

Sincerely,

Ashleigh Eubank
Project Manager

c: 480.309.2743

e: ajeubank@sundt.com

w: Sundt.com

a: 1600 Rio Rancho Blvd, Rio Rancho, NM 87124



TRANSPORTATION / INDUSTRIAL / BUILDING / CONCRETE

From: [Aiden Montoya](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed calendar change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:14:33 PM

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Dear NMPED,

The proposed calendar mandate strips away the essential element of local control, undermining our ability to make decisions that best serve the Mesa Vista Schools. Our schools are small, and our needs are unique: we deserve the right to make decisions specific to our community. Local control has allowed Mesa Vista Schools to flourish, ensuring that decisions about our school calendar remain in the hands of those who know our community best-us. We are making gains and should be allowed to continue guiding our schools through our unique calendar.

I absolutely love my school and the fact that I get to spend an extra day a week with my family and being a kid makes it even better. Please consider my voice during the calendar mandate.

Sincerely,
Aiden Montoya

From: [Lauren Catanese Fichtl](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I'm saying NO to Rule 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:15:36 PM

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Hi there,

As a mother of a middle schooler and two high school students I want share my concern and opposition to a proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. I disagree with all the stipulations set forth in this rule and hope that it doesn't pass.

Thank you,
Lauren

From: [SERENITY PEREZ](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New School Calendar
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:16:11 PM

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Hello,

In my opinion of this new schedule I believe it's not a good idea for two main reasons. The first is that it would make everyone's lives harder, students and staff. Another big reason is that I believe it would be detrimental to students' mental health. I believe it would cause an increase in depression and also suicide rates. All in all, as an LAHS student, I am against this new calendar.

Thank you



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Rosa Hernandez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:17:42 PM

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I'm in disagreement about the additional hours for students and staff in the school calendar; As educators stress coming from the demands to work more days could affect our health and really won't help the students' academic success, this has been proven in the different systems around the world, Noruega is the one I can think of, where teachers only work a few hours, no state test, etc. The Montessori system allows children can explore more instead of sitting all day in a classroom looking at a computer affecting their posture, eyes, etc. Also, parents should be more involved, and given more responsibility for their children's success in education which will be transferred into success in life.

--

*Rosa E Hernandez, LMSW, CCTS-F
School Social Worker
Monte Vista ES
Manzano Mesa ES
Bel Air ES
Lowell ES
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Google Voice (505)585-0837*

rosa.hernandez@aps.edu

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From: [Lynnsey Hall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:20:27 PM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

Changing to five-day weeks will do more harm than good. I am from a small town, and I go to an even smaller, rural school that is about 30 minutes away. I am involved in many activities, such as 4-H and FFA, and my sister is involved in sports. We must drive back and forth from school and home multiple times a day for practices, meetings, and other things, which take up most of our time. Not to mention, we also show livestock year-round and are still tasked with our schoolwork.

Even with our three-day weekends, we are still not able to get all our tasks fully completed to the best of our abilities. Changing to five-day weeks would give us even less time for the things we have dedicated our lives to. Most people who go to rural schools also have problems like these. It would change everyone's lives around, parents and teachers too. Too much school is draining on students, especially students who have been going to four-day weeks their whole lives. Therefore, instead of increasing grades and test scores, it could actually decrease them.

There are also so many other reasons this would be terrible for New Mexico. These include finances, availability of teachers, and so many more. We need to put the students at the top of this decision so that we know who this is really going to affect. I hope the lives and wellbeing of students are considered.

Charmaynn H.

From: [EMMITT TIBBITTS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:21:15 PM

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Dear NMPED,

I believe this calendar change would not be good for the students of my school Los Alamos High School. Taking another full class would add more stress to the students of my school. These students already have enough stress. They don't need more. This increased stress would cause the mental health of my school's students to decrease. This can cause more mental illnesses across our school like anxiety, depression and sleep deprivation. This rule change also would hurt sports and extracurricular activities. Increasing the time of school would push these activities back meaning kids get home later and go to sleep later. School is important but extracurricular activities are important as well for physical and mental health and as well as applying for college. Also this rule would be very bad for upperclassmen, because they are set to graduate. Until this law passes because of the credit requirement these people might have to spend an extra semester in school. Also people have other commintens after school like jobs. So this is why I think this law should not be passed

--

Sincerely
Los Alamos High School Student



This email has been sent from a verified [laschools.net](#) user.

From: [Randy Martin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; aftnmaction@gmail.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:24:19 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To All Whom it May Concern,

I am a current APS teacher, former APS parent, and a gravely concerned community member. As a teacher in New Mexico for 17 years, I have achieved my National Board Certification, won the Golden Apple Teaching Award, received the APS/TIG Technology Innovation Award, won the Gilder Lehrman State History Teacher of the Year award in 2017, and was recognized as one of the top 10 history teachers in the nation in 2018. The list goes on... but I am not here to brag. The achievement of all of these achievements and awards really comes down to one thing - the **time** and **ability** to attend quality professional development. For me, this PD has included multiple grants with the NEH up and down the east coast, my attendance of Gilder Lehrman history seminars across the world, including in NYC and Scotland, and PD I have done with the US department of state as a Fulbright fellow in West Africa, as well as internationally recognized PD work I have done in Russia, Greece, South Korea, Germany, Poland, Bahrain, Switzerland, and Italy. **This PD has led to positive and measurable student learning** - The proof is in the multiple measures of success as seen by my students proficiency scores and the top rating of my school site. **With the recent changes to the calendar by HB 130, the ability of our teachers to attend quality PD around the nation and the world - and by extension, student learning - has been severely limited.** With our summers disappearing, the ability of teachers to attend quality PD is also disappearing. **As a result, student learning - the very thing we are trying to improve - is being profoundly and negatively impacted.**

Beyond teacher PD, the extended calendar has all but destroyed our students' ability to learn by traveling to the places they learn about with their teachers. For example, understanding the power of student learning beyond the classroom has helped me lead student trips to Washington DC, VA, MD, Europe, Central America, etc. ***Now, fewer and fewer students are able to take advantage of these extracurricular learning opportunities because of the expanded calendar.***

Extending the calendar even further into our already besieged summer will all but destroy expanded student and teacher learning.

All of this is to say - more ***MUST*** be done to restore and enhance our teachers ability to attend quality PD and our students ability to learn. I do not come without offering solutions, however:

1.
Bring back our previous calendar and restore the time that teachers and students use to learn beyond the classroom.
2.
Provide PD days WITH sub pay available that teachers can access in the same way we access and receive sick leave.
3.
The best solution - do *BOTH*.

Thank you for listening and for your consideration. I know you will do what is right for our students and our teachers.

Randy Martin, NBCT, NGCE

Golden Apple Fellow &

Gilder Lehrman State History Teacher of the Year

7th/8th Grade Social Studies,

Desert Ridge Middle School



From: [Erin James](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:28:43 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

The educational professionals I trust tell me that the proposed rule changes would make their already-maxed-out challenge level go even higher. Having read the rule, I can see no proposed benefit that warrants adding stress to educational professionals' lives, especially when burnout is at an all time high. Please, do not adopt these proposed rule changes.

Sincerely,
Erin James, MS, LPCC
Los Alamos, NM

From: [Steven Dixon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] potentially detrimental rule change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:29:58 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my sincere disapproval of the proposed new rule mandating 180 school days for students, not including teacher professional development days.

I have embraced a passion for teaching in our Santa Fe community for more than twenty years, spending many weekends and evenings working to help enrich the academic lives of my students.

This potentially detrimental rule change would increase an already heavily invested workload for every teacher in the district, coercing teachers to end up working closer to 190 days. This considerable increase in hours will most likely negatively impact everything from teacher and student burnout to exhaustion of resources, educational and otherwise.

I strongly encourage you to reconsider the new rule change proposal. I appreciate you taking this time and I am optimistic that you will make the choice that best benefits the many lives in our community.

Sincerely,

Steven C. Dixon

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From: [Dorothy Stradling](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] "NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:36:12 PM

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To whom it may concern:

As a parent, I am very displeased with the sudden changes that are being proposed for next year.

A required 8 credit hour year for 4 years is unsustainable for high school kids who need study halls to get homework done before they go to their after school job or sport. In addition, I think the mental toll of balancing another required class will make our academic scores go down along with a slew of other problems. Already, the extra time in the school year has caused many problems for summer jobs (and we will have a whole class of kids that are financially and emotionally unprepared to work for their needs.)

Let the kids be kids. Let them explore, try new things (outside of the classroom), and become self sufficient and have the time to do so. Let families have time to teach their own children life and social skills that will apply to all ages. Let them find who they are.

My college aged daughter would not have had the opportunity to work at a prestigious internship had she been required to take 8 credits her senior year. My college aged son would have never started his own business if he did not have time to explore options during the summer months off. I want all of these things and more for my current high school child.

Please reconsider what "free time" can mean to the upcoming generation.

Thanks,
Dorothy Stradling
White Rock, NM

From: [FLAVIA D'ANGELO](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New rule
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:45:09 PM

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I am a student at LAHS. I am a freshman this year and have several concerns about the new proposal. I fear I am going to struggle to graduate and get all of my credits before I finish senior year. I'm also concerned about the level of stress that would be placed on us. I think having free periods in senior and junior year is something a lot of kids, including me, look forward to. I don't think it's fair for the lower grades to have to work so much harder to graduate, as schedules have changed over the years. I believe this new rule would cause a loss of participation from students, a lot more stress for kids who are already struggling as is, and it wouldn't be super cost efficient. I didn't choose to live and go to this school, a lot of us didn't consent to being worked so hard because we go to school in an overachieving town full of scientists. Please consider how much these constant schedule and rule changes affect students and staff.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Grace Evans](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED Change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:45:20 PM

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This will limit the athletics of students who have more activities than just going to school. If school days are lasting longer, then it will shorten the amount of time for practices, and make them last later, resulting in students having less time for homework. This will be extremely impactful and hard for student athletes.

Additionally, students should still be given free periods as an incentive to take harder classes to earn credits.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [SOFIA GRACE HAAGENSTAD](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Hours Extension
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:46:50 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

This will be extremely hard for kids to be able to have time to do homework. Practices will be pushed even farther. Our mental health is already struggling. This would cause us to struggle even more. Hope you consider my comments on this.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [LIN WOLF](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:49:03 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I am a sophomore student at Los Alamos High School in New Mexico. I have read the new proposed rule change to 6.10.5 NMAC, School Instructional Time Requirements, and I would like to voice how much this rule will **not** help students improve their learning. This rule will do the opposite.

First, High School students would not be allowed to have a free period. This means that LAHS would need to add additional classes, teachers, or have larger class sizes to ensure all students are placed in 4 credit bearing courses each day. Attending a school that depends on free periods so kids can get their AP homework done, this would affect our performance tremendously. We also need free periods to keep a check on our mental health and wellbeing. Many of my peers have heard that they might not have free periods next year already, and boy, you should see the panic that is commencing as I'm writing this email. Many peers, including me, are applying for online school next year as we put ourselves before our education, as any sane person would.

Second, LAHS students would complete a total of 32 credits. Graduation requirements are for students to complete 24 credits. This is more required credits than we have as of now. Since this rule is to be set in the 2024/2025 school year, many upperclassmen will have to take significant steps to graduate, even if they already had enough credits. I can already see the stress this is causing on my friends that are Juniors.

And finally, this rule change could have serious financial implications to the district if increases to teacher contract days, increased meal and transportation costs, and other operational expenses are not fully funded. Based on past rules and experiences, the state of New Mexico has failed to financially support public schools in these areas. As someone that grew up on the south side of Santa Fe and went to Nina Otero Community School, I witnessed first hand little kids not being able to afford school supplies or lunches, and teachers quitting left and right. They also did not have enough books for kids. My brother had one book in the classroom in his reading level and since I already surpassed the highest reading level available in my class, I wasn't provided another book. Los Alamos is a wealthy county, yes, however my worries go out to people who are now in my brothers and my situation. It will still seriously affect every public school in New Mexico, including LAHS.

I know that if this rule were to be set next year, teachers will quit, student's mental health will plummet, and our school system will not change its ranking in the nation. Last year,

around the same time there was talk about increasing school days, a student at my school, Miles Weaver, **overdosed on fentanyl**. I can only imagine that many students are considering doing the same after you take away our sources of self care and independence.

If you truly care about New Mexico students, you will not let this rule happen, for the sake of health, wellbeing and academic enrichment for all kids. You will give us more time out of school to find our own passions and interests, to enjoy our earth and our future. You will give us an alternative option to solve New Mexico's education system that won't give kids depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. Please listen to students and teachers, we are the ones affected by this.

Sincerely,
Lin Wolf



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Laura Ann Gryder](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:49:51 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in regards to the proposed rule change for 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. I am deeply concerned with the proposal to mandate 180 school days without exceptions for professional development and Parent Teacher Conferences. House Bill 130 was implemented less than 6 months ago and is only beginning to take effect this school year. To state that HB 130 is not working is disingenuous at best and misleading at worst. It is impossible to determine whether the increase in instructional hours is effective or not until adequate time has passed to allow for data to be collected and analyzed. Less than one school year is not adequate time to accomplish this.

Requiring 180 days does not address issues that are truly impacting our schools. Chronic absenteeism being one of them. Within my grade level, there are currently 29 students that are chronically absent and 39 students that are not considered chronically absent. While schools do what they can to encourage students and families to value their education, it is continuously demonstrated time and time again that it is not a priority by students not attending regularly, coming in tardy, and leaving early. How can you expect families to attend more school school days, when currently 43% of our students are not consistently attending the days we have now?

Teachers cannot teach students that are not in school. Adding school days will not increase attendance or engage students in giving their best effort, and will not improve education for students that frequently miss school. Until families are held accountable for bringing their children to school everyday, on time, these students will not make progress. Teachers and families already attending consistently should not be punished by taking away their valuable breaks, that help avoid burnout.

Adding more days to the school year does not directly address the current needs of students and is a pseudo solution to a complex problem. The Yazzie/Martinez decision outlined various areas of failure by the state. Packing on days does not address the resources needed to comply with the Constitution. Rather than extending the academic year, providing training and resources to teachers (e.g. through professional development), so that educators may be better positioned to provide a culturally and linguistically relevant education. Furthermore, social services and smaller class sizes go a long way in preparing students to be college and career ready. Adding school days would have a negative impact on both teacher recruitment and retention.

Additionally, House Bill 130 was implemented through the legislative branch by elected officials. It was discussed within various committees and stakeholders. Circumventing the law, directly as the executive branch, is an overreach and creates unnecessary tension between the educators and PED. The rhetoric that this is a district or teacher problem indicates a lack of knowledge and

understanding of what is involved in educating New Mexico's children. A more useful and meaningful solution exists. Perhaps researching solutions in collaboration with more knowledgeable others would be appropriate.

Thank you for your time and I hope that you do what is best for students and schools by not implementing this rule change.

Laura Gryder

From: [Rhonda Lee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: joseph.sanchez@nmlegis.gov; [Campos, Pete](#); [Romero, Andres G.](#); [Soules, William P.](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMPED proposal for 2024-25 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:59:27 PM

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Hello,

I am writing this to state that I am against your proposed rule mandating that all school districts in NM go on a 5 day per week calendar starting with the 2024-25 school year. This proposed rule is against HB130 which does not mandate that all school districts must go to a 5 day a week calendar in order to meet the required minimum of 1,140 instructional hours for students. HB130 clearly states "An Act Creating a K-12 Plus program: PROVIDING ADDITIONAL PROGRAM UNITS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT INCREASE THE NUMBER OF INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS BEYOND ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY DAYS FOR A FIVE-DAY SCHOOL WEEK AND MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-FIVE DAYS FOR A FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK". This is stated throughout the Act/Bill and nowhere in the Act/Bill does it state that schools must go to a 5 day per week calendar to meet these required hours. HB130 also states in SECTION 1, PARAGRAPH C: "Up to sixty instructional hours per school year for elementary grades and thirty instructional hours for middle and high school grades may be used for professional work hours, which may be embedded during the course of a normal school day. A "professional work hour means time during which a teacher participates in professional work aligned to challenging academic content and performance standards, including: (1) home visiting or parent-teacher conferences; (2) educator training or professional development; and (3) mentorship, coaching and collaboration between school employees". The key point in this paragraph is that instructional hours of 30/60 may be used for professional work hours, which may be EMBEDDED, during the course of a normal school day. It does not state that these hours must be separated and met outside of the course of a normal school day. Teachers, particularly Special Education Teachers, often use embedded instructional/professional hours to meet the requirements of general education, IDEA and NMAC for Specialized Education to serve/instruct students. The proposal by PED to mandate that all professional hours be completed outside of "instructional time" and without providing additional funding for this is detrimental to student's education and teachers as teachers are already underpaid and work above the hours they are mandated to by districts/states and governments. The PED proposal to mandate that all schools must go on a 5 day per week calendar, excluding professional hours from instructional hours, goes against HB130 and the rights of local school districts/boards and communities to determine what is best for their students and members. Several 4

day per week school districts added the required additional hours to meet the needs of the students and communities with staff, student and community input which NMPED approved. It is not right that NMPED is now going to change this after NMPED's own approval of such. I ask what is the reason for NMPED to make this mandate when several 4 day per week districts meet and exceed state educational standards? Is this proposal/reason for the benefit of students/communities for which it is designed to serve or for its own purposes/benefits?

I am an Occupational Therapist who has worked for the Cimarron School District for 23 years. I began working for this district in 2001, several years after it implemented a 4 day per week school calendar in 1972. As Cimarron District is a very rural and large geographical district, the 4 day per week calendar has and continues to meet the needs of our communities. It has changed its school days from Mondays to Thursdays to Tuesdays to Fridays at least a few times in order to operate efficiently and meet the needs of its students, staff and communities. Throughout the years of Cimarron School District's 4 day per week schooling, it has and continues to excel and go above the state educational requirements. It has consistently been one of the top ranked schools in the state of NM for all grade levels and it requires more than the minimum NM graduation requirement hours. My daughters attended school in Cimarron District from grades K-12 and have received excellent educations, excelling in their all-around public school/academic careers. They, and other students, have/had good attendance overall as a result of this 4 day per week as they were often involved in sporting events which require lengthy bus/car rides to go to and participate in. Athletic events are often scheduled at the end of the day and/or on the days in which our and nearby 4 day per week school days are not in school, thus reducing absences from instructional hours. They, and other students have also have/had reduced absences from instructional hours (by going to school on a 4 day per week), as medical and other such appointments are made on the days in which they are not in school. Appointments often have to be made in Albuquerque, Las Vegas, Santa Fe, Raton, and Taos to mention a few which is anywhere from a 45 minute to 3.5-hour drive one way. Given the round-trip travel time and appointment time, it takes a half to one full day to go to an appointment. In fact, our local dental office in Angel Fire, NM operates on a 4 day per week, (longer days) schedule in order to meet the needs of our students by not taking away from their instructional hours. I myself work at a pediatric outpatient clinic on Mondays, a non-school day to provide therapy services to children. Some of these children come to the clinic to receive their medically necessary therapy services, on their non-school day, in order to not miss school, which may include Special Education instructional hours. Mandating that rural districts go to 5 day per week calendar would certainly decrease the instructional hours for the students, which is opposite of the intention of

HB130 to provide 1,140 instructional hours to students and that children need to be in school.

I am also against this proposal due to concerns about the bus rides for our rural students. Several rural schools have consolidated making some bus rides for students longer than what they were before consolidation. Cimarron School District and several other rural districts cover a very large geographic area over various terrain and weather conditions. Many of our students are on the bus for up to 90 minutes each way but on a 4 day per week, they are in school much longer than they are on the bus or in a car. I do not think it is in the best interest of our students to riding to/from school for 3 hours per day for 5.5 or possibly 3.5 instructional hours.

In consideration of this proposal, may I suggest that members of NMPED visit and attend at least one full day of school as a student or staff in one or all of the state's 4 day per week school districts? Your visit would include driving or riding the bus to/from the school and attending the school throughout the course of its normal day. Perhaps by doing this, you can experience yourself how well a 4 day per week school can educate our children and operate efficiently as determined by the school district itself, and not state/federal government agencies which demand a 5 day per week schooling to educate children. School districts should determine how to educate its students and meet the needs of the communities, not NMPED. Perhaps I will meet a NMPED member at one of the high-ranking schools in Cimarron School District.

In conclusion, I state again that I am against the NMPED proposed rules for Extended School Hours/Calendars and ask that it not be passed. I hope that you read and consider my thoughts and opinions in this letter as I cannot personally attend/speak at the December 18 hearings on this matter as I will be working on a non-school day to provide healthcare services to those in need including some who will receive services on their non-school day in order to not miss school.

Sincerely,
Rhonda J. Lee, OT/L
Occupational Therapist, Licensed
NM License #678


From: [JAMES ANDERSON](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Also.....
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:02:53 PM

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This new change will make NM look bad, more students will home school or just straight up quit and the teachers will also leave making less money!!!! Just because you add another class period add more days and more hours dosent mean you get better grades. Shorten school days hours and less periods and see what happens then.

James K Anderson
LAHS's 9th Grade Student
EAA Pilot & Aviator



 This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Caitlyn Alaniz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:04:17 PM

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Hello,

I am writing today to voice my concerns and opposition to the proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. I am a parent of two children in Los Alamos Public Schools district, and a stepparent of a child in the Las Cruces Public School district. I myself attended NM public schools from kindergarten to graduation.

As an informed voter, I take keeping up to date with our state legislation seriously. My first concern is that, during last year's legislative session, bills were passed regarding school hours, school calendars, and several subjects that are now being included in this proposed rule change. Many proposed changes are in direct opposition of what was written in the law. Suddenly, the proposed changes include a minimum requirement of 180 days, when the bills stated that hours of instruction would be counted toward a minimum, not days. Another direct opposition is that districts cannot count professional development as a part of the required instructional hours. The new law says that districts can count that. While not every district was impacted equally by these bills made into law last session, several districts had to make massive additions to hours, days of instruction, or both. I am concerned that both the changes in the law, as well as in this proposed rule change, are not actually based in evidence that there is any benefit for students, but rather that they are being implemented simply because other school districts/states have done this. Written another way, these changes have become popular, but are they beneficial? As a parent, I am concerned that these unnecessary changes will contribute to increased burnout and decreased mental health among students, particularly in teenagers. I am concerned that there is no evidence-based benefit to students. This is education and any changes made regarding hours, days of instruction, or calendar changes in general should first and foremost consider whether there is evidence that it will actually benefit students. Along that line of thinking, this school year is the first to be affected by the bills passed during last year's legislative session. How will districts in the state evaluate the effects of the new law if NMPED moves to make additional changes next school year? Is one school year really enough to evaluate whether there is any benefit to the changes that were already made by law? Does NMPED even care if there is any benefit for students? Are the proposed changes even legal when they differ from the new law?

Additionally, I am concerned about the sudden changes that would come if this proposed rule went into effect. Los Alamos Public Schools was one of the districts that faced massive change this school year due to the new laws. If the proposed rule changes went into effect, every single K-12 student in LAPS would be affected in such a manner that their weekly school schedule would likely change. In addition, the school calendar would likely be extended again, as it was for this current school year. I do not understand the logic behind making these proposed changes. I see these changes taking away flexibility from districts for no apparent reason, with no apparent benefit. There are consequences to the proposed changes, though. Districts will be forced to make several decisions about how best to accommodate the changes, again, in April when budget and calendars are done. It would be an administrative headache. It seems as though the budget would be possibly affected as well. Graduating

seniors from LAPS would be graduating with 8 more credits (32) than what is required by the graduation requirements of NM (24) if the proposed rule changes went into effect.

In conclusion, I oppose the proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. I urge that these changes are not approved. I do not believe these changes are legal, as they differ from existing NM law. These rule changes have consequences that will limit critical staff planning time and be disruptive to schools and students alike. I do not believe that adequate time is being given to districts to implement changes and to evaluate their effects. Furthermore, I do not agree with the direction that these changes are going in, and would advise that the department instead consider that flexibility can benefit students, their families, districts, and the state. I believe that empowering districts to embrace flexibility, to the extent applicable, provides problem solving that benefits everyone involved.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Caitlyn Alaniz, parent

From: [Jordyn Pritchard](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please keep the 4-day week
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:06:32 PM

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I am a recent resident of New Mexico, and I have two children currently enrolled in school in Catron County. We came from Oregon, where the kids had a five day school week, and I have noticed a positive difference after having them in the 4 day week.

The school my kids attend, Quemado School, is phenomenal and the teachers there are doing a wonderful job. Compared to the schools my kids went to in Oregon, which were arguably decent schools, I prefer Quemado. It's small, and the community we live in works hard to support the school and all the kids. The teachers all care deeply about the kids and it's a different environment than I've ever seen in a public school, and I want to support the things that make it special, including the four day week. All the teachers there support the four day school week, and I believe it is counterintuitive to not listen to our teachers, because they are the ones actually doing the hard work of educating the children.

Schools should have the ability to make decisions that work best for the families in their particular community, and if the school hours are being met, which they are in our case, the decision should not be mandated by the state, especially in a state with so many rural areas. Things out here in the middle of nowhere are not the same as things in the city. So, please, don't take away the school's ability to do what works best for our community.

With such a rural location, the kids spend almost an hour on the bus daily, 4 days a week, then another half hour in the car with us to get to/from our house. Adding another day of that would be that much harder on our schedule and our vehicles, resulting in more maintenance costs for us and more cost for the feeder route fee the school pays us.

Having every Friday off allows me to plan doctors appointments and therapy sessions for the kids that would be almost impossible without missing school hours otherwise. The kids have also told me how much they enjoy having three days to decompress every weekend, and they even enjoy having 8 hours at school each day, which they were initially nervous about.

I hope the opinions of those of us with the most difficulty getting our kids to school will be heard.

Thank you for your time,
Jo Pritchard

From: [Kylie Stewart](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Instructional Time Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:10:39 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I'm writing to express my opposition to the proposed rule change.

While I appreciate the desire to ensure all students in NM are receiving a quality education, there are several things I consider problematic about this proposal.

It is important for students to get enough class time; however, it is also important for teachers to have time for professional development so they can continue to provide the best education possible. The hours spent by teachers in professional development directly benefits students and should be counted towards the total hours.

Speaking of total hours, each district needs to be allowed the flexibility to determine the best arrangement of those hours. Whether the district thinks taking 190 days or 170 to do that is best, they need the flexibility to make that decision.

My school district currently has early-release Wednesdays at the elementary level. This gives the elementary teachers contracted time to prep, similar to teachers having a prep period in middle school and high school. Requiring 5.5 hours per day every day, removes that time makes an already difficult job more difficult for elementary teachers. It also takes away a much needed break for our youngest students.

While not used at my school district, some districts prefer to have 4 longer days per week than 5 regular days. You know the benefits: less transportation expense, less transportation/commuting time, increased mental health for personnel and students. Districts should have the flexibility to make these choices.

This rule change would also eliminate the ability for high school students to have a free period. These students are nearly adults and should be trusted to manage their schedules, with guidance from school administration. Many high school students work to help support their families, save for college, or both; having the discretionary time can be beneficial academically, by allowing extra time for study, but also socially, emotionally, and physically.

Even if this rule change ends up being passed, I implore you to delay its implementation date. There are several big changes here and school districts need time to plan how to best rework their schedules.

Thank you for your time.
Kylie Stewart

From: [Vanesa Loya](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:12:15 PM

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NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements" in the subject line.

I am strongly against this rule change. This sudden and unrealistic change will have a huge negative impact to our children. I urge you to please take a step back. Please take in consideration the hundreds of kids this will affect. Please stop thinking that this change is for the good. If the kids were in reality they are only new ideas on how you can line your pockets with the extra funds that you'd be getting from extending this BS schedule. Our kids are being held at school for longer than ever before, their summer has been cut, they are required all the crazy schedules and now this, yet another impact to their lives. Just STOP.

**Curry County
New Mexico**
Board of County Commissioners
417 Gidding Street, Suite 100
Clovis, NM 88101
Phone (575) 763-6016 • FAX (575) 763-3656



COMMISSIONERS
Fidel Madrid • District 1
Brad Bender • District 2
Dusty Leatherwood • District 3
Seth Martin • District 4
Robert Thornton • District 5

County Manager • Lance A. Pyle

December 15, 2023

Dr. Arsenio Romero
Secretary of the Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave, Santa Fe, NM 87501

Re: Administrative Rule Amendment – 180 Student Days Per Year

Dear Secretary Dr. Romero,

We are very concerned by the proposed rule change that would require all school districts to adhere to 180 student days per year and the impact that would have on our school districts, educators and students. Curry County has four school districts; Texico, Melrose, Grady and Clovis. Three of our four school districts operate on a 4 day school week; Texico, Melrose and Grady. Of those schools, Grady Middle School, Melrose High School, Melrose Jr. High School, Texico Elementary, and Texico Middle School are all designated in 2023 as Excellence. In addition, Grady Elementary School, Melrose Elementary School and Texico High School are designated in 2023 as Spotlight.


We understand the importance of increasing student achievement, and share and recognize your concerns and the need to improve student outcome in our State, but in Curry County, our small, rural schools, who will be impacted by such rule, are already seeing success in their operations and we are afraid of the negative impact this would have on those schools. They could potentially lose qualified, long-time educators who are accustomed to a 4-day work week and its benefits. Many staff, teachers, and students have longer than average commutes due to living in rural communities. This is one less day they have to travel to school. They utilize the 5th day for medical appointments, working on the family farms, and businesses to gain life experiences. These rural schools utilize the 4-day work week as an incentive when recruiting qualified teachers and assisting with family needs to minimize student absences. We are also very concerned for all of our school districts in the number of teaching vacancies. Currently, classes are being covered with long term substitutes who do not meet the educational requirements, which is a detriment to our students. Curry County has offered, and continues to offer our employees the opportunity to work a 4-day work week and assist the schools with substituting on days off, but that is not an ideal situation for the districts or the continuity of consistency. This proposed rule change could only exacerbate the teacher vacancy challenge with more teachers leaving, which would increase the number of vacancies and increase the substitute shortage. It is also a concern that the rule would only increase the ongoing issue school districts across the State faces with chronic absenteeism amongst students. Lastly, there is no increase in pay provided to the teachers for the additional proposed hours.

We urge the Public Education Department to consider all benefits and oppositions to the proposed rule change as well as other avenues to increase student achievement such as funding allocated towards classroom technology upgrades, educational material and student mental health support, to name a few.

If you have any questions or need anything, feel free to contact County Manager Lance Pyle at lpyle@currycounty.org or 575-763-6016.

Sincerely,


Robert Thornton, Chairman


Seth Martin, Vice Chairman

CC: File
Lance Pyle, County Manager
Board of Curry County Commission

From: [Javier Ortiz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:18:38 PM

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To whom it may concern at NMPED,

I'm an APS teacher since 2005 in the Great State of NM. It's frustrating looking at news and proposals that don't help our teachers nor our students. It even looks questionable when a bill was enacted through the voting process but now modifications are being proposed through other "individualistic" means.

What we need is the approval of proposals that go through a voting process w/ teachers as your experts. Yes, the teachers are the ones working day in day out with not just the students but also with families... and let me tell you, we do way more than just teach. At the end of the day, we go to our homes drained because of the many hats we wear, the lack of support we experience in the classroom, and the CONSTANT changing of rules/policies that ultimately affect NM's most important resource: the children.

Please, focus your energy and resources towards the classroom... staffing schools w/ TA that help us close learning gaps on a daily basis on various basic subject areas.

There's a saying that goes like this: "El que mucho abarca, poco aprieta", and I feel PED and some politicians are missing the point, the basics... just as our kids.

Please, help us, Ortiz

From: [LACEY PORTILLOS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Schedule
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:18:40 PM

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After reading this email I like the schedule for the most part except for the no free periods. I believe that students should be able to have free periods if they have completed the required amount of credits for a class. I believe this is unfair to future juniors and seniors.

-Lacey



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [CAIDEN WALKOVIK](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:23:44 PM

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As a student in New Mexico, I believe I speak on behalf of others when i say this schedule will not help us, but rather make our time worse. Already people throughout New Mexico and depressed and even committing suicide due to the workload, and this would just make it worse. If you care about the students, please don't change the calender.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Rachel Wehner](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:24:33 PM

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As a former teacher and parent of highschool, elementary and middle school aged kids, these proposed changes would push us to consider either homeschooling our children or moving out of the state. These changes are NOT what is best for teachers OR children! I sincerely hope these changes do not happen!

If you have questions, feel free to contact me via email losalamos4rent@gmail.com

Rachel Wehner

From: [MARSHALL BRUNETTE](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Changed schedule proposal for 24/25 school year
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:25:58 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Public Education Department,

I am writing to give feedback on the proposed school schedule changes. I am currently a student enrolled at Los Alamos High School. I believe that these changes would hold benefit in your minds but you are not seeing it from a student perspective very well. As a high school student I can see in others and myself that there is already a lot of stress and troubles from the standard 3.5 class a day schedule we have. It is very difficult to enroll in an extracurricular while keeping your grade up already and adding to that pile just makes it more difficult. Knowing students in my school there is already a tendency to skip classes to do other activities but if students are forced into more class time then ditching will become a more common occurrence. I would appreciate it if you looked over my points and perspectives in your future decision making. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Marshall Brunette



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Dana Denning](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:28:34 PM

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Urgent Action Needed: Oppose NM Public Education Department's Unnecessary School Hour Extension

Dear NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to express my deep concern and strong opposition to the proposed rule change that would dramatically extend school hours in New Mexico, starting in the 2024-2025 school year. This proposal, outlined in Rule 6.10.5 NMAC, raises serious concerns about its impact on students, teachers, families, and the overall effectiveness of our educational system.

The proposed changes, in essence, do the following:

- Rigidly mandate 1140 instructional hours AND 180 school days: This eliminates the current flexibility districts have to count hours or days, potentially requiring additional school days and disrupting existing routines.
- Eliminate professional development as part of instructional hours: This forces districts to add more days or squeeze professional development into already tight schedules, hindering teacher growth and impacting student learning.
- Enforce a rigid 5-day, 5.5-hour minimum for elementary and 6.5-hour minimum for secondary schools: This removes the current early release Wednesdays for elementary teacher planning, adding unnecessary burden to both teachers and students.
- Force a 4-credit-per-day requirement for high schoolers: This disrupts the current successful block schedule at many schools and could lead to larger class sizes or additional classes, jeopardizing student focus and personalized learning.
- Require LAHS students to complete 32 credits, exceeding the 24-credit graduation requirement: This unnecessarily burdens students and raises questions about the purpose of exceeding minimum requirements.

These changes are being proposed with alarmingly little time for public input and preparation and is unclear on its true purpose. The new calendar and schedules need to be finalized and submitted before the April budget deadline, leaving districts scrambling to adjust to a potentially disruptive overhaul. I would much rather see our

educators spending their time focused on supporting our students. I would also much rather see our students, especially those who are neurodivergent like my own, focused on trying to navigate the requirements as they exist today vs. more pressure being put on them with more hours and credits - what purpose is this really serving?

The unintended consequences of this proposal are far-reaching:

- Reduced teacher planning and professional development: This can negatively impact teacher morale and effectiveness, ultimately harming student learning.
- Disruption to established school schedules and routines: This can lead to confusion, stress, and decreased productivity for both students and families.
- Increased cost burden for districts and families: Additional days, larger classes, and potential transportation changes could strain budgets and create logistical challenges.
- Loss of flexibility and local control: This one-size-fits-all approach ignores the unique needs of different districts, communities and learners.

I urge you to:

- Reject the proposed rule change in its current form.
- Prioritize collaboration and dialogue with educators, families, and local communities.
- Focus on solutions that genuinely support student learning and well-being, not rigid mandates.
- Allow districts and schools to retain the flexibility they need to tailor their educational models to their specific needs and contexts.

This is not just about school hours, but about the future of education in New Mexico. We cannot afford to rush into a potentially disastrous change without thorough consideration and community input.

Sincerely,

Dana Denning

Parent of student in the Los Alamos School District

--

Dana C Denning

mobile: 415-309-9657

email: danacdenning@gmail.com

From: [COLE LUSCHER](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Schedule
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:33:09 PM

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We have not seen the full effects from the new school schedule passed last school year. I know this applies to other school districts but Los Alamos Public Schools are one of the best schools education wise in this state and should not need to be worried about "Missing too much school over Covid-19." You Guys need to get your head out of your Gluteus maximus and think about how this will affect students, not just how you look. Longer days overtime will wear students out and taking away our breaks will also make students feel like this is never ending and be unmotivated. Breaks are called breaks for a reason not just so we can have fun, so our brains can mentally rest from stress and prepare for the round of school. Also how are students already in High School going to graduate? Am I going to have to take 2 extra years of High School just to meet your stupid required 32 credit hours. If you guys don't listen to how the public feels, especially my town, I think you need to remember We are the United States of America. Taking away public views and rights to vote towards such matters goes against the FIRST line of the constitution "We the people." Please do not ignore this email.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [TRENT OGAS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New Rule 2
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:33:09 PM

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I also would also like to say that these new hours are terrible, we don't need more days of school because on breaks I get to visit my mom in Washington and if you extend school and shorten breaks then I wont be able to see my mom for very long each break.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [POLLY SHATTUCK](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] rule number NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:34:09 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

I am a social worker for SFPS district. I work with students who need down time as a way to calm their nervous systems during breaks and weekends, and do not need added days to the year. It is hard enough to get some of the students I work with to come to school on a regular basis, and this would add pressure to an already tense situation. It is my opinion that this will bring more tardies, and detention to students that are already struggling, and more behavioral problems

With that said, there is also the workload that teachers face. My colleagues and I spend many nights and weekends working on helping students and need our down time to face the challenges that we are facing that have become more extreme post Covid. We have more students requiring social work services. This means more behaviors to manage in the classroom and this causes additional strain on teacher's mental health.

So, I vigorously support the calendar year remaining the same and not adding days or taking away PD days away from already stressed staff.

Polly Shattuck
School Social Worker.

From: [ISABELLA GLETSOS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:34:16 PM

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To whom it may concern,

This is an absurd request to implement so abruptly into the New Mexico education system. As a student in Los Alamos High School, I am beginning to acclimate to the new schedule that began this year and adding this request to add more hours and complete more hours of credit to graduate on top of that is ridiculous. I strongly urge you to rethink this ludicrous ask.

Sincerely,
Isabella Gletsos



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [KATE OBREY](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New School Schedule
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:34:49 PM

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This is illegal sir, and a very bad idea. >:(You give the schools no time to fully prepare the schools in time to fully adapt to these changes. I realize the intentions behind your actions but I feel this will not help the education of this state. I will be a senior next year, I will not have enough credits nor time in my schedule to fully complete these requirements to graduate. Your intentions are to help education in New Mexico and increase the graduation rate, but because of this new piece of legislature it will actively impede my ability to graduate. Even if you do not increase the requirements to graduate I only need two classes to graduate. Requiring me to take classes I do not need and will only have the opposite effect. Making skipping classes a much better alternative instead. It makes me feel .

Good day sir, KAte Obrey



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [SARA KHAN](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed NMPED Rule Change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:34:50 PM

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Recently, a new rule change has been proposed by the NMPED, changing the required number of school hours, credits, and on-campus time for students and teachers.

The consensus and reaction from students, teachers, parents, and citizens has been overwhelming against the new change. The people are lobbying against these proposed changes due to their sudden, frequent proposition time frame, with critical lack of public opinion and voting. Legislation is unable to vote on this issue, as it is being proposed to pass by December.

Teachers, as is, struggle to meet all of their needed requirements to keep their classroom flourishing. Forcing more people into these rooms, and frankly, with no proposed points for funding, teachers will become even more overworked than they are now.

This entire bill is the starting spark for strikes to occur. By introducing it so suddenly, with no public opinion within it, NMPED has dug themselves a deep grave. Considering the bill has nothing concerning where the funding for these new students, teachers, classrooms, and supplies will be coming from, it looks bleak.

Another serious issue this bill creates is the credit requirements. Previously, 24 credits have been required for graduation. However, increasing that to 32 will pose big issues for students currently enrolled in high school. Speaking as a sophomore, I fear deeply what will happen to me if I am forced to try to make up 2 extra years of credit, even worse for juniors who will need to adapt to 3 additional years worth of the credits. Having heard from my junior peers, I understand how much heavier this is weighing on them.

Continuing on secondary education, secondary education will non longer have access to unsupervised periods. Campus will immediately become far too overcrowded, because there will not be enough rooms, parking spaces, or teachers to go around without unsupervised periods.

This bill additionally will affect elementary schools, who receive half-days on Wednesdays. These times serve as teacher preparation periods. Without this, elementary teachers will be heavily overworked as they try to cram lesson planning on top of an already busy schedule of trying to teach young minds.

Clearly, this bill is in an attempt to move New Mexico up from its 48th ranking in Public Education. However, the deepest issue is the lack of teachers. Schools are scrambling for

teachers to fill gaps. Speaking from some of the teachers my peers and I have seen, they were clearly the only people available and not particularly qualified for the job they hold. The biggest shift to fixing this problem would be an increased salary raise for teachers, which would give qualified people a reason to apply for the job. Simply increasing school hours is going to be horribly detrimental to students' mental health.

I can almost guarantee a spike in suicide rates amongst our children and teens because of how harmful extended schooling can be to their mental health. Is a mediocre attempt to push our state up in rankings worth the lives of children? Is it truly not better to raise teachers' salaries? That wouldn't fix every problem, but it would be a much better step in the right direction than just trying to shove more on-campus time into the system.

Additionally, many students work to help support their families from falling into poverty. New Mexico's schools have 1 in 5 students that live in poverty. For these families, students *have* to work in order to provide for their families. An extension of school time would prohibit these students from taking home the income that they quite literally cannot survive without.

More classes means more homework. By both extending class hours and classes taken, there is innately less time at home. There are a fair number of students across the state who make daily commutes of at the very least a hundred miles, and these districts often have 4 day school weeks. Districts being in charge of their schools, up until the proposition of this bill, works out better for the students and teachers within it. The state cannot possibly account for the differences between every district in NM, and so it makes sense for the districts to be left more to their own devices. Obviously, state policies are still needed, but this harsh and sudden rule is absolutely not the route for it.

This is about what is fair under a democracy. This is about what will help our students, our teachers, and our families. This rushed, forced bill is vehemently opposed by every single person it will affect. The dire lack of preparation and planning for the bill is going to become clear when it fails to work well.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Monica Aranda](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:37:28 PM

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To whom it may concern at the Governor's Office,

I hope that this email finds you well. I am writing concerning the extension of the upcoming school year 2024-2025. I know that we are all concerned about the academic levels of all our students. I do not know how any of you think that by extending the school year, the students are going to do so much better. I think most of you need to visit our school more often in order for you to see for yourself what we are dealing with day in and day out.

To start with, the behaviors of so many students are outrageous to say the least. There has to be a faster response from other departments to get the support that the students need in order to be able to teach the students that are in the classroom wanting to learn. What about their educational rights, do they not have a right to be in a safe and quiet atmosphere in order for them to learn everyday that they attend school?

In our school, all our classrooms are combo classes. For those of you that do not know what that means; there are two grade levels to one teacher that is doing the job of two and only getting one salary. The teacher is expected to teach all the students at their grade level and have them all at grade level academically throughout the school year. Who can do that? On top of that, I am speaking for myself, but I know that I also speak for a lot of teachers that are in the same situation as I am in. I am also a bilingual teacher that has to teach Spanish and ESL to English Language Learners as well as Spanish to Spanish Language Learners to both grades. This is where the problem is. We need teachers that teach only one grade no matter how small the class enrollment is. Can you imagine the academic growth these students would make each school year? We need to teach the students at their own grade level everyday, all day. We cannot reach the goals that we are expected to, if we do not get the right support that we need. I feel that if the state and district keep adding to the workload of all their teachers, there will be a lot more teachers leaving and we cannot afford to lose any more educators. As you can tell by what I wrote, I am against adding more days to our school calendar. Please reconsider.

Respectfully,
Monica Aranda
Bilingual Teacher/Tesol
Kindergarten /First Grade Combo
Eugene Field Elementary
Albuquerque NM

From: [ShyAnn Gonzales](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:39:34 PM

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Hello this emails is in regards to the potential changes in the school calendar. I believe these changes would be a mistake. Children AND teachers are already in school for long hours and many days of the year which is only causing burnout in both the students and staff. My child specifically will be pulled from public school and homeschooled. These expectations for everyone to be in school for longer hours and days is horrendous when there are schools who don't even have teachers for the classes.

What you should consider is increasing teacher pay, which would hopefully in turn bring more teachers to the teaching world to call for smaller class sizes to ensure every student has a chance to learn and be explained to. Added more days and hours to these children's school calendar is causing burnout for everyone and is not a good idea.

-ShyAnn

From: [Rhonda Lee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMPED proposal for 2024-25 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:45:34 PM

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Hello,

I am writing this to state that I am against your proposed rule mandating that all school districts in NM go on a 5 day per week calendar starting with the 2024-25 school year. This proposed rule is against HB130 which does not mandate that all school districts must go to a 5 day a week calendar in order to meet the required minimum of 1,140 instructional hours for students. HB130 clearly states "An Act Creating a K-12 Plus program: PROVIDING ADDITIONAL PROGRAM UNITS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT INCREASE THE NUMBER OF INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS BEYOND ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY DAYS FOR A FIVE-DAY SCHOOL WEEK AND MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-FIVE DAYS FOR A FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK". This is stated throughout the Act/Bill and nowhere in the Act/Bill does it state that schools must go to a 5 day per week calendar to meet these required hours. HB130 also states in SECTION 1, PARAGRAPH C: "Up to sixty instructional hours per school year for elementary grades and thirty instructional hours for middle and high school grades may be used for professional work hours, which may be embedded during the course of a normal school day. A "professional work hour means time during which a teacher participates in professional work aligned to challenging academic content and performance standards, including: (1) home visiting or parent-teacher conferences; (2) educator training or professional development; and (3) mentorship, coaching and collaboration between school employees". The key point in this paragraph is that instructional hours of 30/60 may be used for professional work hours, which may be EMBEDDED, during the course of a normal school day. It does not state that these hours must be separated and met outside of the course of a normal school day. Teachers, particularly Special Education Teachers, often use embedded instructional/professional hours to meet the requirements of general education, IDEA and NMAC for Specialized Education to serve/instruct students. The proposal by PED to mandate that all professional hours be completed outside of "instructional time" and without providing additional funding for this is detrimental to student's education and teachers as teachers are already underpaid and work above the hours they are mandated to by districts/states and governments. The PED proposal to mandate that all schools must go on a 5 day per week calendar, excluding professional hours from instructional hours, goes against HB130 and the rights of local school districts/boards and communities to determine what is best for their students and members. Several 4 day per week school districts added the required additional hours to meet the needs of the students and communities with staff, student and community input which NMPED approved. It is not right that NMPED is now going to change this after NMPED's own approval of such. I ask what is the reason for NMPED to make this mandate when several 4

day per week districts meet and exceed state educational standards? Is this proposal/reason for the benefit of students/communities for which it is designed to serve or for its own purposes/benefits?

I am an Occupational Therapist who has worked for the Cimarron School District for 23 years. I began working for this district in 2001, several years after it implemented a 4 day per week school calendar in 1972. As Cimarron District is a very rural and large geographical district, the 4 day per week calendar has and continues to meet the needs of our communities. It has changed its school days from Mondays to Thursdays to Tuesdays to Fridays at least a few times in order to operate efficiently and meet the needs of its students, staff and communities. Throughout the years of Cimarron School District's 4 day per week schooling, it has and continues to excel and go above the state educational requirements. It has consistently been one of the top ranked schools in the state of NM for all grade levels and it requires more than the minimum NM graduation requirement hours. My daughters attended school in Cimarron District from grades K-12 and have received excellent educations, excelling in their all-around public school/academic careers. They, and other students, have/had good attendance overall as a result of this 4 day per week as they were often involved in sporting events which require lengthy bus/car rides to go to and participate in. Athletic events are often scheduled at the end of the day and/or on the days in which our and nearby 4 day per week school days are not in school, thus reducing absences from instructional hours. They, and other students have also have/had reduced absences from instructional hours (by going to school on a 4 day per week), as medical and other such appointments are made on the days in which they are not in school. Appointments often have to be made in Albuquerque, Las Vegas, Santa Fe, Raton, and Taos to mention a few which is anywhere from a 45 minute to 3.5-hour drive one way. Given the round-trip travel time and appointment time, it takes a half to one full day to go to an appointment. In fact, our local dental office in Angel Fire, NM operates on a 4 day per week, (longer days) schedule in order to meet the needs of our students by not taking away from their instructional hours. I myself work at a pediatric outpatient clinic on Mondays, a non-school day to provide therapy services to children. Some of these children come to the clinic to receive their medically necessary therapy services, on their non-school day, in order to not miss school, which may include Special Education instructional hours. Mandating that rural districts go to 5 day per week calendar would certainly decrease the instructional hours for the students, which is opposite of the intention of HB130 to provide 1,140 instructional hours to students and that children need to be in school.

I am also against this proposal due to concerns about the bus rides for our rural students. Several rural schools have consolidated making some bus rides for students longer than what they were before consolidation. Cimarron School District and several other rural districts cover a very large geographic area over various terrain and weather conditions. Many of our students are on the bus for up to 90 minutes each way but on a 4 day per week, they are in

school much longer than they are on the bus or in a car. I do not think it is in the best interest of our students to riding to/from school for 3 hours per day for 5.5 or possibly 3.5 instructional hours.

In consideration of this proposal, may I suggest that members of NMPED visit and attend at least one full day of school as a student or staff in one or all of the state's 4 day per week school districts? Your visit would include driving or riding the bus to/from the school and attending the school throughout the course of its normal day. Perhaps by doing this, you can experience yourself how well a 4 day per week school can educate our children and operate efficiently as determined by the school district itself, and not state/federal government agencies which demand a 5 day per week schooling to educate children. School districts should determine how to educate its students and meet the needs of the communities, not NMPED. Perhaps I will meet a NMPED member at one of the high-ranking schools in Cimarron School District.

In conclusion, I state again that I am against the NMPED proposed rules for Extended School Hours/Calendars and ask that it not be passed. I hope that you read and consider my thoughts and opinions in this letter as I cannot personally attend/speak at the December 18 hearings on this matter as I will be working on a non-school day to provide healthcare services to those in need including some who will receive services on their non-school day in order to not miss school.

Sincerely,
Rhonda J. Lee, OT/L
Occupational Therapist, Licensed
NM License #678

From: [Megan Avina](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] More time Does NOT equal learning
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:50:37 PM

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Whoever thinks this is a solution to our student's "learning gap" definitely needs to spend a week in an actual school. Students are exhausted, hungry and bored during an 8/10 hour day (accounting for to and from school)

Engaging curriculum, project based learning, counseling services in school, field trips, healthy school breakfasts, snacks and lunches are THE ANSWER to our state's learning gap.

This is not rocket science, why can't New Mexico get on board with other states and throw some money towards the health and well being of our neglected youth.

I dare you to spend a week in a Title One school, eat what and when our students eat, be allowed time for fresh air and movement when our students are, talk a walk in their shoes and then

tell me if you think adding time is the answer.

Sincerely and With Best Intentions,

Megan Bowers-Avina

--

[Megan Bowers-Avina](#)
Milagro Maker Space

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From: [Luz Martinez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:58:06 PM

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Hello,

My name is Luz Martinez and I am a third grade teacher with APS. I oppose the change to the 180-day school year that does not count PD hours or parent teacher conferences day. Adding more days to the school year is simply not the solution. I work at a TOPs school so I work from 7:05-3:35, already an 8.5 school day. I can tell you that the teachers at the school are burning out fast. Our school also has an additional 10 days, by the end of the year very few students attend school on those last days showing that parents also do not want this change.

One of the benefits of the TOPs program is the additional time in the mornings to do professional development. It is such an important piece to student growth. Teaching is a career that needs continuing education. Teachers need time for PD and collaboration in order to have the most impact on the students. Requiring us to do it outside of the duty day is near impossible because we also have families and lives outside of school. I ask that you please listen to the voices of the community and realize that the problems in education are much more complex than just adding more days. Educators need PD days as well as collaboration time with colleagues. Students need teachers that are well trained but also other supports such as social workers, counselors, nurses, community partners that can enrich the students' learning. Please leave the calendar as is.

Thank you for your time,
Luz Martinez

From: [Trevor Stewart](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:59:00 PM

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Hello, I am writing to express my concern as a parent over the changes to the state school calendar proposed by the NMPED. Just this calendar year the state added hours to the school year (which I have no problem with), so to add several new requirements to be implemented for the next, rapidly approaching school year, seems to be moving too fast. I understand the desire to increase the quality of our education in New Mexico, and that may be implemented in part by increasing the quantity of school, but I believe acting so quickly is asking too much of administrators and teachers. The district where I live, Los Alamos, has added 10 extra days to the school year to accommodate last year's change for required hours. It was not easy to decide the best route to pursue, and going forward there is still the need for careful deliberation among parents and school officials to find a permanent calendar. To add so many other changes on top of that would, I believe, be overly stressful to teachers and students both, and risk burning them out. I am not opposed to gradual change, but again, to ask so much for the 24/25 year does not seem appropriate. Let us take a few years to determine the effect of last year's change on overall education before we add more requirements and more calendar changes.

Thank you for your work to support our schools.

Trevor Stewart
Los Alamos School District parent

From: [ESTELLA REMILLIEUX](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirement"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:00:25 PM

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Good Afternoon. My name is Estella Remillieux and I am a junior at LAHS. I think it is extremely unfair to take away the Free periods away from the kids who have been looking forward to it for a long time. I use those free periods to do my homework that I might not be able to do at home. I also think it's unfair to spring these new rules on especially upperclassmen who have been setting up their classes for a specific path to graduate, and these new rules would mess up our entire senior year.

I hope you understand.

Estella Remillieux



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Kat Wood](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [ACT](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:09:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in regards to the proposed rule change for 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. I am deeply concerned with the proposal to mandate 180 school days without exceptions for professional development and Parent Teacher Conferences. House Bill 130 was implemented less than 6 months ago and is only beginning to take effect this school year. To state that HB 130 is not working is disingenuous at best and purposefully misleading at worst. It is impossible to determine whether the increase in instructional hours is effective or not until adequate time has passed to allow for data to be collected and analyzed. Less than one school year is not adequate time to accomplish this.

Requiring 180 days does not address issues that are truly impacting our schools. Chronic absenteeism being one of them. Within my grade level, there are currently 29 students that are chronically absent and 39 students that are not considered chronically absent. While schools do what they can to encourage students and families to value their education, it is continuously demonstrated time and time again that it is not a priority by students not attending regularly, coming in tardy, and leaving early. How can you expect families to attend more school school days, when currently 43% of our students are not consistently attending the days we have now?

Teachers cannot teach students that are not in school. Adding school days will not increase attendance or engage students in giving their best effort, and will not improve education for students that frequently miss school. Until families are held accountable for bringing their children to school everyday, on time, these students will not make progress. Teachers and families already attending consistently should not be punished by taking away their valuable breaks, that help avoid burnout.

Adding more days to the school year does not directly address the current needs of students and is a pseudo solution to a complex problem. The Yazzie/Martinez decision outlined various areas of failure by the state. Packing on days does not address the resources needed to comply with the Constitution. Rather than extending the academic year, providing training and resources to teachers (e.g. through professional development), so that educators may be better positioned to provide a culturally and linguistically relevant education. Furthermore, social services and smaller class sizes go a long way in preparing students to be college and career ready. Adding school days would have a negative impact on both teacher recruitment and retention.

Additionally, House Bill 130 was implemented through the legislative branch by elected officials. It was discussed within various committees and stakeholders. Circumventing the law, directly as the executive branch, is an overreach and creates unnecessary tension between the educators and PED. The rhetoric that this is a district or teacher problem indicates a lack of knowledge and understanding of what is involved in educating New Mexico's children. A more useful and

meaningful solution exists. Perhaps researching solutions in collaboration with more knowledgeable others would be appropriate.

Thank you for your time and I hope that you do what is best for students and schools by not implementing this rule change.

-Kaitlin Wood, NBCT

From: [Rachel D. Josephson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:14:04 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I would like to briefly state that I am not impressed by the additional rule requirements proposed for our elementary, middle, and high schools. Currently, my students (K and 2nd grade) are feeling very burnt out from school. We started so early that, even with a fall break, they are ready to be done with school. I also see many conflicts with teacher prep time (see our superintendent's email below for more details). We value our teacher's Wednesday afternoon prep as it allows them to be well prepared during the rest of the week.

I think that school districts should be allowed some flexibility regarding when their teachers prep as well as time to conduct teacher development during the school year.

Why are we not instead focusing on teacher development, and on smaller classrooms rather than on extending the school year, the school day, etc.? More of what we already are doing isn't going to help with test scores. Better instruction and one-on-one learning will.

Thank you,

Rachel Josephson

EMAIL FROM LOS ALAMOS SUPPERINTENDENT

I am writing to make sure that you are aware of an important rule change that the NM Public Education Department is proposing that would impact Los Alamos Public Schools. The NMPED has provided notice that they are taking public comment on a proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements until Monday, December 18 at 5:00.

This rule has several changes that will impact our schools.

1. The new rule would require districts to provide 1140 hours of instruction AND a minimum of 180 days each school year. This is a change from legislation that allowed districts to count hours NOT days.
2. The rule no longer allows the district to include professional development as a part of the required instructional hours. This means that we would most likely have to add additional days to the teaching contract to maintain professional development time provided through the collective bargaining agreement.
3. The rule will require that students are in school 5 days a week for at least 5.5 hours a day at the elementary and 6.5 at the secondary schools. This would eliminate the ability to have early release Wednesdays for elementary teacher planning and prep. We would have to consider releasing elementary students earlier each day to meet teacher planning requirements. We are still learning how this would impact advisement and testing days at the secondary level.
4. The rule requires secondary students to take 4 credit bearing classes each day (8 classes each week). Currently, LAPS secondary schools use a block schedule that has 3.5 classes each day for a total of 7 classes a week. This means that we will have to

- change the master schedules at LAHS and LAMS.
5. High School students would not be allowed to take a free period. This means that we would need to add additional classes, teachers, or have larger class sizes to ensure all students are placed in 4 credit bearing courses each day.
 6. LAHS students would complete a total of 32 credits. Graduation requirements are for students to complete 24 credits.
 7. The rule change would go into effect for the 24/25 school year. The new calendar and class schedules would need to be finalized, approved, and submitted before the budget is submitted in April.

As a school district, we are concerned about the sudden change in requirements. We are also deeply concerned that the rule would be at odds with the law. We believe that this rule has unintended consequences that will limit critical staff planning time and be disruptive to our secondary schools. Although we are still working to understand the overall impact of this rule change, we believe that NMPED is failing to give districts adequate time to prepare for this unexpected change that dramatically impacts our students, teachers, and families.

AFT-Los Alamos, the LAPS School Board, and the LAPS administration are in agreement that we do NOT support the adoption of the proposed rule change.

What can you do to share your opinion?

1. Read the proposed rule, [linked here](#).
2. Write an e-mail with your comments about the proposed rule and send them to: rule.feedback@ped.nm.gov, referencing *NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"* in the subject line. Any comments must be submitted by 5:00pm on Monday, December 18th.

We will update you as soon as we know more. As always, we value all opinions on this issue and understand that others may have a different opinion than the concerns outlined here. We encourage everyone to evaluate the rule and feel comfortable with sharing their own thoughts either in support of or in opposition of the rule.

Jennifer Guy

Superintendent

Los Alamos Public Schools

From: [Beverly Marrs](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ditch the rule change and lets talk about social determinants of education
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:16:30 PM

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Beverly D. Marrs
Veteran NM Science Teacher
4640 Crest Ave SE
Albuquerque, NM 87108

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Ditch the proposed rule on calendar reform and let's talk about social determinants of education

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke the aforementioned proposal. Two facts have great bearing on this rule: 1) rule cannot go further than statute, and 2) the rule does not acknowledge the diversity of school performance regardless of school calendar. Aside from both of these facts the proposed rule is reactionary and punitive. This rule conflicts with legislation that was signed by the Governor only 6 months ago and its introduction shortly after statewide testing data was reported gives me the distinct sense that this rule change is punitive.

I began my teaching career in 2000, shortly before the implementation of NCLB and in the two decades since that legislation has been enacted I have seen repeated attempts to punish our way out of our long standing educational struggles. Punitive measures are not going to solve this problem. Systemic issues exist in education in New Mexico and now is the time for honesty, boldness and creativity.

Now is the time to be honest with ourselves and to start discussing social determinants of education. Families are struggling, it is hard to prioritize education when every other aspect of your daily life is a challenge. The impact food, housing and medical insecurity have on education can no longer be ignored. The impact addiction and incarceration have on education can no longer be ignored. Spending more hours and days in the classroom will not impact these social determinants of education.

We need to be honest with ourselves and acknowledge that industrialized education is the last thing an at risk learner needs. We need to follow that honesty with boldness and break away from the industrialized educational model of the past. Analysis of NM VISTA school data shows a clear pattern—overall, large schools are not addressing the needs of our students. I find it insulting and absurd that we value crafted, small batch experiences and products in every aspect of life other than education. Craft beer, craft food, small batch “this” , small batch “that”--but when it comes to our most precious resource we continue to follow a model of mass production. Are campuses with 1500+ students really the best way to educate our children?

Now is the time for creativity, and bravery, not punishment. It is past time for open and honest conversations about the social determinant of education. Solutions need to come from ALL stakeholders, families, employers, schools, faith communities and medical and mental health professionals.

Adding a few more days and hours to the school year is a great way to “look” like something is being done—but all of us that are actually on the front lines of education know that these measures are punitive and ineffective.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that the PED will carefully consider the implications of the proposed rule and work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop solutions that prioritize the best interests of our students and educators.

Yours sincerely,

Beverly D. Marrs

From: [Michelle Watkins](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:18:12 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am concerned that the rule would be at odds with the law. I believe that this rule has unintended consequences that will limit critical staff planning time and would be very disruptive to our secondary schools. I am greatly concerned that the consequences of this rule change have not been fully considered.

I urge you to reconsider this rule change.

Michelle Watkins
208-906-4394

From: [anne salzmann](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New calendar
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:19:23 PM

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I write this letter out of surprise and anger at the recent PED suggestion that adding days to the school year is the antidote to the issue of students missing school days. As a retired school administrator of 30 years, the last 17 of those in Santa Fe, I know the frustration that absenteeism creates, but adding school days in no way addresses the issue of why there is a problem!! Why is no one asking the teachers, the professionals who are struggling with this issue on a daily basis, for ideas? I talked to a first grade teacher friend in Santa Fe about what would work and below are two ideas that reflect our experiences.

1. Realize that punitive attendance policies don't work any more. Robocalls and threats have no impact. Instead, we need additional attendance aides who are bilingual, friendly and conversational, and who can create genuine alliances with parents and students. Instead of delivering empty threats, they could call each household where a student is missing school to assess the problem and offer suggestions. If initial suggestions or referrals to services do not help, trained social workers or counselors with strong communication skills and a positive mindset could meet with parents and students to further understand what is needed: tutoring, help dealing with a bully, need for a babysitter for a younger sibling so parents can work, money for clothes they are not embarrassing to wear, classes that emphasize practical skills, recognition of un-diagnosed depression or drug dependence, better assessment of actual ability level with appropriate placement, special help that does not feel demeaning, and classrooms that feel supportive and lively. Services must be provided by people who understand and like children and teens, and who will want to keep in touch with students and their families over time.
2. Provide social workers, counselors and lay helpers in schools to support teachers. A teacher should be able to make a quick call for someone to take a child who is unhappy or in crisis out of the classroom for help so the teacher can teach the rest of the class. That helper can assess whether this is a temporary need for support or a systemic problem that needs further attention. Having an immediate, non-punitive individual response for a child who is unhappy or in crisis is a necessity; the result is that the rest of the students do not suffer the consequences of the teacher having to direct all attention to the child in need.

The reality of the world today is that life is difficult, and children are deeply affected. Let's put money into humans helping humans from a place of love and understanding rather than into quick-fix or punitive responses. Schools have to be a place where we address student needs that interfere with learning, facilitating growth and change early enough to impact educational outcomes. We can do this!

Anne Salzmann
Retired Principal at Monte del Sol and The MASTERS Program Charter Schools
Sent from my iPad

From: [Jacqueline Nolen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:25:05 PM

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Dear NM PED

I am writing to you as both a parent and a school employee about the new school calendar requirements that you are wanting to put in place. I understand that students in New Mexico have been labeled as behind, perhaps needing more time in school to successfully "catch up". It is also hard now that the covid affected students are reaching high school age, and are perhaps less capable on standardized tests and even regular course work. So I am acknowledging your belief that adding class time will help.

As a parent and a school employee I am almost positive that your plan to add class time is not going to be effective. My elementary age child does not need more time at school, she needs more learning while at school. They spend a great deal of time testing for the state, instead of adding class time, let's cut down on that. Spend the time learning actual lessons, not just cramming so they can look good on your tests. Please remember that outside of this longer day, with more class time, these kids have lives. They play sports, are part of clubs, and groups, that are part of making them a well rounded person.

My high school student will be a senior next year. During their senior year, they plan to have a well earned free period. This free period is during the school day, where they are taking 2 AP classes, a college level humanities class, and 2 required social studies classes. For their free period they hope to take an online dual credit class, to help them get ahead in college.

According to the new proposed plan, the free period would go away, and instead they would have to fill their already hard schedule with 4 pointless classes. At this point in their education my child does not need to fill time with classes, they want to work on getting ahead for college. They also will use some of their free period doing work at a local elementary school, volunteering because they want to give back to the community.

My middle school 8th grader would be one of the most affected by these changes. He will start high school, taking a lot of classes and then having more homework. Not specifically taking classes that will help him in life, but just time filling classes. Let's take extra art classes, or perhaps weight lifting because we HAVE to be in school during this time, not because it matters in life. And with no free periods, our school will have to find more class rooms, teachers, and subjects to fill time. And his sports will be hurting because the day is longer, so practice time will have to be cut down. So instead of having a chance to get a sports scholarship, which is more likely than an academic scholarship for this child and many others, they have to spend their time in extra, unnecessary classes.

I would love to hear exactly what studies, or information you are using to build this plan. Where has it worked? What benefits does it have for the average or even the above average students?

I vote a very strong NO to these changes to the school schedule. Last year's changes were annoying enough, let us get used to that change before we can even consider new changes. Constant change is actually detrimental to the students' learning process. Stability has been proven to work.

Thank you for your time, please don't pass this and waste my children's time.

Jacqueline Nolen

--

Jacqueline Nolen
Student Placement Specialist
College & Career Center
[Counselor Info Site](#)
Los Alamos High School
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j.nolen@laschools.net



This email has been sent from a verified [laschools.net](#) user.

From: [KYLIE SHRADER](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Response
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:32:14 PM

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I don't think any of these changes are positive. Requiring more hours of the school day along with more classes doesn't seem reasonable or fair to the mental health of students and teachers. Taking away free periods to get in more classes stresses everyone out, and the stress we already have from what classes we have already is still concerning. Taking away the early release for elementary schools doesn't sound good either, it taking away from the time younger kids have to be developing their social skills. Often they use that time to hang out with their friends or family, since it's the only day they have a lot of time during the week. You can't develop the social skills you need in just school; there are plenty of other situations where only school is not going to help them at all.

I think these changes are going to affect everyone negatively, since it would mess with people's lives and schedules, especially those who are now required more credits when they're already half way through their high school career. This new change would mess with any time kids have off. We already have enough homework as it is, we don't need more thrown onto us, leading to sleep deprivation and plummeting mental health. Our lives have to include something other than school, since we need to find what we want to do for the rest of our lives. We can't have school all the time, taking up every bit of time we have and then have no free time to actually live. I do not think any of these changes are going to affect the schools positively.

Thank you.



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Devoney Wilhite](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:34:27 PM

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Including five more instructional days in the school year to solve the education crisis in New Mexico is like wearing a red shirt to cover up blood instead of stitching a wound.

The calendar has *just* been changed, and we haven't even gotten complete data on the results of that change. Did adding 10 days help? We have no way of knowing. We've only completed 5 of the additional days-- and, I might add, it actually feels like the students are getting less time in the classroom than ever. This may be because of the strange calendar APS was allowed to implement (three 2-day weeks for students just in this last semester), or it may be because of the usual testing, re-testing, and plethora of surveys. Either way, I feel like this year's change has not yet been implemented with full integrity. It certainly hasn't been tested fully. And yet NMPED wants to go full force in an untested direction. Ridiculous politicking.

If NMPED "leaders" actually worked in the environment they claim to care so much about-- the classroom-- they'd be forced to face the insanity their policies have created. The majority of people who are actually here see the intense cracks created by politicians pretending to understand anything about teaching. For that matter, it seems most politicians have forgotten how to *learn*. How many times will they ignore warnings and advice from experts? For how many decades can they ignore and disrespect people on the front lines of education? How many times can they try illogical solutions and come up short?

Here's what people in the classroom say they need:

- More people working in schools. This doesn't just mean teachers, it means EA's, nurses, counselors, and office assistants. Incentivizing people with reasonable pay and accessible programs will get more hands to help carry the immense weight that is public education. NMPED did a good thing when it approved alternative licensure programs and raises. Since then, we haven't seen much. You know why people don't retire from other jobs and become teachers? Because they'd have to accept 5 years of "training" and lower pay than they are used to, before receiving pay commensurate with a Master's Degree. NMPED shot themselves in the foot with that one.
- More bilingual teachers, EA's, and programs. Incentivize people who can help students make that lingual transition. This seems like a no-brainer.
- More CYFD truancy officers. Adding 5, 10, or 50 instructional days is meaningless to parents who don't make their kids come to school. Those are the students struggling the most. CYFD home visits stopped during COVID; it feels like they never really started again.
- More school police and security guards. Students don't feel safe in school. Do you know how many absences we have the days after a national or local violent event?
- More counselors and social workers. Students need more mental and social help than ever before. Do you know how many students miss class because of mental breakdowns or

problems at home?

And the final thing we always say we need, and have been saying we need for *decades*, are politicians who listen to and value us. NMPED "leaders" spend their days in nicely updated offices, patting each other on the back, complaining about something they don't even understand. That is more of an impediment to NM education than a lack of instructional days could ever be.

You saw how many teachers retired last year. Does the amount of new teachers even come close to filling that gap? Do the math.

I'm sure you'll hear from me again soon.

Sincerely disappointed,

Devoney Wilhite

--

Devoney Wilhite
6th / 7th / 8th Social Studies
Taylor Middle School
ext. 41121
devoney.wilhite@aps.edu

From: [Kelly Vallejo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; aftnmaction@gmail.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:39:39 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Dr. Arsenio Romero and the NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to you to express my strong objection to the new NMAC Rule 6.10.5 that NMPED is proposing for the 2024-2025 school year.

For context, I teach Special Education at Aspen Elementary School. We are currently contracted for 195 days, with 188 of those days being instructional days with our students. We teach our students from 8:30 to 3:30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In our school district, Wednesdays are half days, starting at 8:30 and ending at 12:00. Due to this abbreviated Wednesday schedule, our students are able to experience new activities and spend time on social and emotional development. This also allows many of them to practice independent life skills under adult supervision that they would otherwise not have.

On these Wednesday afternoons, teachers are given time for professional responsibilities like grading, planning, meeting, and collaborating. This average of 300 minutes of preparation time weekly is guaranteed to our teachers through our collectively bargained agreement and ensures that our educators can provide students with a high quality education.

The proposed 6.10.5.8 C 1 requires 180 instructional days per school year and would not include professional development time and the proposed 6.10.5.8 D would require that elementary school days be no shorter than five and a half hours. In order to meet these requirements, our elementary schools would have to discontinue our early release Wednesdays, which would be a problem for students because it would require a schedule change for afterschool programs and drastically change how families would need to plan for after school care. Another consequence for students could be that release times would change to being earlier on a daily basis, again creating a problem for after school care. This change would also be problematic for staff as they would have to deal with a schedule change in order to get the allotted average of 300 minutes of prep time weekly. Staff also have children who will be affected by this schedule change. An unintended result may be that teachers leave the profession due to the increase in demands of their time.

I ask NM PED to reconsider by voting no when it's time.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kelly Vallejo

3rd/4th Special Education Teacher
Aspen Elementary School

Los Alamos Public School

--

Kelly Vallejo
Special Education Grades 3-4
k.vallejo@laschools.net
505-663-2302



This email has been sent from a verified [laschools.net](mailto:k.vallejo@laschools.net) user.

From: [Heidi Cannon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Against rule change 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:42:20 PM

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we are concerned about the sudden change in requirements. We are also deeply concerned that the rule would be at odds with the law. We believe that this rule has unintended consequences that will limit critical staff planning time and be disruptive to our secondary schools. NMPED is failing to give districts adequate time to prepare for this unexpected change that dramatically impacts our students, teachers, and families.

Thanks.
Reed and Heidi Cannon
Los Alamos NM

From: [Katie Skipp](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please decline rule change!
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:47:12 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My children attend Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for my children and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support my children's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

It will also cause my children to miss more school since we use Fridays (they go to school Monday-Thursday) to do most of their therapy/other appointments that they have weekly.

I respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Katie Skipp*

From: [Lyle Cunningham](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); [Guy, Jennifer](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:47:27 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NMPED staff,

I have several concerns with the proposed rule changes to our public instruction system, as a parent and as a NM Level 3 certified teacher. I currently do not teach as I am a business owner, but as a professional teacher with the majority of my experience outside of New Mexico, I have very strong opinions on how this state has NOT been successful teaching our current students, COVID notwithstanding. Covid simply emphasized the issues and brought them into current discussion.

1. The new rule would require districts to provide 1140 hours of instruction AND a minimum of 180 days each school year. This is a change from legislation that allowed districts to count hours NOT days.

Hours should be the only item that matters here. Leave the scheduling of those hours to the local school district as they know the local needs better. Rural schools may need a 4 day school week to allow for budget flexibility for transportation or for travel time to other schools for sporting events so student athletes aren't missing too much instruction time. Local schools may want time for instructional planning for teachers!

2. The rule no longer allows the district to include professional development as a part of the required instructional hours. This means that we would most likely have to add additional days to the teaching contract to maintain professional development time provided through the collective bargaining agreement.

New Mexico as an entire state needs to promote professional learning communities for their education professionals. This requires time during their contract day to meet to align curriculum, standards, assessments, and learning activities that ensure students are learning what they need to! This collaboration leads to more successful students and better teaching and teachers! NM is in a school staffing crisis-hiring people who want to teach and expecting them to learn on the job while also taking courses to complete their teaching endorsements is going to burn out those who want to be doing the job. It takes a trained educator 5 years to become a good teacher-I'm not happy as a parent of a child who has untrained people leading their classes.

3. The rule will require that students are in school 5 days a week for at least 5.5 hours a day at the elementary and 6.5 at the secondary schools.

I don't have any issues with the time requirement here-local districts will have to figure out planning periods for elementary teachers-which is always difficult as in many districts specialists often have multiple schools to cover.

4. The rule requires secondary students to take 4 credit bearing classes each day (8 classes each week).

8 courses is a ridiculous number for a student to be held to, especially if they are taking more challenging AP or Honors courses. Perhaps allow for an unscheduled period or a "study hall" period for each advanced course a student is enrolled in? Staffing to cover periods that students currently are able to take as a free period will mean there aren't enough classrooms for those students, teachers will need to be hired, and additional classes will need to be developed as electives for these students.

5. High School students would not be allowed to take a free period.

Again, staffing costs are going to be ridiculous. Larger class sizes are NOT beneficial for students or teachers. While the rule states that work experience is allowed, again, what about those students who are taking advanced courses? Why can't they have free periods to allow them to keep up on homework-and sitting in a required study hall isn't a good solution. They may need to be accessing the library on campus or in town-or just taking time for themselves to avoid student burnout. That's right-32 credits means there is no time for a free period.

6. Students would complete a total of 32 credits. Current graduation requirements are for students to complete 24 credits.

8 more classes to graduate. 8 classes passed every year for 4 years. Will there be a higher expectation in math and science courses to a specific level, or will the state just make them take "electives" to fit this expectation? What about if a student fails a course and needs to repeat? Summer school isn't an option for many families as many students work to help with family finances! Will the Credit Recovery course count for both the failed class repeat as well as the "elective" course? Will the state fund modern school buildings for students to take these courses in, or will science teachers be teaching classes with no lab space? Will the cafeteria spaces become classrooms? How about gym space becoming open air classrooms. How about having PE every year? Mandating recess time for elementary students as that has shown to be more beneficial to them than more time in a classroom?

7. The rule change would go into effect for the 24/25 school year. The new calendar and class schedules would need to be finalized, approved, and submitted before the budget is submitted in April.

University course catalogs don't hold enrolled students to a new program standard once they are enrolled-these changes are begun with the incoming Freshman class. Why do you think you can hold K-12 students to this standard? Will our 2025 graduating seniors suddenly have to have 32 credits to graduate? When they have had free periods and "only" 7 class periods per year, there is NO WAY they can meet graduation requirements! This is an unreasonable time frame as districts will need to find qualified staff, figure out their budget and see what the state will be helping with, most likely have to create a new master schedule for each building, AND reconfigure bus transportation routes and times. Any of these changes makes for chaos, but all of them at once? Do you really hate the administrators and teachers working in NM so much you want them to burn out even more?

My last child will be a senior next year. If this is implemented, I will have to seriously consider sending him to live with family in another state to finish his high school education-or have him take the GED and enroll in the local community college his senior year. He wants to have free periods as he will be taking several AP courses and will need the time to work on them. He also considers many of his class options as a waste of time either because the

content is not relevant to him or the teacher teaching it is an "idiot" in his words. Having seen some of the content in some of these classes, he's not wrong. He also wants to enroll in distance learning courses for his chosen university to get a head start on core curriculum.

You all need to seriously think hard about the damage you are going to do to the relationships with New Mexico teachers, administrators, and most importantly, PARENTS if you attempt to implement this all next year. Phased implementation and educational cultural change is necessary before and during this proposal. Changing the rules just because you are in a position to do so does not mean you should do so!

Sincerely,
Gayle Cunningham
BS Elementary Education, MS Special Education
20+ year educator
Parent to 1 current NM student and 2 NM graduates

From: [T. Biehl](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to HB130: Concerns Regarding the Proposed Five-Day Instructional Week Mandate; NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:48:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am writing to express my deep concern and strong opposition to the proposal by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NM PED) under HB130 to impose a mandatory five-day instructional week for all state schools. This measure, seemingly aimed at increasing instructional time, raises serious issues regarding the appropriate democratic process and collaborative decision-making that should be inherent in shaping our education system. It is troubling that NM PED is taking a unilateral approach, effectively attempting to change the law without robust collaboration with schools, teachers, parents, and students. Education policies should be a product of shared input, reflecting diverse needs and preferences of the communities across the state. The proposal is shocking and shameful, as it lacks consultation with stakeholders, and undermines principles of inclusivity and collaboration that should be the foundation of the NM education system. NM PED's actions reinforce concerns that their focus is on dominance above partnership. Rather than working alongside educators, parents, and community leaders to identify the most effective strategies for improving outcomes, NM PED is seeking to dictate changes from the top-down. A one-size-fits-all approach, such as mandating a five-day instructional week- including at many of NM's top-performing schools and effectively changing their curriculum/ability to do business, does not consider the unique needs and successes of various educational models within the state. As evidenced by the performance of schools operating on a four-day week, the correlation between increased instructional time and improved academic outcomes is not as straightforward as the NM PED m suggests. It also drastically undermines NM's wonderful school-choice model and options- which is one of the pillars of our state system! NM PED's proposal is rooted in false data and conclusions that more days equals better outcomes- this is simply untrue. The proposal is unethical at best, illogical and ill-conceived- not to mention expensive to implement. Factor in the many families who will remove their students from the public education system and lost revenue- that expense increases.

It is my sincere hope that the NM PED reevaluates its strategy and engages in a more collaborative process that respects the diverse perspectives of those directly affected by these proposed changes.

Thank you, Tara Biehl

From: [Eleanor Russell](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:49:37 PM

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Hello,

My name is Eleanor Russell. My son, Jean-Jacques Callot, is a first-grader at Roots and Wings Community School in Taos County. As a working mom, I am unable to drive my child to and from school, and like most other Roots and Wings families we rely on a public bus. The proposed calendar requirements would penalize working families like myself, and I strongly reject the changes.

Thank you,
Eleanor Russell

From: [Miles Lessen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Commentary on rule change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:49:54 PM

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I recently reviewed the rule change being proposed by PED. Extending hours will NOT improve education in this state. All research shows this. Increased classroom time has no direct correlation with increased learning. Now, if the aim is to completely institutionalize youth, stripping them of freedom, creative down time, learning socialization skills by playing independently with friends, exploring their world on their own, and doing all the things required to achieve basic milestones allowing them to be contented and happy adults, then forcing students to stay in their cages longer makes perfect sense. School should not be daycare. I will homeschool before turning my child into an inmate.

Thank you,
Miles Lessen



405 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-242-6640

Erik Bose
ABQ Charter Academy
405 Dr. MLK Jr. Ave. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed rule on school calendars and instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke the aforementioned proposal. Calendar reform was just debated and passed in the 2023 legislature and the extended school year has only been implemented in our school for one semester. A compromise was reached on this legislation and was signed by the Governor. It seems as if the newness of the legislation and Department's lack of statutory authority to execute this rule as proposed, we request that PED revoke this proposed rule and allow time to see if the new and current process will see academic improvement.

State law clearly states that rule cannot trump statute: 14-4-5.7(A) "No rule is valid or enforceable if it conflicts with statute. A conflict between a rule and a statute is resolved in favor of the statute." Within the proposed rule, there seem to be new policies that lack statutory authority for PED to provide the mandates in the proposed rule:

a. Statute clearly allows for school districts to meet statutory hourly requirements without regard to school days. In fact, NMSA 22-2-8 only allows for the Secretary to waive minimum requirements associated with school hours in certain circumstances. Statute is silent on the length of school week except for language surrounding K-12 Plus funding (NMSA 22-8-23.14), which states that schools operating on a 4-day school week must have more than 156 school days to qualify for K12 Plus programming. This clearly provides for 4-day school weeks in law without any explicit authority for the secretary to mandate a length of the school week. The proposed rule oversteps New Mexico school law by prescribing more than 50% of weeks to be five-day weeks. Further, the proposed rule mandates that schools must have 180 days to qualify for K-12 Plus funding, which directly contradicts statute. It is essential to align the rule with statutory provisions on flexible scheduling for districts and charter schools. Revisiting the law to provide authority for the Secretary seems to be required to implement the change in policy.

b. The proposed rule introduces a maximum number of hours in a school day without explicit statutory authorization. It is imperative to identify the specific statutory provisions granting the Secretary the authority to establish such limits. Further, this section of the proposed rule would not apply to charter schools that exercise a nondiscretionary waiver associated with “Length of School Day” NMSA22-8B-5(c).

The proposed rule does not seem to recognize the diversity of school performance across the state regardless of the school calendar. We are on a 4-day calendar to maximize our time with students who have numerous outside of school concerns. We have students who are emancipated, 18 years old and living on their own, primary care givers, have medical issues that cause a need for a flexible schedule and have to work to make ends meet. Students will face unnecessary disruptions by having to modify their calendars without a clear evidenced based justification on why this change is needed now. It is imperative to acknowledge the success of existing calendar structures and avoid unnecessary changes that may adversely affect student outcomes.

Presently chronic absenteeism has hovered around 40% and the average New Mexico student misses 10.5 days of school. Our school has focused on and improved our attendance by utilizing a longer day and a 4-day week.

We urge PED to reconsider the proposed rule. We suggest you allow the newest changes to have to work. Then, using a researched based approach, study the results of the newest K-12+ initiatives and determine if further action is needed. This approach would provide the necessary clarity and allow for comprehensive, evidence-based data to address the diverse needs of our educational community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that the PED will carefully consider the implications of the proposed rule and collaborate with stakeholders to develop solutions that prioritize the best interests of our students and educators.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erik Bose', with a stylized, cursive script.

Erik Bose

Executive Director, ABQ Charter Academy

From: [Elizabeth Portillos](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:50:59 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello, I am deeply concerned about the many negative impacts that could result from the proposed changes to the school calendar requirements. Adding more hours and more classes will stress out and overwork many students and teachers instead of producing the desired effect of better education. I am a firm believer that people need rest, reduced stress, and time to play in order to be successful individuals. Mental health plays an extremely strong role in my family, and the families of many of my friends. For example, my high school sophomore is barely hanging on due to the helpfulness of his IEP team, and additional stresses are a big deal and often push him over the edge. In order to meet the goals of the proposed changes, high school block-scheduling would require 4 different classes a day instead of 3.5. This change would disallow him from having Academic Skills Lab at the end of every day, which is a class he desperately needs every day in order to catch up on work from his other classes since his anxiety does not allow him to do homework, and it's a class that gives him comfort and support and makes sure he is doing ok emotionally every day. He and I were both really looking forward to the free period(s) he will earn as a junior and senior because these times to breathe will really benefit him. I won't go into detail about how the proposed changes will affect elementary school kids, teacher planning, and budgets, because I know other people will be expressing these, but those impacts are in my heart as well. I am however strongly expressing my heartfelt opinion about some of the ways these changes will negatively impact my family. My middle child whom I mentioned above will likely not be able to continue with public school if the proposed changes are accepted, because his IEP team and I have already struggled over and over to make public school barely work for him as it is. Please consider our situation and those of families like ours. Thank you so much for listening.

Elizabeth (she/her)

From: [O Diaz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback for 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:59:57 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke the proposal as mentioned above.

I'm concerned that this ruling negatively impacts minorities and low income rural communities like my own the most.

The school my son attends is located in the Foothills of the Sangre de Cristo mountains at 8,200 ft. in northern Taos county, where we get a lot of snow. Most of students use public transportation to go to school and children walk nearly a mile from the bus stop to the school. When it snows heavily, the school switches to remote learning.

Delayed openings are not feasible for families since there is no bus scheduled at those times. With this ruling, parents would have to drive their children to school in unsafe driving conditions or miss mandatory school. Parents should not have to make this choice — especially in a state with high incidents of traffic mortality — in order to meet a state mandated quota.

To improve education outcomes we need to attract and retain talent. Increasing pay for teachers will go a long way in doing just that. Continuity and stability are the foundation of children's success at school.

Respectfully,

Odalys Diaz



12/15/2023

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke the aforementioned proposal. Calendar reform was only recently debated by the legislature and has been implemented in schools for six months. There was great debate on the calendar reform legislation in the 2023 legislative session. That debate led to compromise on legislation that was signed by the Governor. We acknowledge the department's commitment to enhancing educational outcomes. However, given the recency of the new legislation and Department's lack of statutory authority to execute this rule as proposed, we request that PED revoke this proposed rule and go through the legislative process to meet these requirements.

State law clearly states that rule cannot run further than statute: 14-4-5.7(A) "No rule is valid or enforceable if it conflicts with statute. A conflict between a rule and a statute is resolved in favor of the statute." Within the proposed rule, there are several new policies that lack statutory authority for PED to provide the mandates in the proposed rule:

a. Statute clearly allows for school districts to meet statutory hourly requirements without regard to school days. In fact, NMSA 22-2-8 only allows for the Secretary to waive minimum requirements associated with school hours in certain circumstances. It's unclear where the authority for a maximum number of hours is allowed in law. The law does not provide for the Secretary to make mandates in our analysis either. Statute is silent on the length of school week except for language surrounding K-12 Plus funding (NMSA 22-8-23.14), which states that schools operating on a 4-day school week must have more than 156 school days to qualify for K12 Plus programming. This clearly provides for 4-day school weeks in law without any explicit authority for the secretary to mandate a length of school week. The proposed rule oversteps New Mexico school law by prescribing more than 50% of weeks to be five-day weeks. Further, the proposed rule mandates that schools must have 180 days to qualify for K-12 Plus funding, which directly contradicts statute. It is essential to align the rule with statutory provisions on flexible scheduling for districts and charter schools. Revisiting the law to provide authority for the Secretary is necessary to implement the policy.

b. The proposed rule introduces a maximum number of hours in a school day without explicit statutory authorization. It is imperative to identify the specific statutory provisions granting the Secretary the authority to establish such limits. Further, this section of the proposed rule would

not apply to charter schools that exercise a non-discretionary waiver associated with “Length of School Day” NMSA22-8B-5(c).

c. The rule mandates a 30-minute lunch period, which directly contradicts the 20-minute lunch period stipulated in statute (NMSA 22-13c-10). It is crucial to adhere to statutory limitations and recognize the bounds of PED's authority in prescribing lunch periods.

Moreover, the mandated requirement that secondary students shall attend a minimum of four courses per day (6.10.5.8(A) in proposed rule) poses considerable challenges for credit recovery non-traditional high schools. The potential impact on charter schools, exempt from course requirements through non discretionary waivers, also raises concerns about equitable application across all educational institutions. Should the proposed rule go through, this would be an area in which the state's public charter schools are exempt through non-discretionary waivers NMSA 22-8B-5(c).

The proposed rule does not seem to recognize the diversity of school performance across the state regardless of school calendar. Some schools use Fridays to facilitate much needed professional development, while still offering OST enrichment and tutoring services to students. Students will face unnecessary disruptions by having to modify their calendars without a clear risk-based justification. It is imperative to acknowledge the success of existing calendar structures and avoid unnecessary changes that may adversely affect student outcomes.

Lastly, schools have been regularly calling for collaboration on the issue of attendance/chronic absenteeism. Presently chronic absenteeism has hovered around 40% and the average New Mexico student misses 10.5 days of school. A focus on changing the current status of student attendance, in conjunction with all education partners, would provide a more impactful change than further calendar change.

In light of these concerns, we urge the PED to reconsider the proposed rule and pursue calendar reform through the legislative process and focus on leading New Mexico's communities in getting our kids to school on a regular basis. This approach would provide the necessary statutory clarity and allow for comprehensive stakeholder engagement to address the diverse needs of our educational community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that the PED will carefully consider the implications of the proposed rule and work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop solutions that prioritize the best interests of our students and educators.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Dorado, Director
beth@gordonbernell.org 505-916-8625

From: [Sam Roy](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:04:57 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sam, and I am a 30-year-old Master's student in UNM's Special Education program and I am set to begin student teaching in Albuquerque schools this upcoming Fall 2024 semester. I write to express my concern, discontent, and opposition regarding the ongoing campaign to enact the proposed amendment 6.10.5 NMAC to New Mexico's school system to extend instructional hours, without community input & approval and without additional in-school support for instructional, administrative, and operations staff. I am extremely offput by this top-down bureaucratic nonsense and attempts to change rules and laws without the input & blessings of students and families. It is undemocratic, ignorant of students' needs, and will cause more harm than benefit.

Our entire nation is in an educational crisis, where instructors bear the brunt of increasing class sizes, stagnant pay, predatory loans, and inefficient and bloated educational & governmental bureaucracies, with the people of New Mexico even worse off than most of the nation in terms of educational success. Instead of simply forcing more school days onto us, we need revamped, needs-oriented approaches to staffing, operations, and policymaking, along with democratic processes to make decisions regarding support staff and school scheduling models. Changing law through community-exclusionary departmental rule is an abuse of power; circumventing the legislature for this is egregious and y'all should be ashamed. Remember the abysmal failures and policies of Susan Martinez & Hannah Skandera? That led to the Yazzie Martinez ruling? These attempts at forcing-through rule changes are making us feel like not much has changed since the ruling if y'all are still trying to enact policies for students, families, and educators without CENTERING, not just *considering*, their input.

These are the kinds of policies that are driving more and more educators out of the workforce, amidst an already-glaring understaffing crisis. Is your goal to burn out more educators and get them to quit? Because unfortunately that's what it feels like! You are **DIS**incentivizing new teachers like me who are soon to join the educational workforce. I am 2 years out from being a certified teacher, yet this undemocratic nonsense already dissuades me from looking for work in public schools, and I am already leaning towards seeking employment in charter or private schools, institutions with slightly more freedom and leeway to shape their operations compared to PED's demonstrably unjust systems. We need public schools and educational spaces shaped from the ground up, based on family, student, and educator needs and input -

NOT based on what will make more money for top-level admin and executives, and their partners-in-crime in the government. Y'all clearly don't know best, so let parents make decisions for the schools. Let students make decisions for the schools.

From 2016 to 2019 I worked in charter school operations & administrative management in the Bronx, NY, and am familiar with how inefficient, top-down, exclusionary educational bureaucracies function, and I pray that New Mexico can get itself together and actually work towards community-based, ground-up models of public education that prioritize the needs of disabled, poor, indigenous, Black, & Latine children. An Education Department trying to force through things like Amendment 6.10.5 does nothing to build trust among your constituents and students; in fact, it's turning people even more voraciously against you and threatening the already-fragile integrity of a failing system.

Sam Roy
ABQ, NM

From: [Michelle Madland](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] feedback from a teacher and a parent
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:11:54 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I'm fortunate to teach in New Mexico. I enjoy my District and the State.

I teach in 5 schools and all levels: elementary; middle school; high school.

My observations of my students with this year's current schedule change include:

-exhaustion and irritation with yet another schedule change - and downright anger at the possibility of extending the year even more. Starting with the necessary Covid schedule changes, a wildfire and now changes required by PED, we are all tired of the changes and the lack of continuity. Children thrive with consistency. Give us a chance to examine our current schedule, for at least a couple of years, before making another change. Let's get some data before we change schedules, yet again.

-my students are missing even more school than they did before this year's lengthened schedule. Parents are clearly thinking "well, it's a longer year, we'll pull them out of school for a few days - no harm done". Vacations are lasting longer.

-during the weeks/days off in our District - often during crucial weeks for athletics, music and other activities - parents who want their child to succeed in these activities are forced to stick around to support their child. Those students/families are not getting a break - leading to more illness (and thus more missed school) and less enthusiasm for school and activities. Some students are just quitting those activities. Our sports teams are weaker and so are our music groups. In my observation there is less participation and less enthusiasm. If the school year is lengthened yet again, I have no doubt our teams will suffer.

-students who are involved in extra-curricular activities are not able to take the week/long weekends off; they have to stick around bc the rest of the State and USA does not operate under this schedule. Parents/students are then taking leave at other times of the year - when the rest of the school is in session in an effort to "get our family break" - resulting in yet more absences.

-after each break in the schedule, we have to all get back in the groove. Students have to get back in the habit of waking up early and show up for a few days tired and lethargic. Teachers have to re-teach what was being taught before the break.

-due to the longer school year already - and shorter summer - many high school students will lose out opportunities to attend prestigious summer camps or get internships that are very important for college resumes.

-teachers - some of the best teachers in our District - are quitting earlier than planned. Those teachers who were "on the fence" about leaving their job before, have already made it clear that if more days/time are added to the schedule, they will quit. We already have a difficult time retaining quality teachers.

-many teachers are fatigued and are spending more time letting students watch movies, have parties, have social time in class - instead of teaching.

I do understand the education concerns here in New Mexico. But not every district has the same problems. I suggest that PED at least consider the District's scores/ratings/ - before forcing yet another change. Give districts some validity and check out how they're doing - before making a blanket decision that all schools must add yet even more time.

If one googles "the top 100 high schools in the nation", one will find that not one of those "top 100 schools" has as long of a school year as we currently have. Adding more time to our year will only compound the problems listed above.

Please also keep in mind: "more does not equal better"; "better equals better".

As a parent and a teacher, I definitely and firmly oppose this plan.

Michelle Rosette

From: [Victoria Vargas](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:13:17 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Victoria Vargas*

From: [TATE PLOHR](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:30:09 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am a Los Alamos High School student and I am appalled at even the notion of this rule change. These changes are unnecessary on top of the added school days this year. You have already added hours to our school year and now you want to add even more. You are also taking away half days from elementary schools. People already resent school enough, give the kids a break! They don't need more boring instructional time, they need to go outside!!! You are also requiring an extra class every year for secondary students and NO FREE PERIODS! This means that you take 32 credits in four years at high school and you need 24! You can theoretically fail every class in a year and still graduate! This encourages skipping and lack of participation rather than work ethic! If you just need a high school diploma, then why would you care about a few failed classes? This ALSO punishes the people who pass every class AND people who got credit in middle school!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Any person who thinks this rule is plausible is STUPID and DESERVES TO DIE!!! F [REDACTED]
OFF!!!!



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: madrum@email.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:31:04 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please do not force this rule change on us. Educators, Parents and Students are still trying to get used to the changes set forth by HB 130.

This rule change will not provide for Professional Developemt as prescribed by HB130.

This rule change does not account for Parent/Teacher Conferences.

The PED Secretary says that there has been no improvements due to HB 130, but they have only been in place for 4 months. The Secretary is not giving due process for HB 130 to be examined over the course of time.

The proposed rule change is not good for Teachers or Students.

Thank you.

Mike Anaya
Teacher/Parent

Sent using the mobile mail app

From: [Brittany Clemmer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:31:22 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

New Mexico PED,

As a NM citizen and a parent with four children currently in the New Mexico Public School System, I am writing to you in regards to the proposed NM Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements.

Education is incredibly important to me and my family. As a graduate of public schools myself and having many extended family members work in the public school systems, we have always done what we could to support the schools.

I am also well aware of where we stand in the country for our educational rankings. However, this proposed rule change is so far from the solution I'm flabbergasted that it would even be proposed.

If this legislation passes, it will be detrimental to the districts because they will lose so many teachers. At a time in this country when it is hard enough to find good teachers, we will literally be breaking the last straw and they will leave. I've watched our own district, desperate for teachers, hire completely unqualified individuals because there is no one else. In the last year and a half, among my four children, we have seen over half a dozen of their favorite teachers leave the school system for other jobs or retire. They are exhausted and fed up. It has been devastating to watch. When I ask why, their response is always the same, they love the kids but it's become too much. They can make a lot more money with a lot less stress in other jobs. I wouldn't stay either.

I don't believe this is the solution now or in a few years but approving this rule change and then turning around and asking administration to implement it within months is criminal.

Please don't throw out any more "studies" that show longer time in the classroom is the solution. It is not and you know it. Not one teacher I've ever discussed this with believes that to be the case. We need quality over quantity. Having exhausted and overworked administration, teachers, and students will not give you the results you're looking for. Families will resort to homeschooling or moving out of state and then it will become glorified babysitting.

I'm the first to admit that there is no simple solution but slapping this together and trying to pass it shows that you're not interested in solutions that will actually work. Instead, you'll simply be looking for something that "looks good on paper". There is no "one size fits all" solution and to require all of the districts to adhere to these new standards will only hurt the state as a whole. Each district knows what they need. Let them be creative in finding solutions.

Sincerely,

Brittany Carpenter

From: [Kari Putman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day Week Rule Change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:34:05 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

Hello, my name is Kari Putman and my daughter goes to school at Loving High School. We have loved the 4 day school week and have seen first hand how it has benefited our family and several other families in Loving, NM. We own a farm and ranch and my kids are very involved in 4-H and FFA. Having Friday off has given my daughter the opportunity to help on the farm and ranch more which they learn hands on life skills and helps provide alfalfa, wheat, Sudan, and beef to the community. My daughter has really thrived in this school schedule the last three years. I can't imagine going back to 5 day weeks nor do I think this will help her education. I feel like it would actually hurt her hands on education that she gets to be a part of now.

If this rule change is voted in, it ignores the whole democratic process. Our elected representatives voted in favor of the 4 day weeks almost a decade ago. It would be taking rights away from local communities who actually see first hand the benefits of the 4 day school weeks. I urge you and plead that you please keep the decision left to local elected representatives. Please do not vote in favor of the rule change. Thank you for your time,

Kari Putman

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Paula Paulik](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130 proposed rule 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:36:02 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Re: HB 130; proposed rule 6.10.5

Small districts, such as Cloudcroft Municipal Schools, benefit from a four day week. Not only do our scores and grades from NMPED prove that it benefits the children but it also proves that the teachers are doing their job. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs humans are incapable of learning if their basic needs are not met. Psychological needs, and safety and security are essential for the growth and development of any person's mind to learn. The first two levels come from family and home. Teachers are also expected to provide those needs in their classroom environment but there has to be a balance between both of them. A four day week balances the social interaction and family life. Families have more of an influence in a student's life than the social realm of the school. These are some of the benefits from having a four day week at school.

Some of the cons to going into a five day week would mean higher expenses to a tight budget that is already stretched out thin in small school districts. Utilities would increase due to having to use all the utilities one more day. Substitute teachers would have to be increased and needed more frequently since teachers would need to take off for important doctor visits. Unlike a four day week when teachers try to schedule their medical visits on the day that they have off. Substitute teachers are already difficult to find in a small district. There are days that we are told in advance that all substitute teachers are taken and we can not call in sick. Moving to a four day week would mean that small districts would lose teachers. We have a handful of teachers that don't mind getting paid less and having to drive farther out for an

extra day off. Instead they will gladly return to a five day week where they get paid more in the bigger districts. Another con that I see moving to a five day week is the attendance rate will significantly be affected because students will get burned out and teachers will need days off to have a balance of life and work.

If no other way exists for small districts then consider doing a year round school where days can be spread out but still allow 4 day weeks. It is better for our social emotional balance and the students not getting burnt out. Rest is essential for greater learning. No learning can be done with overworked, or stressed bodies and minds.

Sincerely,

Paula Paulik

Kindergarten Teacher

Cloudcroft Elementary Schools

575-601-4416 ext 321

www.cmsbears.org

From: [Alyssa Anaya](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:36:40 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To: Secretary Arsenio Romero and other members of the PED,

I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with the proposed rule change that would impose a 180- day school year. I would come up and make a public comment on Monday, December 18th, but interestingly enough those of us that teach in Albuquerque Public Schools still have to deliver instruction next week. I am fascinated by the fact that you have scheduled the meeting for public comment on an instructional day for the largest district in the state. One could infer that you don't really want public comment from the teachers that this rule change would affect.

I oppose this rule change for several reasons. First, educators have shouldered the increases of instructional and professional development hours implemented this school year, but we can't continue to do more with less support. Teachers improve and add to their practice through professional development. Expecting us to squeeze in professional development before or after school, give up weekends, or add days to our contract just to improve our practice is disrespectful, and unsupportive.

Second, In order to give students effective instruction, we need instructors in the classroom. Making unilateral changes to educators' working conditions without our input is a proven way to drive educators out of the profession.

Third, I look forward to summer vacation every year. Summer is a time for me to reconnect with my family and friends, and make up for the times I threw myself into my job, and was unable to be fully present in my relationships. This rule change will cut more into that quality time I look forward to each year, and will lead to a decrease in my moral and efficacy as an educator.

My fourth issue is that this rule does not account for Parent/Teacher Conferences. I am a firm believer that a child's education needs to be supported by both teachers and parents. Cutting out this time to connect and communicate with families is going to have a negative affect on student achievement.

Additionally, Our students are affected by chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. Staffing our schools for the whole child means that every preK-12 school has a specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) team—composed of licensed school social workers, licensed school psychologists, certified school counselors, licensed school nurses and other highly qualified personnel— who work with teachers and parents to address barriers to educational success, ensure positive conditions for learning, and help all students achieve academically and ultimately become productive citizens.

Finally, changing the law through rule is unacceptable and is an overstep of the executive branch. This is reminiscent of the tactics used by Gov. Susan Martinez and her Sec. of Ed. Hannah Skandera. This is a false solution to a complex problem. Students need more than additional seat time to succeed. If you really want to see an improvement in student achievement, reduce class sizes.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Anaya - Teacher/Parent

From: [Mary Choque](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:38:59 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

- Urgent considerations:
- Educators have shouldered the increases of instructional and professional development hours implemented this school year, but we can't continue to do more with less support.
- To give students effective instruction, we need instructors in the classroom. Making unilateral changes to educators' working conditions without our input is a proven way to drive educators out of the profession.
- This proposal is a disruption of educators' and students' lives.
- Adult learning = student learning. That's what the current law (HB 130) is based on. This PED proposal does not include Parent Teacher conferences or any time for adults to learn together and work together.
- Changing law through rule is unacceptable and is an overstep of the executive branch. This is reminiscent of the tactics used by Gov. Susan Martinez and her Sec. of Ed. Hannah Skandera.
- This is a false solution to a complex problem. Students need more than additional seat time to succeed.
- Our students are affected by chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. Staffing our schools for the whole child means that every preK-12 school has a specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) team—composed of licensed school social workers, licensed school psychologists, certified school counselors, licensed school nurses and other highly qualified personnel—who work with teachers and parents to address barriers to educational success, ensure positive conditions for learning, and help all students achieve academically and ultimately become productive citizens.

This bill does not include all the hours teachers spend with family engagement like Parent teacher conferences, open house, and also all the hours of professional development, collaboration, mentoring, not to mention the hours of other meetings such as SAT, FBA?BIP, Health & Wellness (attendance & behavioral issues) -- **all of which receive lip service** from NM PED but seem meaningless as far as teacher's time goes. Usually all these meetings are after school hours now that early release Wednesdays are gone. Teachers put in long hours. More days are more long hours for no extra pay.

10 extra days were added and only 2 of those are when students are present the other 8 went to PD for teachers this past year. Teachers have a Bachelor's and many have a Master's degree, they have taken or are taking LETRS, on top of all the new PD. **Teacher training must be counted since it is for the student's benefit.**

The extra days have not improved attendance nor test scores apparently. There are just more days for students to be absent.

The biggest question is where and when will there ever be any parent accountability? Attendance (especially in elementary school), tardiness, lack of doing homework, coming to school tired, and many other factors out of teacher's control lead to poor student performance (academic, behavioral, attendance, tardiness, etc.).

When will NM PED engage in best practices? Research has shown that smaller class sizes reduce behavioral problems, allows for more individual attention which will improve academic performance, allows more time for SEL, more relationships before rigor, more of a student teacher rapport, etc., all of which receive lip service. Our school has empty classrooms so please do not use lack of space as an excuse -- and portables are brought in when needed. No it must be the teacher shortage and sub shortage that will only get worse with this type of dictator behavior -- just dictating to teachers (without teacher input) that this is how it will be. Gee, wonder why there is such a teacher shortage? Make the year longer, take away early release Wednesdays (so meetings happen on teachers' personal time without pay), few and far in-between pay raises -- and then there is a mass exodus from teaching. Wow, that is where it is headed like a train wreck.

Respectfully,
Mary Kay Choque
mkchoque@yahoo.com



December 15, 2023

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform

Dear Secretary Romero,

I write to you to share my concerns regarding the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke the aforementioned proposal. The legislature only recently debated calendar reform and has been implemented in schools for six months. There was great debate on the calendar reform legislation in the 2023 legislative session. That debate led to compromise on legislation that was signed by the Governor. I acknowledge and support the PED's commitment to improving our educational outcomes. However, given the recency of the new legislation and Department's lack of statutory authority to execute this rule as proposed, I request that PED revoke this proposed rule and go through the legislative process to meet these requirements. I've learned that NM law clearly states that rule cannot run further than statute: 14-4-5.7(A) "No rule is valid or enforceable if it conflicts with statute. A conflict between a rule and a statute is resolved in favor of the statute." Within the proposed rule, there are several new policies that lack statutory authority for PED to provide the mandates in the proposed rule:

a. Statute clearly allows for school districts to meet statutory hourly requirements without regard to school days. In fact, NMSA 22-2-8 only allows for the Secretary to waive minimum requirements associated with school hours in certain circumstances. It's unclear where the authority for a maximum number of hours is allowed in law. The law does not provide for the Secretary to make mandates in further analysis either. Statute is silent on the length of school week except for language surrounding K-12 Plus funding (NMSA 22-8-23.14), which states that schools operating on a 4-day school week must have more than 156 school days to qualify for K12 Plus programming. This clearly provides for 4-day school weeks in law without any explicit authority for the secretary to mandate a length of school week. The proposed rule oversteps New Mexico school law by prescribing more than 50% of weeks to be five-day weeks. Moreover, the proposed rule mandates that schools must have 180 days to qualify for K-12 Plus funding, which directly contradicts statute. It is vital to align the rule with statutory provisions on flexible scheduling for districts and charter schools. Revisiting the law to provide authority for the Secretary is necessary to implement the policy.

b. The proposed rule introduces a maximum number of hours in a school day without explicit statutory authorization. It is imperative to identify the specific statutory provisions granting the Secretary the authority to establish such limits. Further, this section of the proposed rule would not apply to charter schools that exercise a nondiscretionary waiver associated with "Length of School Day" NMSA22-8B-5(c).

The rule that most egregiously affects ABHS students is the mandated requirement that secondary students shall attend a minimum of four courses per day (6.10.5.8(A) in proposed rule) poses considerable challenges for dual credit high schools. The potential impact on many charter schools, exempt from course requirements through non discretionary waivers, also raises concerns about equitable application across all educational institutions. Should the proposed rule go through, this would be an area in which the state's public charter schools are exempt through non-discretionary waivers NMSA 22-8B-5(c).

Given these concerns, I respectfully request the PED to reconsider the proposed rule and pursue calendar reform through the legislative process and focus on leading New Mexico's communities in getting our kids to school on a regular basis. This approach would provide the necessary statutory clarity and allow for comprehensive stakeholder engagement to address the diverse needs of our educational community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that the PED will carefully consider the implications of the proposed rule and work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop solutions that prioritize the best interests of our students and educators.

With warm regards and enduring respect for all the balancing you must have to do,

Stephanie Graham Becker, PhD
Executive Director/Principal



530 Jefferson Street NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87108
505.262.2657, fax 505.266.1967

ELLEN BERNSTEIN
PRESIDENT

December 15, 2023

Policy Division, New Mexico Public Education Department, Room 101
300 Don Gaspar Avenue,
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Re: “6.10.5 NMAC, Instructional Time Requirements” and “6.19.4 NMAC, Accreditation Procedures”

The Albuquerque Teachers Federation is submitting this letter in strong opposition to the proposed revisions to the New Mexico Public Schools Instructional Time Requirements and the proposed Accreditation Procedures.

Many comments from stakeholders, both written and oral, will cover the legal reasons the PED cannot circumvent law, the premature disruption to schooling in our state and the negative consequences we all anticipate if the PED imposes these rules.

These are crucial considerations.

Equally important is my focus today: The impact of breaking trust with your dedicated workforce.

A school accreditation process that takes away local control and puts it in the hands of a revolving door of education secretaries is short-sighted, unnecessarily burdensome and, frankly, an insult to our communities — to say nothing of the fact that it subjects schools across our state to political whims, leaving everything up to and including school consolidations and closures to one person that each district must hope to satisfy. School boards, voted on by the communities they serve, are correctly tasked with those decisions, and held accountable for how they carry them out.

We need only look at the proposed rule on Instructional to see how alarming it is for one agency to have to power to change law. The proposed rule does nothing less than ignore HB 130, passed last year after much discussion and compromise. It makes for a great sound bite to say, “more instructional days” the reality, however, is that negative consequences to students and staff are all but assured if the PED imposes these rules.

My comments today will focus on the impact of breaking trust with your dedicated work force punctuated by a few quotes from opposition letters educators have sent to you.

The posted mission statement of the PED reads as follows:

Equity, Excellence and Relevance

The New Mexico Public Education Department partners with educators, communities, and families to ensure that ALL students are healthy, secure in their identity, and holistically prepared for college, career, and life.

Exercising unilateral control over public schools, changing laws passed by the legislature, or micromanagement of school districts are not mentioned as a part of this mission statement.

What is mentioned in this mission statement is the word partner. We take that word seriously.

Partners are equals, working toward mutual interests. A TRUE partnership means that we can rely on each other to set a common course for our work. True partners listen to those with whom they are working and know that their voices are being heard. True partners work to reach consensus when making important decisions.

Our commitment as partners is to promote our student's learning and well-being. To achieve this, we need the dedicated, hardworking educators who guide our students every day. The greatest hindrance to providing quality instruction is a lack of instructors. We are facing shortages of educators across our state. A major part of our commitment as partners has been — and must continue to be — the recruitment and retention of the best-prepared and the most-qualified educators. The primary factor that drives educators from our profession is lack of teacher efficacy, the failure to listen to the practitioners' voices when implementing change.

Over the past 5 years, we have kept lines of communication open and worked together toward an educator ecosystem that, as stated in your department's strategic plan, "begins the long road of transforming education to meet the needs of New Mexico's most underserved students. Since the education system is reliant on its educators, this includes significant professional development on culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy, antibias work, meeting the unique needs of students with disabilities, and supporting the behavioral needs of all students."

Yet, as our partner, you break trust by unilaterally taking away the time for the professional development codified in HB 130 and to which you pledged your support. Educators need adult time to collaborate, plan, and perform the myriad tasks it takes to meet the needs of our diverse students.

Furthermore, the prohibition of acknowledging parent-teacher conferences as instructional time undermines our efforts to fully engage parents and the community. This is valuable time

educators use to collaborate with parents and guardians to differentiate for students' individual needs.

I am elected to represent the 6,400 educators in the Albuquerque Public school who have devoted their professional lives to the education and well-being of our over 70,000 students.

Here is what a few of my constituents have to say:

An Elementary teacher:

Extending the year will only magnify the problems caused by large class sizes, a lack of subs and other support staff, behavior concerns, minimal resources, and inadequate buildings. This will cause both teachers and students to burn out.

A School Psychologist

The best way to improve test scores and student achievement is by meeting student needs. This includes social and emotional learning and enrichment. When students first have basic needs met and are happy, then they can learn.

An Elementary teacher:

I implore you to engage in open and transparent dialogue with educators at all levels to collectively chart a course towards a future where passion for teaching thrives and the needs of both students and educators are placed at the forefront of our educational system.

An Elementary teacher:

To make changes to working conditions without any of our input is a fantastic way to drive instructors right out of the profession.

A School Counselor:

Smaller class sizes and decreasing workloads for educators by providing more support would make a difference in students' education.

A HS Special Education teacher:

Adding days to our school year is not the answer to our problems. We need good teachers in the classroom which means you need to listen to the teachers. Every decision you make is making more and more good teachers leave the profession. I don't know how much more I can give with your constant changes and unrealistic expectations.

An Elementary Teacher

We need fully staffed schools, instead of classes being taught by long-term substitutes. This rule you are proposing will not encourage more people to become teachers or help keep good, passionate teachers in the classroom.

A HS Teacher

As a longtime teacher, I feel that my experience and knowledge is completely ignored. I wonder if I should not continue to work in a profession where I am not valued or trusted by my employer. I urge PED to listen to their best asset, which is their educators, before it is lost.

A HS Teacher

Parents and families need more support. Our communities are struggling, and we need to convince parents and children of the value of school again. They have lost faith. That is a bigger problem that cannot be solved with more instructional days our kids don't go to. I feel disrespected and unappreciated by this proposal.

The way to recruit and retain is respect.

Listening to the voices of professionals who ultimately, as the professionals working with our students every day, are the most accountable people in the whole educational system is the first step. The proposal is the exact opposite direction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ellen Bernstein".

Dr. Ellen Bernstein, President Albuquerque Teachers Federation

From: [Ben Choque](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:03:50 PM

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- Educators have shouldered the increases of instructional and professional development hours implemented this school year, but we can't continue to do more with less support.
- To give students effective instruction, we need instructors in the classroom. Making unilateral changes to educators' working conditions without our input is a proven way to drive educators out of the profession.
- This proposal is a disruption of educators' and students' lives.
- Adult learning = student learning. That's what the current law (HB 130) is based on. This PED proposal does not include Parent Teacher conferences or any time for adults to learn together and work together.
- Changing law through rule is unacceptable and is an overstep of the executive branch. This is reminiscent of the tactics used by Gov. Susan Martinez and her Sec. of Ed. Hannah Skandera.
- This is a false solution to a complex problem. Students need more than additional seat time to succeed.
- Our students are affected by chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. Staffing our schools for the whole child means that every preK-12 school has a specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) team—composed of licensed school social workers, licensed school psychologists, certified school counselors, licensed school nurses and other highly qualified personnel—who work with teachers and parents to address barriers to educational success, ensure positive conditions for learning, and help all students achieve academically and ultimately become productive citizens.

Too many families treat the public school system like a free day care instead of the educational system it is for children. The longer school year and no early release Wednesdays (for teachers to have meetings with families, SAT, FBA/BIP, Health & Wellness, etc.) is all for families' convenience and not necessarily what is best for family engagement or students.

When will parents be held accountable for their responsibilities to their children? Such as taking children to school on time, not taking vacations during the school year, completing make up work with extended absences, and doing homework. Homework would really help with test scores and improving the standardized testing but families do not want to do homework with students.

Teachers are already overworked and underpaid. My mom is a teacher, I know how much she works after hours.

Ben Choque

From: [Antonio Jaurigue](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Los Alamos School Board Opposes Rules Change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:07:36 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

New Mexico Public Education Department,

We, the Los Alamos Public School Board, are writing this letter to express our opposition to the recent proposed rules changes. The proposed changes to Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC [School Instructional Time Requirements] would have detrimental effects for most districts throughout New Mexico. There are some foundational issues with this rule change that pertain to the communication, and potential implementation process, but there are also logistical issues that will impact how Los Alamos operates.

As for the communication on this proposed rules change, we are disheartened at the lack of explanation on what this change is aimed at addressing and a lack of any supporting data or argumentation. If this were to support a greater initiative, or supported by data that this change will likely improve our education system, that information has not been communicated. This results in this initiative seeming like a knee-jerk reaction to unrealized fears. Furthermore, we have not seen an effort to gather feedback on how this program would impact us. This is the case with other districts we are in contact with. The lack of feedback will lead to a poorly thought out end-product and will hurt majority districts in New Mexico.

The local impacts are something we can not stand by and allow without strong opposition. It is noted that there is no definition to what a "class period" constitutes, even though the rules change mandates 4 class periods per day. Depending on how PED decides to define this, Los Alamos could see a dramatic change to the daily schedule layout for secondary school students.

Los Alamos is also responsible for adhering to the Collective Bargaining Agreement that was established in 2023. With the proposed rule change, Los Alamos would not be able to adhere to the CBA without extensive re-negotiation that could result in further hardships to the district. A large part of the CBA involves Educator Professional Development. This has been built into our current calendar, which will not be possible within the new requirements.

There is also a lack of understanding on how the 4 periods a day supports the benefits of the reduced credit hour requirement from the previous legislative session. Under this rules change a student would reach 32 credit hours by the end of senior year, but the graduation requirements from the legislature are 24 credit hours. This has been a benefit to many students throughout the state that are at or near the end of their school career and use the time to begin future progress such as trade schools, college credits, military preparation, etc..

We also are in the beginning stages of gathering data from the drastic calendar changes that were implemented due to HB130. The calendar changes were a shock to everyone and we deserve the opportunity to assess the impact of the changes and whether or not there is opportunity for improvement and where. This action is against every tenet we have learned while supporting education. Change takes time, and in that time, we assess and verify whether the change brought value or if it requires refinement. This rapid deviation from the legislative change is the antithesis of this ideal.

Finally, these changes would undoubtedly increase the financial obligation for every district that needs to pay for the educators to increase their contact time. It would increase the lunch program costs, transportation costs, and various other program costs. There are a lot of unanswered questions around this funding that our district will be unable to meet if this rule is changed.

Thank you for your consideration,

Antonio R. Jaurigue
Los Alamos Public School Board President

Ellen Specter
Los Alamos Public School Board Vice President

Christine Bernstein
Los Alamos Public School Board Secretary

Melanie Colgan
Los Alamos Public School Board Member

Sondra Wyman
Los Alamos Public School Board Member

Lauren Coupland,
Los Alamos Public School Board Member Elect

**“A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they
shall never sit.” — Anonymous Greek Proverb**



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [R and S Bent](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Instructional Time Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:27:21 PM

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I am a parent of two children in the Los Alamos school district, as well as an Albuquerque employee (UNM Hospital). I have also previously lived in Santa Fe. I oppose the school instructional time requirement proposed changes.

I think the new proposal is just... crazy. I understand that New Mexico is looking at some really bad educational statistics (much as we are in healthcare) but you can't just legislate us all to DO MORE for the losses we all experienced due to COVID. I've watched over the past year as staff have left my local school system (a good one, mind you, w high schores and low student poverty.) If staff are leaving en masse from LAPS, I can't imagine what they are doing elsewhere. If shorter school weeks help recruit and retain staff in more rural areas, then so be it.

As the parent of two HS students (9th, 11th), my students already take 7 classes. Due to block scheduling, they attend 4 classes a day, and our district interprets the proposal to mean they would have to take 8 classes instead of 7. It is more executive function stress to keep up with 8, diluting the content of what they already take. Why? to what end? When I was in high school (an all magnet public school, mind you, 96% of us went to college), I took SIX courses. The one thing I can support in this is to not have a free period, unless it's a kid who is doing an extra year to graduate or something. We can all learn- financial literacy, auto mechanics, baking, whatever. That said, I support this as someone who lives in a county that's ten miles wide. Maybe for a kid in a rural area that travels 2h to school, a free 1st period makes sense? That's why these decisions need to stay local.

We have political divides because people keep applying coastal solutions to rural states. Stop and consider where we are. Stop and consider the destruction COVID did to us (I'm a raging liberal Democrat, educated in the northeast, who works in healthcare, I didn't oppose closures, but I recognize that all decisions have consequences...). Don't contribute to the ongoing exodus of educational staff (ask us in healthcare, it sucks, and a warm body with a license isn't the same as someone with years of experience and institutional knowledge). We already had so much upheaval in our community with the calendar changes of last year, that it caused more divisions in our community. Please don't adopt these changes too.

Sabrina Parks Bent
Los Alamos

December 18, 2023

Dr. Arsenio Romero
Cabinet Secretary
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Secretary Romero,

NewMexicoKidsCAN would like to express our support and provide feedback for the proposed rule change to 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar, by the New Mexico Public Education Department. The state of education in New Mexico demands urgent action, and we believe this rule change is a crucial step towards improving student outcomes for New Mexico students.

New Mexico is currently in an education crisis, evident in every measure of academic outcomes. The 2021 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exam revealed New Mexico ranked 50th in every category for the first time in the history of the NAEP being administered.. Recent data from the 2023 statewide assessment also reveals only 38% of New Mexico students are reading at grade level, and a mere 24% perform at grade level in mathematics. Additionally, New Mexico's average SAT score of 901 is 127 points below the national average of 1028, as reported by CollegeBoard's 2023 September Report.

The proposal to amend the school calendar and increase instructional time aligns with the urgency of the educational crisis in New Mexico. There is also no supporting data indicating that four-day school weeks lead to improved student outcomes. In fact, a [2023 study by Annenberg Brown University](#) suggests that such schedules may even have negative effects on student achievement, with a decline in math and reading performance from fall to spring.

The study highlights racial and gender disparities among students in schools operating on a four-day week. In particular, female students have a greater decline in math and reading performance compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, Hispanic students experience greater negative effects on math gains compared to their White peers under a four-day school week. The study also revealed that the decline in performance from fall to spring is also more pronounced in reading. With over half of New Mexico students reading below grade level, these declines pose significant risk.

While we support the proposed rule change, we also acknowledge there are high-performing schools in New Mexico successfully operating on a four-day school week. In light of this, we propose that schools and districts with **significantly higher academic performance** than the state average should be granted the autonomy to choose their schedule.



We are at a pivotal point in New Mexico history. Our students are counting on us to help them succeed. An increase in high-quality instructional time can help rewrite the history of academic achievement in New Mexico. Our students deserve better than last place and it is up to us to put them on a path to success. We applaud the New Mexico Public Education Department for their dedication to addressing the educational challenges of our state and trust that careful consideration of this rule change will pave the way for improved student outcomes in New Mexico.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda R. Aragón". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Amanda" being the most prominent part.

Amanda R. Aragón
Executive Director

From: [Antonio Jaurigue](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns and Questions Regarding Proposed Rules Change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:42:02 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I would first like to thank you, and whoever else may read this for the work you do. It is thankless, I'm sure, but very important work.

I am currently the Los Alamos School Board President and I am writing to express my concerns around the proposed rules change to Rule 6.10.5 [School Calendar Requirements]. With the proposed changes there are a lot of unanswered questions that do not seem to have an easy, or readily apparent answer.

There are some major disparities between the legal requirement and the proposed rules change. Speaking only for Los Alamos, because i'm not intimately familiar with other districts' operations, we will struggle meeting out Collective Bargaining Agreement obligations surrounding teacher PD time. There is also a major hurdle surrounding the class schedule at all levels of our district. Currently our school utilizes an A/B schedule with the 4th period being .5 of a class. This is something we are unclear on how to handle given the new proposed changes.

There is also a problem with funding, we don't have an answer on whether or not there will be SEG adjustments to ensure the added days of breakfast/lunch, transportation, as well as other operational costs.

The final point I will bring up is the lack of communication on why this change is so sudden and needed. If there was a logical argument made that relied on data to show how this will improve student achievement, i would be more willing to consider it. But from where I stand, kids are getting burnt out already, with a currently underfunded, understaffed workforce. This is a big heavy task to ask our threadbare schools to perform. At the end of the day, it will be the students who suffer, because teachers can move or change professions, but the kids can't.

There are many more issues, or potential issues, that I could raise, but I just want to highlight some of the most pressing concerns that have been on my mind.

Thank you for your time, and I hope you reconsider the rules change,
Antonio R. Jaurigue
LAPS School Board President

**“A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they
shall never sit.” — Anonymous Greek Proverb**

This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Juli Miller](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:42:12 PM

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Hello,

To put it simply, if this passes, my family will either 1. Move out of New Mexico or 2. Homeschool. I have been very disappointed with NM Ped since 2020. It has hurt my children's' education and mental health. Yes, NM is 51st in education, but why aren't we using the data that is out there that more school and longer days do not equate improvement?!? Why are we grasping at practices that have been proven to not be best practices. Let's look to the states that are doing education better.

We live in Los Alamos. Our schools are typically always ranked as the best in New Mexico. But, a lot of this stems from attracting the best teaching staff. We are having teachers leave in droves as to policy changes such as this that are burning them out and not supporting them in their number one goal, to educate our children.

Thanks!
Juli Miller

From: [Ty tech](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:42:24 PM

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What is so wrong about a 4-day school week that it can't even be an option for anyone?

This message is in regards to the proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) mandating a 5-day school week. My children attend Alice King Community School (AKCS), which has a 4-day school week. This is a better fit for our children and family. As attending AKCS is optional, those who prefer a 5-day school week attend other schools.

One of my children has dyslexia and already hates school in 2nd and 3rd grade (way too young to experience that). From our own experience and much research, the evidence clearly indicates that for my son to be successful in school, he needs dyslexia therapy from a certified academic language therapist (CALT). He will never receive all the help he needs in public school. We have hired a CALT who meets with my son one on one for 4 hours a week outside of school time. We've seen miraculous progress in 4 months, which has also been noticed by staff at his school.

The recent change over the summer requiring more time in class had a negative impact for us. This negative impact will be further compounded if we're forced into a 5-day school week. When is an 8 year old supposed to get a break when he's in school longer hours and more days? Ironically, the help he needs most is outside of school. We can provide him that help, but not when the PED and/or state diminish our time capacity to do so.

I've seen multiple claims about how the additional time in class and the frequency in class is always better. This is NOT true for my family and I know we're not alone. What is so wrong about a 4-day school week that it can't even be an option for anyone?

From: [Bridget Wolf](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:46:53 PM

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Dear NMPED,

I am a parent of twins who are in high school. More class time is going to hurt them emotionally. I reject the proposed plan.

I understand you are trying to rank higher in education among the other states. The best thing I believe that you can do is to improve the school environment by making it super positive, exciting, and creative. Keep the kids curious, grow their love for learning, feed their academic and vocational passions. This can be done with less time in the classroom and more time for after school vocational and recreational activities. All of this requires listening. Please listen, and put your big plan aside. What are you hearing from the students, teachers and parents? They are the voices you need to hear and create policy from if you are going to win. If you push through this plan without the support of parents, teachers, and students, you will fail us. We need you to do the right thing.

Thank you,
Bridget Wolf

From: guffee@att.net
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:48:41 PM

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I am a parent of three students that have each attended Los Alamos Public Schools, grades K - 12. Two have graduated and one is a HS Senior. I fully support the expeditious implementation of the new rule. This is something that should have been implemented 20 years ago. More instructional hours, more class days, more class hours, and more credit bearing courses.

Best regards,
Ray M. Guffee
413 Maple Drive
Los Alamos, NM 87544

From: Jennifer Guy <j.guy@laschools.net>
Sent: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:20 AM
Subject: PED Change to school hours

I hope you are enjoying the last few days of the semester. Thank you for your patience with the weather over the last few days.

I am writing to make sure that you are aware of an important rule change that the NM Public Education Department is proposing that would impact Los Alamos Public Schools. The NMPED has provided notice that they are taking public comment on a proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements until Monday, December 18 at 5:00.

This rule has several changes that will impact our schools.

1. The new rule would require districts to provide 1140 hours of instruction AND a minimum of 180 days each school year. This is a change from legislation that allowed districts to count hours NOT days.
2. The rule no longer allows the district to include professional development as a part of the required instructional hours. This means that we would most likely have to add additional days to the teaching contract to maintain professional development time provided through the collective bargaining agreement.
3. The rule will require that students are in school 5 days a week for at least 5.5 hours a day at the elementary and 6.5 at the secondary schools. This would eliminate the ability to have early release Wednesdays for elementary teacher planning and prep. We would have to consider releasing elementary students earlier each day to meet teacher planning requirements. We are still learning how this would impact advisement and testing days at the secondary level.
4. The rule requires secondary students to take 4 credit bearing classes each day (8 classes each week). Currently, LAPS secondary schools use a block

schedule that has 3.5 classes each day for a total of 7 classes a week. This means that we will have to change the master schedules at LAHS and LAMS.

5. High School students would not be allowed to take a free period. This means that we would need to add additional classes, teachers, or have larger class sizes to ensure all students are placed in 4 credit bearing courses each day.
6. LAHS students would complete a total of 32 credits. Graduation requirements are for students to complete 24 credits.
7. The rule change would go into effect for the 24/25 school year. The new calendar and class schedules would need to be finalized, approved, and submitted before the budget is submitted in April.

As a school district, we are concerned about the sudden change in requirements. We are also deeply concerned that the rule would be at odds with the law. We believe that this rule has unintended consequences that will limit critical staff planning time and be disruptive to our secondary schools. Although we are still working to understand the overall impact of this rule change, we believe that NMPED is failing to give districts adequate time to prepare for this unexpected change that dramatically impacts our students, teachers, and families.

AFT-Los Alamos, the LAPS School Board, and the LAPS administration are in agreement that we do NOT support the adoption of the proposed rule change.

What can you do to share your opinion?

1. Read the proposed rule, [linked here](#).
2. Write an e-mail with your comments about the proposed rule and send them to: rule.feedback@ped.nm.gov, referencing *NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"* in the subject line. Any comments must be submitted by 5:00pm on Monday, December 18th.

We will update you as soon as we know more. As always, we value all opinions on this issue and understand that others may have a different opinion than the concerns outlined here. We encourage everyone to evaluate the rule and feel comfortable with sharing their own thoughts either in support of or in opposition of the rule.

Jennifer Guy

Superintendent

Los Alamos Public Schools



Los Alamos Public Schools would like to continue connecting with you via email. If you prefer to be removed from our list, please contact Los Alamos Public Schools directly. To stop receiving all email messages distributed through our SchoolMessenger service, follow this link and confirm:
[Unsubscribe](#)

SchoolMessenger is a notification service used by the nation's leading school systems to connect with parents, students and staff through voice, SMS text, email, and social media.

From: [MAIRA FINN](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:57:46 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

My name is Maira Finn, and I am a freshman student at Los Alamos High School. I am emailing about concerns with the new proposed rule for School Calendar Requirements, which include things such as requiring 8 credit-bearing classes, elimination of high school free periods, and increasing the amount of hours in the school calendar.

As a high school student, I have concerns about multiple aspects of this new rule. First of all, adding additional classes would severely mess up the schedules, as my school has 7 classes, as well as many other schools, as far as I know. Adding an additional class would increase the workload upon students, and even if it is just a little bit, it could be further damaging to student's mental health. According to the document "State of Mental Health in New Mexico" by the New Mexico Department of Health: "The majority of high school students (72.1%) did not sleep eight or more hours per night in 2019. This was associated with increased risk for suicide attempts as well as feelings of sadness and hopelessness." Increasing the workload on students would only cause these numbers to increase, leading to more stress, depression and suicide rates in New Mexico. New Mexico has the fourth-highest suicide rates in the nation. You wouldn't want those to increase, would you?

Secondly, I want to address no longer allowing free periods. I am a freshman, so I have not had the opportunity for any free periods yet. But from what I have heard from juniors and seniors, they are a beneficial time to study for classes and take a break. Taking these away and replacing them with more classes would do more harm than good. Referencing the data on mental health in New Mexico, this would only add more stress onto students.

As a high school student, I already experience a lot of stress, anxiety, and depression in school. I hope that whoever is reading this email right now can think about this rule that they are about to pass. Think not only about the teachers and school staff, but the students themselves. What good would increasing stress in an already stress-filled environment do?

Sincerely,
Maira Finn

Sources:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gpN8ZBRSGBW9xsBYZwAE5dfG8UzTgi4Q/view?link_id=6&can_id=b00b9552a644fdf434779e0a5bf414be&source=email-speak-out-ped-initiates-rulemaking-for-longer-school-years-2&email_referrer=email_2142745&email_subject=icymi-ped-initiates-rulemaking-for-longer-school-years
<https://www.nmhealth.org/data/view/report/2650/>
<https://www.nmhealth.org/news/information/2021/12/?view=1739#:~:text=About%20half%20of%20individuals%20who,in%20both%202020%20and%202019.>



This email has been sent from a verified [laschools.net](https://www.laschools.net) user.

From: [Jennifer Schmierer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please make well thought out decisions
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:40:13 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear PED,

Please take the time to make well thought out decisions regarding our children's education. Continually throwing huge changes at schools without the time to prepare and plan is problematic for Students, Families, and Teachers. As a Teacher, I want to do a good job and provide a solid education for my students. Strange schedules, not being able to plan, and stressed out admin and staff is just too much. I am a 16 year teacher and have started looking for different employment. We are tough, but quick decisions that are not research based and haphazard implementation drives teachers and staff away when we are already short staffed.

Please consider rejecting this plan in favor of something well thought out and research based. Give us a chance to make a difference with positive changes.

Thank You

Jen Schmierer
School Counselor (for 16 years)
Los Alamos Public Schools

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [Steve Lloyd](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:41:48 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I just read the proposed rule change. Then I did a little math.

1140 hours instruction per year 180 instruction days per year
 $1140/180=6$ and $1/3$ hours of instruction per instruction day
[but, instruction days only need 5 and $1/2$ hours of instruction]
totals 7 and $1/6$ hours of school per day
add $1/2$ hour for lunch
add $1/3$ hour for lunch passing

Not bad, gets the kids used to something like an 8 hour work day. Then I did some more math.

180 instruction days per year
add 5 spring break days
add 10 Christmas break days
add 5 Thanksgiving break days
add a few other days
totals ~200 days per year; 40, 5-day weeks per year

That is over half the year that the school system manages my child's life. Stop, don't dig this hole any deeper.

Very little of the proposed rule change is backed up by education science. Three years ago you had us follow the science down the rat hole of remote learning, only to find out that the medical science was very flawed and the education science for remote learning has yet to be developed at a broad level.

Changing this rule on short notice is a very bad idea, don't do it!

From: [Ramon Gonzalez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback:6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:51:19 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

This email is stating that in Loving NM we need to keep the 4-day school week.

There are many benefits to the 4-day school week. Financially our schools have benefited by having more money to put towards student programming.

Mentally students do better with the extra time. Giving them more time to be kids. They also have more family time. But the most important benefit is the attendance, kids doctors appointments can be made on the day off instead of during school time. Being in Loving, when our kids miss for a doctors appointment, they don't come back to school because town is too far away.

This town has benefited greatly from the 4-day school week. There is more benefits than I can think of just to put in this email.

Please keep our kids mental health at the top of your list when considering this change.

Ramon Gonzalez

8325475032 or riraruke@icloud.com

From: [AJ Rascon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: AFTNMACTION@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:56:15 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear PED,

I am writing to you to voice my opposition to the proposed changes of HB 130.

Adding more instructional days is NOT the answer to the issues public schools across New Mexico are facing. In fact, I believe this would have far reaching negative impacts particularly in regard to the retention of teachers. Schools are still adjusting, some with significant difficulty, to the changes that were made just this year. Forcing more days onto school systems and having to go back to square one to create a new calendar is absurd. Piling on more hours is an ignorant and short sighted response to societal, economic, and cultural issues that our state uniquely faces and adding more hours or days to the school year will not move the needle. Asking more on already overburdened teachers will only have one result; fewer qualified teachers. Ultimately, the proposed changes to this bill would be bad for all stakeholders in our state's educational system.

Sincerely,

AJ Rascon

From: [Alfred Rascon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: AFTNMACTION@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:57:21 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear PED,

I am writing to you to voice my opposition to the proposed changes of HB 130.

Adding more instructional days is NOT the answer to the issues public schools across New Mexico are facing. In fact, I believe this would have far reaching negative impacts particularly in regard to the retention of teachers. Schools are still adjusting, some with significant difficulty, to the changes that were made just this year. Forcing more days onto school systems and having to go back to square one to create a new calendar is absurd. Piling on more hours is an ignorant and short sighted response to societal, economic, and cultural issues that our state uniquely faces and adding more hours or days to the school year will not move the needle. Asking more on already overburdened teachers will only have one result; fewer qualified teachers. Ultimately, the proposed changes to this bill would be bad for all stakeholders in our state's educational system.

Sincerely,

AJ Rascon

From: [Jon Putman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback 6.10.5 BMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:01:45 PM

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I am the parent of children that will be affected by your new rule changes.
Our kids are extremely involved in serval agriculture activities including but not limited to the state 4-H programs.
The 4 day a week school calendar our school district currently follows is working well for many reasons. I won't waste your time with too many details but our children are testing at the top of any national scale so please reconsider this proposal. It can not be beneficial.
Thank you,
Jon Putman

From: [Peter Maginot](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:02:08 PM

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My name is Peter Maginot and I go the Los Alamos Middle school and I believe that this is a horrible idea and that this project should be canceled immediately.

On Fri, Dec 15, 2023, 18:59 Peter Maginot <pjmaginot@gmail.com> wrote:

From: [Cori Gonzalez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback:6.10.5NMAC
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:04:15 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today to ask that you not change Loving NM schools away from the 4-day school week. The kids here have done nothing but benefit from the change to a 4-day school week. I personally have noticed a change in the kids in my family. They seem happier and more able to cope with the stress of school. Their grades have improved and their general attitudes seem better. When they are having a rough week, telling them they only have a day or 2 left in the week versus telling them they have 3 more days make a huge difference on whether or not a child is willing to go back and tough out the rest of the week. It really helps the mental health of our students. The attendance is easier. If I have a doctors appointment out of town, my student doesn't have to miss a day of school if I can schedule it on a Friday. I'm sure there is benefits financially also but I do not know them other than the cost of utilities I would assume would be less. Please don't take away the 4-day school week of our students. It has soooo many benefits.

Cori Gonzalez
corigonzalea94@gmail.com
505-484-9020

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Erin Tatge](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AGAINST NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:09:29 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please do not put this rule into place. Increasing hours and days of the same quality schooling isn't going to get our students ahead. And if you do go forward with this, give the schools more than a few months to figure out how to implement it! Major changes to the schedule should have AT LEAST a full year's notice.

Erin Tatge
she/her

From: [Nichol Gallegos](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:11:31 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

NMAC Rule 6.10.5 this ruling would affect both of my children still in school in a negative way. My elementary student would have to get out earlier to make this happen and still allow his teachers the time they need to prepare. Both prep time and school hours would affect him. Picking up both children would also be a problem considering both my children would get out at the same time and there is no way for one parent to be in two places at one time. For my daughter in middle school this would affect her in many ways, this would affect her class size as well as the fact that she will not be allowed to get ready for high school and college using the block schedule she has now. Again this would also affect the parents and both my children for pick up. More than anything this rule would affect my children's quality of education. I am against this rule, I care about my children's quality of education and this rule just seems to want more hours with the disregard of my children's education.

Nichol Gallegos

From: [Ivana Gonzales](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AGAINST NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements" i
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:36:40 PM

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Dear PED,

I am a parent with kids in LAPS. We are AGAINST new school calendar requirements that would require students to be in school for 180 days at least 5.5 days each!

More and more parents we know are deciding to home school children because you are FORCING more and more instructional time on the kids and the teachers!

Kids are already tired with the current calendar.

Solution is not to increase QUANTITY but QUALITY by paying teachers more and attracting more educated personnel into the public schools.

You already have issues attracting teachers! In our local Pojoaque school our old 70 years neighbour wis teaching science! This is a disgrace and you make people sorry for voting democrat!

Listen to NM teachers and districts and their needs!

Listen to the parents and kids!

My children are already tired of going to school from early August to June!

This is a disgrace!

Ivana

--

Ivana (nee Matanovic) Gonzales, Ph.D.

From: [Elisa Enriquez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 7:47:30 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am a parent of a Los Alamos High School student.

I am very concerned about the proposed NMAC rule that seems to leave out any rationale for impending changes to a system and schedule that works. In addition to the undue hardship the extra workload will cause teachers by not allowing sufficient time for professional development, spending more time in the classroom is not correlated with better results. In fact, older kids who may have extracurricular activities, duties at home, or a part time job will not benefit from this.

Finally, the thing that not only makes no sense, but absolutely asinine is making the middle and high school kids take more unnecessary credits not required for graduation.

We already have a teacher shortage all over the country. More with little extra financial benefit is not what teachers want. Unintended consequences may include having larger class sizes and less teachers in an already strained system.

I urge you to NOT pass these changes as they are detrimental to both our kids and our teachers.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Enriquez
5085 Alegria
Los Alamos, NM

From: [P.R](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: ATF Members: Take Action on PED Proposal to Lengthen School Year!
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:00:32 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern:

When I received notice of what NM legislature is trying to extend more time to the school calendar for both educators and students, I was extremely disappointed. This is not even 1 year after already extending the calendar. For a couple years prior to extending to the 2023-2024 school year. At least Albuquerque Public Schools District had survey it's community and staff about whether or not they wanted to extend and add additional time to its calendar. Overwhelming, the answer a no by the community and staff.

The more time that is add, the closer that it gets to break. From experience and trends that I see in the schools is increase in fights amongst students. This is a negative effect. Parents are going to be more inclined to pull their children out school for any reason with there being less break times.

Students and educators both need these breaks. We look forward to having the long summers off. This is a reason to why some chose to go into education for a profession. Making breaks shorter, and giving less breaks is going to make it harder to close the growing gap of employment in education.

As a school counselor, we are required to more than a teacher. We are required to come back to work 2 weeks before students start the school year. This is a week sooner than teachers. So, while teachers, may not have Techniqually started until early August this school. Us secondary school counselors started late July. Our caseloads are much higher than a teacher, we are more specialized, and handle more sensitive matters. We are usually, treated the worst (low man on totem pole) out of any the licensed staffed. By the times these breaks come around, we are all ready for them. The students are ready for the break. Adding more time would just more than likely make students more squirrely and burn both students and educators out fasters. Which could drive people out of the profession. Especially when it is seen as low pay for what educators no matter the position have to endure.

Please do not consider adding more time to the calendar at this time.

Sincerely,

Pamela

On Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 02:44:31 PM MST, Albuquerque Teachers Federation <act@atfunion.org> wrote:

From: [P.R](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: ATF Members: Take Action on PED Proposal to Lengthen School Year!
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:00:37 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern:

When I received notice of what NM legislature is trying to extend more time to the school calendar for both educators and students, I was extremely disappointed. This is not even 1 year after already extending the calendar. For a couple years prior to extending to the 2023-2024 school year. At least Albuquerque Public Schools District had survey it's community and staff about whether or not they wanted to extend and add additional time to its calendar. Overwhelming, the answer a no by the community and staff.

The more time that is add, the closer that it gets to break. From experience and trends that I see in the schools is increase in fights amongst students. This is a negative effect. Parents are going to be more inclined to pull their children out school for any reason with there being less break times.

Students and educators both need these breaks. We look forward to having the long summers off. This is a reason to why some chose to go into education for a profession. Making breaks shorter, and giving less breaks is going to make it harder to close the growing gap of employment in education.

As a school counselor, we are required to more than a teacher. We are required to come back to work 2 weeks before students start the school year. This is a week sooner than teachers. So, while teachers, may not have Techniqually started until early August this school. Us secondary school counselors started late July. Our caseloads are much higher than a teacher, we are more specialized, and handle more sensitive matters. We are usually, treated the worst (low man on totem pole) out of any the licensed staffed. By the times these breaks come around, we are all ready for them. The students are ready for the break. Adding more time would just more than likely make students more squirrely and burn both students and educators out fasters. Which could drive people out of the profession. Especially when it is seen as low pay for what educators no matter the position have to endure.

Please do not consider adding more time to the calendar at this time.

Sincerely,

Pamela

On Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 02:44:31 PM MST, Albuquerque Teachers Federation <act@atfunion.org> wrote:

From: [Sylvia Escoto](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:06:39 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello. My name is Sylvia Escoto, not only have I been teaching with APS for 19 years, I am also a mother of two APS students. PED teachers and students are not guinea pigs. STOP experimenting, and listen to the opinions of the people who are working directly with students. Increasing instructional hours is not the answer. Instead provide teachers with the resources, and time to develop meaningful instruction for the time already mandated by State Law.
Sylvia Escoto

From: [Mandy See](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:16:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM PED Leaders,

Thank you for proposing new rules for our public schools. So many elements of the new rules make sense and will benefit our students immensely. Under the proposed rule, I'm glad high school students would not be able to take free periods and would need more credits to graduate. That is valuable and will help our students succeed.

I'm glad that elementary schools would no longer have early release days one day a week. I think early release is disruptive to routines for students, and it limits the effectiveness of the instructional days for students.

However, one element of the rule I disagree with. I see that schools must be in session for a certain number of hours and days. I disagree with this rule. It makes sense to count instructional hours, not days.

Counting hours ensures students receive a thorough education, but counting days as well becomes counter-productive. Longer days with more days off can lead to travel, enrichment, experiences, work, internships, family visits, and spending time outdoors. All these activities need more days out of school. Too many days in school will place undue restraint on students and teachers, limiting their ability to do outside activities that augment learning and professional development, and that help them recharge and come back to school refreshed. Without enough days out of school, school will become more of a prison than a place for learning and exploration. Individual districts should have the freedom to choose which days their schools meet, and for what hours of the day.

Please only regulate the number of instructional hours per year, not also the number of calendar days each school must meet.

Thank you for hearing my concern.

All the best,
Mandy

--

Mandy See
(505) 274-5227
[LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)
mandysee.com

From: [sierra](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 8:16:47 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke the proposal as mentioned above. The legislature recently debated calendar reform, which has been implemented in schools for six months. There was significant debate on the calendar reform legislation in the 2023 legislative session. That debate led to a compromise on legislation that the Governor signed. We acknowledge the department's commitment to enhancing educational outcomes. However, given the recency of the new legislation and the Department's lack of statutory authority to execute this rule as proposed, we request that PED revoke this proposed rule and go through the legislative process to meet these requirements.

Direct Impacts to Our School

Roots and Wing Community School (RWCS), a K-8th grade, state-authorized charter school, is considered a 4-day/week school for calendaring purposes. This year, with the mandated calendar change last year, we are currently operating with 54% of our weeks as 5-day weeks with 171 student contact days meeting the required 1140 contact hour mandate. The majority of our students use a rural transportation system bus for transportation, and parents drive the rest. Our school hours are dictated by the bus schedule, which provides us with a fixed 6.5-hour school day. In addition to all the concerns that this rule proposes for all schools, we will be additionally penalized by enacting this rule as it currently reads.

We will lose over \$92,000 (approximately 9% of our operating budget) in K-12 Plus funding. We will have to add nine (9) days to our calendar just to make 180 days, eliminating us from participating in the K-12+ program again. This will take us to 1,199 hours! So we are adding nine (9) days and 58.5 instructional hours to our calendar AND having our budget REDUCED!

Last year, we had to add a net of seven (7) work days to our teacher contracts, so we added a stipend contract to all teaching staff, paying them for the additional seven days with money from the K-12+ funding. This was an added expense of \$22,750.

With this proposal, unless we significantly cut the limited number of PD days the teachers have, we will again have to pay the teachers a stipend for extra days with little or no K-12 Plus funding. Cutting teacher PD days is not an answer to improving student achievement or training high-quality teachers. If we don't offer the stipend, teachers will likely leave as we would ask them to work more days with no salary increase from the previous year.

Remote Days Issue

Our school is located in the Foothills of the Sangre de Cristo mountains at 8,200 ft. in northern Taos county, where we get a lot of snow. Since most of our students use the RTD public

transportation to come to school and parents drive the rest, we can not do delayed openings as no bus is scheduled at those times. Therefore, we must cancel school if the surrounding districts call for a delay, or we would have to require parents to drive all students to school during unsafe driving conditions. The pandemic taught us that we can effectively learn remotely on days otherwise lost. By restricting us from using remote learning days instead of canceling school and due to the increased number of school days required by this rule, we would have to add days at the end of the year instead of continuing our instruction. Students and parents will NOT send their students to school at the end of the year to do make-up days, causing them to be wasted and increasing our absenteeism rate. Please allow us to use this remote learning tool without restrictions for weather and unexpected shutdowns.

Loss of Local Control and Staffing Issues

We have been a 4-day school since the school's beginnings over 20 years ago. We participated in the ELTP program and used the extra funding to provide more student contact time, teacher PD time, and enrichment programs to benefit our students. We were a Spotlight school in 2022 and are currently ranked as Traditional, and we have not been on any corrective action plans. Additionally, we received a 5-year contract renewal and continue to score very high on our annual site reviews by CSD/PEC. But last year, due to the increased contact hours, we eliminated most of our teacher PD days, and because of state rules/mandates, we were forced to eliminate a robust after-school enrichment program for our students. We know what works for our students and want what is best for them, but the continued implementation of these one-size-fits-all regulations is detrimental to the students and staff you are trying to help. Allow us to be innovative and successful, and stop handcuffing us with rules and mandates that prevent us from best serving our students and staff. Increasing staff workloads and decreasing professional development time are not ways to retain staff. This is especially true in rural areas where staff must travel hours to receive medical or basic life needs services. Working them five days a week will require them to take more days off and out of their classrooms.

Impacts to All Schools

State law clearly states that rule cannot run further than statute: 14-4-5.7(A): "No rule is valid or enforceable if it conflicts with statute. A conflict between a rule and a statute is resolved in favor of the statute." Within the proposed rule, several new policies lack statutory authority for PED to provide the mandates in the proposed rule:

a. Statute clearly allows for school districts to meet statutory hourly requirements without regard to school days. In fact, NMSA 22-2-8 only allows the Secretary to waive minimum requirements associated with school hours in certain circumstances. It's unclear where the authority for a maximum number of hours is allowed in law. The law does not allow the Secretary to make mandates in our analysis. The statute is silent on the length of the school week except for language surrounding K-12 Plus funding (NMSA 22-8-23.14), which states that schools operating on a 4-day school week must have more than 156 school days to qualify for K12 Plus programming. This clearly provides for 4-day school weeks in law without any explicit authority for the secretary to mandate a length of school week. The proposed rule oversteps New Mexico school law by prescribing more than 50% of weeks to be five-day weeks. Further, the proposed rule mandates that schools must have 180 days to qualify for K-12 Plus funding, which directly contradicts the statute. It is essential to align the rule with

statutory provisions on flexible scheduling for districts and charter schools. Revisiting the law to provide authority for the Secretary is necessary to implement the policy.

b. The proposed rule introduces maximum hours in a school day without explicit statutory authorization. Identifying the specific statutory provisions granting the Secretary the authority to establish such limits is imperative. Further, this section of the proposed rule would not apply to charter schools that exercise a nondiscretionary waiver associated with “Length of School Day” NMSA22-8B-5(c).

c. The rule mandates a 30-minute lunch period, which directly contradicts the 20-minute lunch period stipulated in statute (NMSA 22-13c-10). It is crucial to adhere to statutory limitations and recognize the bounds of PED's authority in prescribing lunch periods.

Moreover, the mandated requirement that secondary students attend a minimum of four courses per day (6.10.5.8(A) in the proposed rule) poses considerable challenges for dual-credit high schools. The potential impact on charter schools, exempt from course requirements through nondiscretionary waivers, and raises concerns about equitable application across all educational institutions. Should the proposed rule go through, this would be an area in which the state's public charter schools are exempt through non-discretionary waivers NMSA 22-8B-5(c).

The proposed rule does not seem to recognize the diversity of school performance across the state regardless of the school calendar. Some of the state's highest-performing schools are on 4-day calendars <<INSERT DATA>>. Students will face unnecessary disruptions by modifying their calendars without a clear risk-based justification. Acknowledging the success of existing calendar structures and avoiding unnecessary changes that may adversely affect student outcomes is imperative.

Lastly, PCSNM has regularly called for collaboration on the issue of attendance/chronic absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism has hovered around 40%, and the average New Mexico student misses 10.5 days of school. Focusing on changing student attendance status, in conjunction with all education partners, would provide a more impactful change than further calendar change.

In light of these concerns, we urge the PED to reconsider the proposed rule, pursue calendar reform through the legislative process, and focus on leading New Mexico's communities in regularly getting our kids to school. This approach would provide the necessary statutory clarity and allow for comprehensive stakeholder engagement to address the diverse needs of our educational community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that the PED will carefully consider the implications of the proposed rule and work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop solutions that prioritize the best interests of our students and educators.

Yours sincerely,
Sierra Hedberg
(Mother of 2 RWCS students, grade 1 & 3)

Dear NM PED,

I am writing this letter today to plead your reconsideration of the proposed rule change **NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements** that would require that all attend at least 180 instructional days plus additional Professional Development. This is simply egregious and not feasible for all. The state of New Mexico has quite the mixed bag of schools, districts, and students and to now assume that all are in the same is outrageous. Many school districts such as ours worked hard to make the necessary changes over 5 years ago to move to a 4-day school week. We made these changes to address several things including budget, students and staff attendance, greater opportunities for students to expand learning through work and college, and to increase morale. Since then, all of this has improved. We have gone from the red to the black on budget, attendance has improved since most errands and appointments can now take place on Friday. More students than ever are taking early college programs, and many students are working and gaining skills to better their futures. More teachers are being drawn into the profession or staying if their schedule is conducive to having a life and not drowning in work. How can we turn a blind eye to the things that are going well?

I know that New Mexico historically has not performed at the highest level and is almost always near the bottom when it comes to education and performance but mandating that we add days to the school year is not going to fix that. We have a greater problem here in this state and it's being ignored. How can we help the whole child? How are we going to address their mental health, social and emotional well-being, and poverty? We cannot assume that more time in school is going to fix performance and learning if the students aren't "mentally" in school or are worried about life outside of school.

Most schools who are on a 4-day week are in rural communities. We do not have the same resources, access to doctors, dentists, stores, therapists, etc., that other places do. We cannot easily leave school for an hour or two, attend an appointment and come back. Most of these things take at least half a day if we are lucky. Many students must travel to specialty appointments such as orthodontists or surgeons and are at least 2 hours away. Having a weekday off assists with missing school for both students and staff members. Since COVID, surveys were sent out to parents over the last 2 years on returning to a 5-day week and received over 93% in favor of staying a 4 day. I fear that living just 20 miles from the Colorado border we will lose not only a high number of students but also teachers to neighboring schools if this new rule is enacted.

Our district's mission is to ensure that all students graduate college and career ready. We feel like our students are truly embracing this. Some students are working to improve skills, gain opportunities, and make a little extra money while others unfortunately must take a responsible adult role in their households. Other students are working on getting a jump start at college. More kids than ever are attending early college programs and taking up to 12 hours per semester in addition to their regular school load. Much of this work is completed on Fridays (their day off regular school) IF this time was taken away from them, they wouldn't push themselves to take these courses and WE as a state and institution would be holding them back. It seems almost like all our focus is at the bottom and the lower functioning yet fail to recognize those who are doing well and thriving.

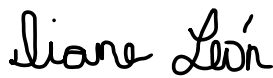
In addition to those students attending college and working, we have over 80% of our students who are also athletes and must travel far to games, often leaving school as early as 11am and returning home as late as 2am. Expecting them to fully function after very little sleep and to be back in school on time and alert is just not possible. Currently most of these games are strategically scheduled so that they miss minimal school or when we are off that Friday. Forcing us to go all 5 days would once again be detrimental to our students.

I can speak for myself and many others when I say that morale has improved tremendously since being on a 4-day week as I was ready to quit the profession and never return prior to this. I really do love my job and truly believe it is a calling but the amount of time, emotion, and stress that is involved in teaching it takes a toll on life and one's family. For many years I struggled with keeping a work life balance and tending to my children and family because I was always doing work or preparing lessons, gradings, making phone calls, sending emails, etc. When on a 5-day week my Saturdays were spent cleaning, doing laundry, and attending games and tournaments for my children. While Sunday was spent going to church, catechism, and doing lesson plans. I had no time to ever just rest or decompress which can be bad both mentally and physically. On a 4-day week I can do all my grading, lesson planning, and tutoring, if necessary, on Fridays, Saturdays have stayed the same and I now enjoy just being on Sunday. My kids no longer watch their mom stare at a screen all day while the rest of the family enjoys time together.

I know that not everyone understands the many reasons for some schools being on a 4-day calendar, and there are still people who say that students need a place to be if they need the help their parents are working, or they need babysitters 5 days a week. Because of this our school district has tried to remedy it by offering Fridays as CTE learning days, offering enrichment programs, winter ski programs, tutoring for those falling below a C in courses, etc. If we can no longer offer this when are these programs supposed to take place? Will we be helping our students or hindering their education. Several states are looking at moving to a 4-day week for all and we seem to be moving backwards by forcing the "old way" on everyone when it might not work for them.

As an 18-year veteran teacher born and raised in the state of New Mexico I know we can do better, but we as a state need to sit down and have discussions with those in the front lines of education, students, and parents to better address our education system. WE CANNOT continue to make decisions for schools and students without consideration of diversity and differentiation. As teachers we are expected to differentiate our classrooms and meet every student's needs, yet as a state we are choosing to treat all schools the same and take away what works best for them. Taking away the autonomy from each district to make these decisions is truly sad and negligent when you think about how it affects our schools, our students, and our staff.

We plead that you reconsider the rule change and listen to stakeholders before making such a rash decision. Thank you for your time and consideration.



Diane León
Questa Independent School District
Teacher
Bilingual, Title III Coordinator



December 15th, 2023

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform

Dear Secretary Romero,

I am writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke the aforementioned proposal. Calendar reform was only recently debated by the legislature and has been implemented in schools for less than six months. There was great debate on the calendar reform legislation in the 2023 legislative session. That debate led to compromise on legislation that was signed by the Governor. We acknowledge the department's commitment to enhancing educational outcomes. However, given the recency of the new legislation and Department's lack of statutory authority to execute this rule as proposed, we request that PED revoke this proposed rule and go through the legislative process to meet these requirements.

State law clearly states that rule cannot run further than statute: NMSA 14-4-5.7(A) states "No rule is valid or enforceable if it conflicts with statute. A conflict between a rule and a statute is resolved in favor of the statute."

Within the proposed rule, there are several policies that lack statutory authority for the PED to mandate:

- a. The proposed rule provides for a maximum length of school day, and it's unclear where the authority for a maximum number of hours is allowed in law. In fact, NMSA 22-2-8 only allows for the Secretary to waive **minimum** requirements associated with school hours in certain circumstances.
- b. The proposed rule attempts to mandate 180 days on every school's calendar. However, the law does not provide for the Secretary to make mandates on the length of school calendar in our analysis either. Statute is silent on the length of school week except for language surrounding K-12 Plus funding (NMSA 22-8-23.14), which explicitly allows for schools to operate on a 4-day school week. In that section of statute, it notes that 4-day week schools must have more than 156 school days to qualify for K12 Plus programming. This clearly provides for both 4-day school weeks in law without any explicit authority for the secretary to mandate a length of school week and allows for schools with 4-day school weeks to qualify for K12 plus programming with just 156 days on their calendar.
- c. Further, the proposed rule oversteps New Mexico school law by prescribing more than 50% of weeks to be five-day weeks. We see no statutory authority for this action by the Secretary.
- d. The rule mandates a 30-minute lunch period, which directly contradicts the 20-minute lunch period stipulated in statute (NMSA 22-13c-10). It is crucial to adhere to statutory limitations and recognize the bounds of PED's authority in prescribing lunch periods.

It is essential to align the rule with statutory provisions on flexible scheduling for districts and charter schools. Revisiting the law to provide authority for the Secretary is necessary to implement the policy.

Moreover, the proposed policy on secondary students taking a minimum of four courses per day does not consider students at early college high schools. This provision would impose a deleterious requirement on students at dual credit high school students focused on college level work, as those students' college schedules don't allow for this many courses each day.

The proposed rule also attempts to make calendar mandates to all schools regardless of performance. Some of the state's highest-performing schools are on 4-day calendars including ASK Academy, Moreno Valley Charter High School, and Taos Academy. These schools received Spotlight or Excellence status in the state accountability system and students will face unnecessary disruptions by having to modify their calendars without a clear justification. It is imperative to acknowledge the success of existing calendar structures and avoid unnecessary changes that may adversely affect student outcomes.

School finances have also not been considered in the proposed rule. Schools moving from 4-day school weeks to meet the provisions of this law will need to cut staff hourly pay or daily rate using the same budget. PED has not requested funding from the legislature to help school to implement these provisions either. Giving no consideration to new employee contracts and their costs will damage the transition to the imposed requirements in this rule.

Lastly, PCSNM has been regularly calling for collaboration on the issue of attendance and chronic absenteeism. This issue is more pressing than calendar days, as students already miss many days of school on current calendars. Presently chronic absenteeism is 40% and the average New Mexico student misses 10.5 days of school. The Department should focus on leading the state toward better attendance, in conjunction with all education partners, that would provide more impactful change than the number of calendar days available to students. Public Charter Schools of New Mexico will gladly support these efforts.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We ask the PED carefully consider the implications of the proposed rule and work collaboratively with the legislature to develop solutions that prioritize the best interests of our students.

Sincerely,

<Signed>

Matthew Pahl

Executive Director

From: [SAMUEL CARMER](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Change in School Instructional time requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:07:22 PM

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Hi, my name is Samuel Carmer, I'm a junior at Los Alamos High School. I'm writing because I believe the proposed changes in school scheduling will have a negative effect on our schools.

The requirement for elementary schools to have at least 5.5 instructional hours a day and schools five days a week will take away our elementary school's option to have an early release schedule on Wednesday. This is a very popular schedule with elementary students and teachers alike. Teachers get additional time for preparation and training which is highly appreciated in the middle of the week. For students, the early release breaks up the monotony of the routine schedule and I believe is actually beneficial for them despite the lost instructional time.

The same could be said for high school students in regard to free periods. Upper class high school students are capable of choosing their own courses and paths in education. While some students can fill their schedule with classes, others need free periods for work, sports, homework, or other personal activities. I believe it would be unfair to these students to force them to take extra classes which they are not in need of. Students in our high school who want to have a full schedule will either way and won't be affected.

There has already been discussion among staff and students at our school about how the extra credit requirements and requirements of four hours per day will generally be filled with electives that the student doesn't actually care about, but is taking because they are required to be in school. I believe the real issue is that instead of encouraging, guiding, and aiding students in their educational path, the rule change forces students to be present at school and actually devalues the instructional time.

The rule change will put additional stress on students, teachers, and administrators in our district. The need for additional classes as well as larger class sizes will burden our teachers and add to the school district's financial burden.

I believe this rule change is misguided and will have a large negative impact on the LAPS school district.

Thanks for your consideration,

Samuel Carmer



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: anna.villalpando@studentlaschools.net
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:11:21 PM


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Dear PED,

I am a student at LAHS and in quotation of the new rules

1. “The new rule would require districts to provide 1140 hours of instruction AND a minimum of 180 days each school year. This is a change from legislation that allowed districts to count hours NOT days.
2. The rule no longer allows the district to include professional development as a part of the required instructional hours. This means that we would most likely have to add additional days to the teaching contract to maintain professional development time provided through the collective bargaining agreement.
3. The rule will require that students are in school 5 days a week for at least 5.5 hours a day at the elementary and 6.5 at the secondary schools. This would eliminate the ability to have early release Wednesdays for elementary teacher planning and prep. We would have to consider releasing elementary students earlier each day to meet teacher planning requirements. We are still learning how this would impact advisement and testing days at the secondary level.
4. The rule requires secondary students to take 4 credit bearing classes each day (8 classes each week). Currently, LAPS secondary schools use a block schedule that has 3.5 classes each day for a total of 7 classes a week. This means that we will have to change the master schedules at LAHS and LAMS.
5. High School students would not be allowed to take a free period. This means that we would need to add additional classes, teachers, or have larger class sizes to ensure all students are placed in 4 credit bearing courses each day.
6. LAHS students would complete a total of 32 credits. Graduation requirements are for students to complete 24 credits.
7. The rule change would go into effect for the 24/25 school year. The new calendar and class schedules would need to be finalized, approved, and submitted before the budget is submitted in April. “

This would be out rages! School is hard enough to get done. There are proven rates showing how mental health is being impacted by how school is already. It's exhausting, overwhelming, student often get depression from the idea of failing. Adding more hours, adding extra credits we need to earn in order to graduate, whose gonna wanna learn, whose actually gonna lean? This would only have a greater impact for the worst, not only for student but for teachers. New Mexico already deals with the issues on trying to meet day and hours needed with constant weather issues and the safety of those who have to drive. By doing these rule changes, I guarantee a massive drop in successful student, due to over exhausting the school system!!!!
Sent from Anna

 This email has been sent from a verified [laschools.net](mailto:anna.villalpando@studentlaschools.net) user.

From: [Whitney Monjure](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Alice King
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:14:48 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

Sincerely,

Whitney Monjure

From: [Heath McLaughlin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New rule will result in more drop-outs
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:16:04 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

I was informed of this new rule from my school district. I'm concerned that NM is once again targeting the wrong solutions for problems instead of looking at states that do well in education.

1. Requiring high school students to not have free periods will have disastrous consequences for just about every HS student. For those in poorer areas, I'll guarantee the dropout rate will increase for those that need to work. If they have to be in school more hours, they can't be working those hours. That is a direct negative on their family and putting food on the table will take precedence to those families. For all students, especially ones with out of school activities (jobs, sports, etc), having a free period or two senior year is vital for applying for colleges, volunteer activities, and applying for scholarships.

2. More days does not mean more education. Neither does more hours. There are so many wasted days/hours currently in all ages, but particularly the formative elementary years - holiday parties, concerts during school, etc. All are a waste of time for learning, and those will only increase with more hours/days required. Teachers need a break, and this is the opposite direction. I guarantee you will see more good teachers quit or leave the state, so once again, this rule change will have opposite the desired effect.

Please stop this rule change immediately.

Regards
Heath

From: [Lindsey D](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Change NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:51:34 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Lindsey Das*

From: [Lance Longley](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:03:04 PM

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I am writing to share my concerns about the proposed rulemaking regarding school calendar requirements. In education, it is evident that the number of instructional days alone does not guarantee improved student outcomes. Research consistently emphasizes the importance of factors such as regular attendance, student engagement, rigorous learning opportunities, highly qualified teachers, high-quality learning materials, and robust family/community support in contributing to academic success.

Mandating a minimum of 180 student days per academic year without considering these other critical factors will not yield the desired results. It is essential to focus on the quality of instruction and the overall learning environment rather than solely increasing instructional time.

Moreover, the proposed rule change raises concerns regarding the authority and power of the NMPED. By attempting to enforce a rule that goes beyond the current provisions of the New Mexico Statute, the department is infringing on local autonomy. This intrusion poses questions about the extent of their authority and the potential to further disengage communities in our democracy system.

Additionally, the proposed amendment not only challenges the efficacy of Clovis Municipal Schools' current calendar but also undermines the principle of local control. The ability to tailor the school calendar to the unique needs and values of the CMS community has been vital to its success. Imposing a mandate removes this essential element of local control, limiting the district's ability to make decisions that best serve its students, parents, and educators.

It is also important to consider budgetary concerns this has evoked. Who will fund the additional days for all of the staff, transportation of the students, and additional operating expenses?

I challenge you to consider a more holistic approach to education that emphasizes quality instruction, quality educators, student engagement, and a comprehensive support system that is likely to yield better outcomes than a simplistic focus on increasing instructional days.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Jennifer Longley

Executive Director of Strategic Planning and School Support for Elementary in Clovis, NM

Mother

Concerned Citizen

From: [RILEY FENSIN](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar"
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:11:25 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am a middle school student here in New Mexico and I do not think this new rule is a good idea and I think it will mess up my school life education wise



This email has been sent from a verified laschools.net user.

From: [Julie Wiens](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AGAINST NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:05:11 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear lawmakers,

Please do not put this rule into place. Increasing the amount of the same quality schooling isn't going to get our students ahead. More hours does not equate to better grades. In fact I would likely lead to worse grades along with more burnout and fatigue.

It would likely be more beneficial to analyze various teaching techniques and support our teachers in development so they can learn new approaches to teaching. Forcing more classroom hours on them will not help anyone.

Please do not do this. I stand with our teachers, students and school board. Please do better than this knee jerk reaction.

Thanks,
Julie Wiens
Los Alamos mother

From: [Nada](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] To whom it may concern
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 12:29:11 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My child attends Alice King Community School, a charter school where students attend 4 days a week. The proposed rule change to the instructional time requirements (NMAC 6.10.5) would have negative implications for our child and family. The 4-day school week provides our family the opportunity to support our child's learning at home. Moving to a 180 day calendar and 5-day school week would cause a major transformation of how Alice King Community School is structured and to its Charter and Mission. This would include possibly removing 20 professional development days for teachers that are used for curriculum development which would change the focus of the school's Charter related to multi-age and inclusion philosophies and teaching methods.

We respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department decline to proceed with the proposed rule change.

*Sincerely,
Shene Cordova*

From: [Cassandra Purdy](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Disapproval of proposed changes to rule 6.10.5 regarding school calendar requirements
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 6:00:19 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

My name is Cassandra Purdy and I am the mother of 2 daughters who are attending school at Ojo Caliente elementary on the Mesa Vista campus. I am very disappointed to hear of the proposed amendments regarding changes to the rule 6.10.5- "school calendar requirements ". My daughters moved to this school this 2023-24 school year and have been thriving with the 4 day school week. I find it completely unwarranted. They are getting quality instruction time and have improved in some areas up to 55 points on their standardized tests in only 4 months. This seems like a complete overreach on your end and this type of change would be such a thoughtless act resulting in unnecessary instability for my children. And I am completely opposed to this proposal .

I'm unclear as to what reasons you have for these changes but I can't help but believe that it's a power play and not thought through as well as highly inconsiderate to both students and faculty. I believe there is a variety of other issues you could spend your time addressing with our schools and am disappointed in your decisions when it comes to prioritizing what's important.

Please consider the ways this proposal will affect schools such as my childrens, students and teachers and parents who have to deal with the aftermath of your necessary disruptions.

Thank you,
Cassandra

From: [rreynaud](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule 6.10.5. I am opposed, because it dilutes local control.
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 6:50:56 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear NM PED, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this rule. [I oppose this rule.](#)
I am opposed primarily because it removes flexibility from local districts: Rural districts are numerous in NM and need the 4-day option due to serve their citizens.

V/R
Rick Reynaud, P.E.
Las Cruces, NM

From: [Rachel Pearson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed changes to school schedule
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 7:45:47 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hi,

I'm writing to say that I am against the proposed changes to the school year hours, days & schedule. I live in Los Alamos, NM, and my daughter attends 7th grade here. If these changes take effect, I believe we would need to find her an alternative to the public school system even if it means commuting to Santa Fe and paying private tuition. I would prefer for her to be able to stay in our school system here.

thanks
Rachel Pearson



MIDDLE COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. Robert Hunter
Middle College High School
705 Gurley Ave
Gallup NM 87301

Secretary Arsenio Romero
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Subject: Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform

Dear Secretary Romero,

December 16, 2023

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request that the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) reconsider the aforementioned proposal. We deeply respect the Department's commitment to addressing the dire educational outcomes suffered by so many of our state's students and families. And we genuinely wish to be a part of the solution, which is why we submit that the idea of a one-size-fits all approach oversimplifies the crisis, reducing it to the idea that giving students more of something that is not working will somehow make it work. We are located in McKinley County, where two-thirds of the local district's students do not meet the state's requirement for regular attendance. In contrast, Middle College High School maintains an attendance rate that is amongst the highest in the state, and our receipt of your letter indicating that we are proof that demographics do not define outcomes is acknowledgement that LEAs can, and indeed *must*, do more to meaningfully address this issue. Our concerns with the proposed rule are twofold. First, it does not contemplate the myriad ways in which successful schools are achieving their successes. And secondly, it bypasses what our legislature has already carefully placed into law.

Middle College is one of two dozen early college high schools across the state. As the oldest such model, our 21-year history provides ample evidence of the efficacy of dual credit opportunities for students. Our concern with a mandate to move to a 180-day calendar is that it does not contemplate how schools like ours offer our programs to students. Situated on the campus of UNM-Gallup, our calendar is largely dictated by that of our host institution, who follows a 159-day calendar. Granted, we have provided additional days to our own calendar that are strategically designed to orient students to the complexities of a dual credit environment, but to stretch this even further would be to go beyond what we have determined to be optimal for our families and students. As this is true of all of New Mexico's early college high schools, we cannot help but point out that the proposed rule does not take into consideration that a significant portion of the state's most effective educational systems do not operate according to a 180-day instructional model. The proposal to move to a one-size-fits-all model lacks sufficient understanding of how results can be achieved through various forms of meaningful innovation.

Secondly, state law clearly indicates that rule cannot supersede statute: NMSA 14-4-5.7(A) states "No rule is valid or enforceable if it conflicts with statute. A conflict between a rule and a statute is resolved in favor of the statute."

Within the proposed rule, there are several policies that lack statutory authority for the PED to mandate:

- a. The proposed rule provides for a maximum length of 7.5 hours per school day, and it's unclear where the authority for the secretary to mandate a maximum number of hours is allowed in law. In fact, NMSA

22-2-8 only allows for the Secretary to waive **minimum** requirements associated with school hours in certain circumstances.

- b. The proposed rule attempts to mandate 180 days on every school's calendar. However, the law does not provide the Secretary to make mandates on the length of school calendar. Statute is silent on the length of school week except for language surrounding K-12 Plus funding (NMSA 22-8-23.14), which explicitly allows for schools to operate on a 4-day school week, should a school wish to do so. In that section of statute, it notes that 4-day week schools must have more than 156 school days to qualify for K12 Plus programming. This clearly provides for 4-day school weeks in law without any explicit authority for the Secretary to mandate the number of days provided in a school week.
- c. The proposed rule oversteps New Mexico school law by prescribing more than 50% of weeks to be five-day weeks. We see no statutory authority for this action by the Secretary.

It is essential to align the proposed rule with statutory provisions on flexible scheduling for public schools. Revisiting the law to provide authority for the Secretary would therefore be necessary to implement the policy as proposed.

Moreover, the proposed policy on secondary students taking a minimum of four courses per day does not consider students at early college high schools. This provision would impose a deleterious requirement on students at dual credit high schools focused on college level work, as those students' college schedules do not always allow for a minimum of four courses each day.

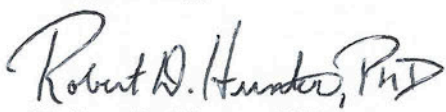
The proposed rule also attempts to make calendar mandates to all schools regardless of performance. This proposal is based on the idea that 4-week schools are not successful. While Middle College High School operates on a five-day week, some of the state's other highest performing schools do not. Consider charter schools like ASK Academy, Moreno Valley Charter High School, and Taos Academy, all of which follow a four-day school week. These are schools who have also received Spotlight or Excellence status in the state accountability systems and their students will face unnecessary disruptions by having to modify their calendars without a clear justification. It is imperative to acknowledge the success of existing calendar structures and avoid unnecessary changes that may adversely affect student outcomes.

School finances have also not been considered in the proposed rule. Schools moving from 4-day school weeks to meet the provisions of this law may need to cut staff hourly pay or daily rate using the same budget as well as increase their budget to provide additional transportation needs. PED has not requested funding from the legislature to help schools to implement these provisions for the year the proposed rule is implemented.

Lastly, our advocacy organization, the Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (PCSNM) has been regularly calling for collaboration on the issue of attendance and chronic absenteeism. This issue is more pressing than calendar days, as students already miss many days of school on current calendars. Presently, chronic absenteeism is 40% and the average New Mexico student misses 10.5 days of school. We believe that the Department should focus on leading the state toward better attendance, in conjunction with all education partners, which would provide more impactful change than the number of calendar days available to students. PCSNM will gladly support these efforts.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We ask that PED carefully consider the implications of the proposed rule and work collaboratively with the legislature to develop solutions that prioritize the best interests of our students and families in solving our state's longstanding educational crisis.

Respectfully,



Robert D. Hunter, PhD

From: [Hikay](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposing proposed rule 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 8:21:27 AM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Upon reading your proposed amendments to 6.10.5 NMAC, I must say we as parents oppose any and all of these amendments.

All redacted lines indicate no checks and balances and pure dictatorship. This is NOT democratic and undermines and eliminates any and all of our rights as parents.

We as parents do NOT agree, nor support any of these amendments to the rule as it eliminates any and all rights for parents and any and all checks and balances, public input and does NOT include any teachers / professional development. This in turn will cause more teachers to leave and therefore compromise the education of our children.

The students are already burned out.

Why are there so many programs that do NOT benefit the academic instruction of our children, but rather indoctrinate them?

The instructional hours of the current schedule is sufficient IF the teachers CAN teach what they are supposed to.

Also, "health emergencies"?! Evidence shows that the handling of the Covid pandemic was a complete and utter disaster causing more stress and showed no benefits, but only harm to all involved, especially considering Covid was reclassified as the flu!

Obviously there is severe lack of reasoning in any and all of this. Our school board, staff, etc. do NOT agree to any of this either.

Some of the other descriptions in the document are more than ALARMING and raises more questions!

Why is the public not informed of what the state knows and why is the public and parents completely ignored in this? Furthermore, there will be NO waivers being granted?!

There are NO options for any circumstances and this amendment to this rule is unacceptable and points to dictatorship.

We are against this rule!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

H.W